

Expanding Chinese- Language Capacity in the United States

What would it take to have
5 percent of high school
students learning Chinese
by 2015?



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Executive Summary

Increasingly leaders across public and private sectors are recognizing the rise of Asia as one of the central facts of the twenty-first century. China, with its tremendous economic growth and emergence as a social and political leader in the region, is fundamental to this shift. Given these changes, the task of increasing the number of American students who can demonstrate a functional proficiency in Chinese is undeniably urgent. Interest in learning Chinese is steadily growing among American youth, but the number of existing school programs is small and the present infrastructure to meet this demand is weak.

In order to address this disparity between need and limited capacity for teaching Chinese language, Asia Society convened a meeting in April 2005 to address a critical question: What would it take to have 5 percent of American high school students learning Chinese by 2015? This report is based on a background paper prepared for the meeting as well as the resulting discussion. We would like to thank the meeting participants, all leaders in the field, for the ideas and insight they contributed to this report. The contributors are listed in Appendix A.

If we are to build the infrastructure to support a K16 pipeline of Chinese-language learners to meet national needs, three critical issues must be addressed:

- creating a supply of qualified Chinese-language teachers;
- increasing the number and quality of school programs; and
- developing appropriate curriculum, materials, and assessments, including technology-based delivery systems.

During the meeting, important new developments in the field as well as some short- and long-term strategies were identified. The report discusses these issues and potential solutions in

greater detail, but the key points were as follows:

1. Tap into Major Developments to Advance the Field. The following initiatives lay a solid foundation upon which the field can begin to expand its capacity:

- Advanced Placement (AP) Course and Examination in Chinese Language (Mandarin) and Culture to be offered nationally to high schools by the College Board beginning in fall 2006;
- CHENGO, an online game-based program for beginning Chinese, developed jointly by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the U.S. Department of Education and available free of charge to pilot schools; and
- The Chinese K16 Pipeline Project of the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which will establish a third university Chinese-language flagship program that includes a model feeder program in local K–12 schools.

2. Take Both Short- and Long-Term Approaches to Create a Supply of Qualified Chinese-Language Teachers. Lack of teachers is the key bottleneck to building capacity in Chinese. In the short term, to expedite the creation of a pool of qualified Chinese teachers, states should work with institutions of higher education to create high-quality, “fast-track,” alternate routes to teacher certification for Chinese speakers in the United States; pilot visiting-faculty programs for teachers from China; use technology and multimedia to supplement the shortage of full-time Chinese teachers in classrooms; and explore a multistate system to certify Chinese-language teachers. In the long term, it will be necessary for higher education institutions to invest in full-length teacher preparation programs, similar to those used for other languages, and to extend professional development opportunities to Chinese-language

teachers. We need to take unconventional approaches in this area, building supply and demand simultaneously.

3. Leverage Growing Interest to Expand and Improve Chinese-Language Programs.

The level of interest in establishing Chinese-language programs in K12 schools is rising rapidly. A 2004 survey found that 2,400 high schools would be interested in offering the AP in Chinese language and culture. Most of these schools, however, do not currently offer Chinese. In order to translate this interest into quality programs, best practices from existing programs must be disseminated through a handbook on establishing Chinese-language programs and through the development of a technical assistance center or network. Beyond this, reaching a goal of 5 percent of U.S. students studying Chinese by 2015 will also require public education campaigns to raise awareness among educators, students, and parents of the growing importance of Chinese; competitive seed funds to make programs available in less affluent school districts; and articulated K–12 or K–16 models to demonstrate how students can attain high levels of proficiency and achievement.

4. Incorporate Research and Technology to Develop Effective Curriculum, Materials, Assessment, and Delivery Systems. Although the supply of teaching materials is growing, they are unevenly developed. Appropriate research-based materials, curriculum, and assessments must be developed in accordance with widely divergent levels of students and types of programs. Innovative ways of using media and technology (television, distance learning, online courses, and communities) to enhance language instruction and broaden access should have high priority.

5. Make a Long-Term Commitment to Invest in the Future. The expansion of capac-

ity in Chinese language will require innovations and investments similar to those in other fields deemed important to the nation. The National Defense Education Act, passed in 1958, after the launching of Sputnik, supported a range of strategies to meet science and foreign-language needs, including teacher training, scholarships for study abroad, and seed funds for language programs in K–12 schools. Today's economic and national security challenges mandate a larger pool of highly proficient speakers of a wider range of world languages, including Chinese. It is crucial that our national language investments go beyond the current support of languages in higher education to include K–12 schools. We need to begin language study in the early grades, use more intensive research-based approaches, build on the communities of heritage-language learners, and utilize new advantages that technology, easier travel, and virtual connections to schools in China allow.

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This report lays out the critical issues that must be addressed and makes some suggestions about how to do so. Its purpose is to stimulate broader discussion, support, and action to expand our capacity in Chinese, a language we as a nation can no longer ignore.

Vivien Stewart and Shuhan Wang

Introduction

Increasingly leaders from different sectors are recognizing the rise of Asia as one of the central facts of the twenty-first century. China, with its tremendous economic growth and emergence as a social and political leader in the region, is fundamental to this shift. China's entry into the global market had profound effects on U.S. economy, foreign policy, culture, and society. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2004 total U.S. trade with China exceeded \$230 billion, second only to trade with Canada and Mexico.¹ For American entrepreneurs and multinational corporations, China's population is an immense potential market for U.S. goods and services. As an emerging political power, China's cooperation is needed to solve a range of issues. And, as the most enduring world civilization, China has a major international cultural presence, drawing on a tremendous heritage in literature and the arts. Chinese Americans are among the fastest growing minority groups, in the United States.

Taking these dramatic trends together, the task of increasing the number of American students who can demonstrate a functional proficiency in the Chinese language is undeniably urgent. Indeed, interest in Chinese language has been growing rapidly, albeit from a small base. For example, between 1998 and 2002, the number of college students studying Chinese rose 20 percent to just over 34,000. In a 2004 College Board survey, 2,400 schools expressed interest in offering the Advanced Placement (AP) Course and Examination in Chinese (Mandarin) Language and Culture.

The number of existing school programs is small, however, and the U.S. infrastructure that would enable these interested schools to actually offer Chinese is weak. In terms of building K–16 pipelines for Chinese language, there are many gaps to be closed and blockages to be removed. Schools do not know how to start and sustain a Chinese-language program and have difficulty finding certified teachers. There

is a lack of suitable curriculum, materials, and assessments. Many heritage-language schools exist, but this pipeline is not well connected to formal school or tertiary programs and there has been a lack of articulation among programs at various levels of the education system.

In order to address this disparity between need and limited capacity for teaching Chinese language, Asia Society convened a meeting on April 12, 2005, to address the question: **What would it take to have 5 percent of American high school students (approximately 750,000) learning Chinese by 2015?** To reach this goal and to build the infrastructure to support a K–16 pipeline of Chinese language learners to meet national needs, three critical issues must be addressed:

- creating a supply of qualified Chinese-language teachers;
- increasing the number and quality of school programs; and
- developing appropriate curriculum, materials, and assessments, including technology-based delivery systems.

Discussion at the meeting centered on these issues. In addition, participants reviewed important new developments in the field and identified some short- and long-term strategies. The need for unconventional approaches, building supply and demand simultaneously, and using different staffing models, including extensive use of technology were crosscutting themes. This report is based on a background paper prepared for the meeting as well as the resulting discussion. We would like to thank the meeting participants, all leaders in the field, for the ideas and insight they contributed to this report. The contributors are listed in Appendix A. This report is not intended to be exhaustive but rather to provide a stimulus for discussion toward collectively developing a set of strategies to build Chinese-language capacity in the United States.

Current Status

Major Developments in the Field

In recent years, there have been several significant field initiatives that will lay a solid foundation upon which to expand capacity:

- AP Course and Examination in Chinese Language (Mandarin) and Culture to be offered nationally to high schools by the College Board beginning in fall 2006;
- CHENGO, an online game-based program for beginning Chinese, developed jointly by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the U.S. Department of Education and available free of charge to pilot schools; and
- the Chinese K–16 Pipeline Project of the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which will establish a third university Chinese-language flagship program that includes a model feeder program in local K–12 schools.

It is important to note that the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCTFL, or *Hanban*) and the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China have renewed their commitment to expanding Chinese-language capacity in the United States. For more information, see Appendix B.

While each of these initiatives is important, they also heighten the need for a well-connected infrastructure. For example, the AP program must be sustained by a steady flow of proficient high school students who are able to pass the examination. CHENGO relies on a supply of middle and high schools that will be willing and able to take advantage of and build upon what it can provide. And the Chinese K–16 Flagship Project, which is yet to be established, is only a single model that will need broader replication. Using these major initiatives as the building blocks for expanding capacity in Chinese, we may examine some of the existing data to assess the field. There is no comprehensive, up-to-date

survey of the number of Chinese-language students, teachers, and programs; nevertheless, the existing data can provide the baseline for discussion.

Students

At the tertiary level, the 1998 survey by the Modern Language Association (MLA) of foreign-language enrollments in U.S. institutions of higher education reported that national enrollment for Chinese was 28,456. The same survey identified Chinese as the sixth most commonly studied foreign language in the United States in 1998, trailing Spanish (656,590), French (199,064), German (89,020), Italian (49,287), and Japanese (43,141), but ahead of Russian (23,791), Arabic (5,505), and Korean (4,479).² The 2002 MLA enrollment survey showed the number of students studying Chinese at American institutions of higher education was 34,153, an increase of twenty percent over that of 1998.³

There are no comprehensive, reliable surveys of the numbers of students studying Chinese in K–12 schools. Some states have encouraged programs in Chinese, but resource constraints have prevented them from collecting data on the number of students and programs. It is therefore not surprising that the 2000 survey conducted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which tracked recorded enrollments for grades 7–12, showed only about 5,000 students studying Chinese.⁴ This number seems to be low compared to the one reported by the Secondary School Chinese Language Center at Princeton University, which estimated that the number of K–12 students studying Chinese exceeded 24,000 in 2002.⁵ Meanwhile, based on different methodology and targeted participants, the 2003 survey by the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS) reported an enrollment of 16,000 students.

The number of students studying Chinese in the two major systems of Chinese-heritage

schools in the United States is much larger, reflecting the fact that Chinese is still a heritage language as well as a foreign language. These programs are offered after school and on weekends. The National Council of Associations of Chinese Language Schools (NCACLS) consists of ten regional associations of Chinese heritage schools organized by immigrants who came mainly from Taiwan or Hong Kong. Its survey, conducted in 1995, showed 82,675 students studying in their member schools. The other group of Chinese heritage schools, whose members are mainly from the People's Republic of China, is The Chinese School Association in the United States (CSAUS). CSAUS reported enrollment of 60,000 as of early 2005. Scott McGinnis, academic advisor and associate professor at the Defense Language Institute, estimated that combined enrollment in the two Chinese heritage school systems was about 150,000 in 2003.⁶

The data reported by the Chinese Language Teacher Association (CLTA), along with that by CLASS, NCACLS, and CSAUS, indicate that there are about 200,000 students enrolled in Chinese-language programs in college, K–12, and community school settings, with approximately 24,000 in primary and secondary schools⁷ and 150,000 in heritage schools. This means that the United States has a lot of work to do, recruiting more than a half million participants if it is to reach the goal of 5 percent of high school students learning Chinese by 2015.

Programs

There are 640 programs in U.S. universities and colleges that offer Chinese, although far fewer offer a four-year sequence of courses.⁸ One notable recent development in higher education is the National Flagship Language Initiative authorized under Title VI of the Higher Education Act. Operated by NSEP in partnership with the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland, the Flagship Language Initiative establishes programs to produce

students proficient in languages deemed critical to national security. Two major Chinese flagship programs are in place at Brigham Young University and Ohio State University.⁹ As mentioned earlier, a third Chinese flagship program with an emphasis on building a K–16 pipeline will be established soon.

In the K–12 setting, the 2003 CLASS survey found 163 Chinese-language programs at the primary and secondary level, but the 1999 Princeton survey showed 178. In the heritage language systems, the NCACLS reported 634 schools in 1995 and the CSAUS reported 130 in 1999.¹⁰

Teachers

In 1995 CLTA reported 382 members, most of whom taught in colleges and universities.¹¹ Based on the 2004–5 CLASS Membership Directory and its Web page, its members total 213, 90 percent of whom are K–12 teachers. According to 1995 data, 5,540 instructors belonged to NCACLS.¹² Taken together, the numbers clearly demonstrate the severe shortage of teachers crucial to building the K–16 Chinese language pipeline.

As the above demonstrates, there is no uniform system in place to collect or report data on students, programs, or teachers. More reliable baseline figures are needed in order to measure progress in field efforts to expand Chinese-language capacity.

Teacher Preparation, Certification, and Professional Development

Teachers hold the key to making or breaking a program. Owing to the non-alphabet-based orthographic system of Chinese, which is also undergoing rapid linguistic changes, the teaching of Chinese language is particularly demanding in the United States. As is true with any language-teaching professionals, to become

a Chinese-language teacher requires specialized, rigorous training and ongoing professional development.

The shortage of qualified Chinese-language teachers is the major roadblock to building efficient pipelines for Chinese-language programs in the United States.

Interested schools do not offer programs because they cannot find teachers, and Chinese speakers have not undergone training for certification as Chinese-language teachers because traditionally there has been no market for them. In this area, we need to take unconventional approaches, building supply and demand simultaneously.

Depending on their linguistic background, different groups of prospective teachers have different needs in terms of teacher preparation, as do teachers of different grade levels and different types of language programs. Although there are shortages of instructors for tertiary programs, the K–12 educational system is the site of a more severe bottleneck. To meet the growing interest by schools in offering Chinese language, there must be a systematic effort to create a pool of qualified teachers through several means.

Teacher-Education Programs

Although the number of universities and colleges that offer Chinese-language programs is increasing, only a handful of institutions provide a full-fledged teacher preparation program in Chinese language and pedagogy. To date, Chinese-language teacher-education programs that are accredited by the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) include only those at University of Iowa, New York University, Ohio State University, and University of Massachusetts at Amherst. There are no data available on how many of their graduates become certified Chinese language teachers. Nor is there information regarding the number of graduates who major in Chinese language and culture in colleges of arts and sci-

ence, who go on to become certified Chinese-language teachers.

Developing accredited teacher-education programs in languages like Chinese requires collaboration among teacher and language organizations, local and state educational agencies, schools of education, and other colleges within institutions of higher education. There are other approaches to creating a supply of qualified teachers of Chinese. One such example is New York University's Steinhardt School of Education, which offers a joint M.A. program that combines Foreign Language Education and the Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). This program has proven popular as there is a great deal of common ground between the disciplines, and graduates are highly marketable in both English-language learning and foreign-language programs in K–12 schools.

Alternate Routes to Teacher Certification in Chinese

While the United States may lack a supply of qualified teachers of Chinese, it has a sizable pool of people who possess some level of Chinese, whether as native speakers, immigrants, heritage speakers, or those who have learned Chinese as a foreign language in school or college. Heritage-language schools have thousands of teachers, many of whom have extensive teaching and immersion experience as well as the ability to connect Chinese and American cultures. Troops to Teachers, a U.S. Department of Education and Department of Defense program that helps eligible military personnel begin careers as teachers in public schools, represents another potential personnel pool.

A network of fast-track programs, strategically placed in universities throughout the United States, which would provide Chinese speakers with the courses and skills they need for certification, could be a catalyst in the field and quickly provide a supply of teachers to meet the growing interest.

Prospective teachers from different backgrounds would have slightly different needs that would have to be taken into account in designing these programs. Native speakers of Chinese, who already possess a high degree of proficiency and literacy in the language, might need additional training in English-language and pedagogical skills as well as enhancement of their working knowledge of the U.S. educational system. Heritage-language speakers, many of whom are already U.S. college graduates, have varying degrees of proficiency in Chinese, and may need Chinese-language training in addition to pedagogical courses in teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

A network of alternate routes to certification programs to serve Chinese speakers could quickly provide a pool of teachers. One example is the summer teachers' institutes offered by the University of Pennsylvania, which is not yet a full alternate route program but has accommodated more than one hundred teachers nationwide and internationally since 1998. The state of Connecticut has a summer-plus-weekends program for certification of language teachers. Recently the California State University at Long Beach announced the availability of a Single Subject Credential Program for candidates to become certified to teach Mandarin Chinese in California.¹³ In addition, in fall 2005, George Mason University will add Chinese to its foreign-language program for licensure in Virginia.¹⁴

An examination of institutions that currently offer alternate certification programs and might be able to offer Chinese could yield a crop of programs and teachers in this field. According to a recent study conducted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), there are over 137 institutions of higher education that collaborate with their respective state education agencies to offer alternate route certification programs designed to save time and ease financial barriers to teaching. These programs are "geared to adults looking for programs where they can draw a salary

and/or receive a stipend during the period of career change."¹⁵ A significant number of universities surveyed indicate that they have such programs, which in turn might be expanded to include Chinese.

Here the issue of teacher demand and supply must be reiterated. Because there are currently only a small number of programs and jobs, prospective teachers are hesitant to undergo labor-intensive and financially burdensome training in pursuit of a *potential* career, which may or may not become a reality. For the same reason, colleges and universities have been hard-pressed to offer such alternate-route or regular teacher-education programs because of perceived paucity of demand and lack of Chinese programs for student teaching. Likewise, while demand is rising for Chinese-language instruction, once Chinese language teachers are certified, they face more challenges in finding appropriate job placement than do their counterparts in Spanish or French. An electronic clearinghouse of available positions would be beneficial in matching teacher candidates with programs in need.

Chinese Visiting Faculty

The National Office on the Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCTFL) of the People's Republic of China offers a visiting faculty program. Among its many responsibilities, NOCTFL trains Chinese nationals as instructors of Chinese as a foreign language and helps select or recommend teachers of Chinese to foreign institutions, organizations, or governments. This model closely follows those of the embassies of Spain, and, in an earlier period, Japan, which have been successful in American schools. There are a host of factors that affect the quality of this kind of visiting faculty program, such as the J1-visa process, the preparedness of both the host institutions and the visiting faculty members, and the local accommodations and professional development provided to help visiting faculty adjust to new professional and living environments. Currently, 25 states offer

special J1 visa programs for Spanish teachers. Such arrangements for Chinese visiting faculty have yet to be established.

In Connecticut, a pilot program in five school districts is proposed that would build a partnership with the Chinese government to facilitate visiting Chinese-language teachers. A cost-sharing approach, in which the Chinese government offers stipends and the host districts cover lodging, will enable visiting Chinese-language teachers with at least three years of teaching experience to work in Connecticut schools alongside American teachers. Fifteen other states have expressed an interest in trying similar programs.

China English Teachers Program

Another innovative way of creating more potential Chinese-language teachers among American citizens would be to follow the model of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program. In 1987 the Japanese government founded the JET Program, which aims to deepen mutual understanding between the people of Japan and those of other nations. JET enables local Japanese governments to hire foreign young individuals to act as English-language teaching assistants and promote international exchange at the community level. The program is supported by a mixture of Japanese national, provincial, and local funds. In 2004, approximately 2,841 participants from the United States participated in the JET Program.¹⁶ The Chinese government might want to consider creating a similar program that would give comparable numbers of young Americans the opportunity to immerse themselves in Chinese language and culture by teaching English in schools in China. Preference could be given to Americans interested in entering the U.S. teaching force on their return.

Teacher Certification and Licensure

Regardless of which preparatory route they take, all prospective Chinese teachers who are interested in teaching in public schools must

meet state teacher certification and licensure requirements. Not only does each state have its own teacher certification requirements for foreign- or world-language teachers, many states are also not familiar with or have not established provisions in certifying teachers of languages other than the commonly taught European languages. New trends in teacher certification along with added demands on teacher accountability further complicate this issue. Many teacher-education programs must simultaneously take into account the changes in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). Topping all these issues is the “highly qualified teacher” requirement mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that is due to take effect for all public schools by 2006.¹⁷

Several implications can be drawn from these developments. First, many states or teacher-preparation programs are considering adopting the competence or output model as stipulated by NCATE, INTASC, or NASDTEC instead of the traditional course credit or input model. This trend is the driving force for the adoption of Praxis II tests by most states and U.S. jurisdictions. Second, under the “highly qualified teacher” provisions of No Child Left Behind, a teacher candidate can become certified only if he/she is a graduate of an accredited teacher-education program or passes the Praxis I and II tests offered by the Educational Testing Service. The Praxis series tests are professional assessments for beginning teachers, consisting of three categories corresponding to the three milestones in teacher development:

- **entering** a teacher training program—Praxis I: Academic Skills Assessments;
- **licensure** for entering the profession—Praxis II: Subject Assessments; and
- **first year** of teaching—Praxis III:

Classroom Performance Assessments.¹⁸

Praxis I tests a candidate's competence in math as well as reading and writing in English. At the heart of the issue in foreign-language certification is Praxis II, Subject Assessments, which usually contains two different tests for a language: content knowledge (interpretive listening, structure of the language, interpretive reading, and cultural perspectives) and productive skills (presentational speaking and presentational writing).

In theory, the Praxis II tests sound like a viable solution to course credit requirements. In other words, a teacher simply needs to pass the Praxis II tests instead of having to take thirty or so university or college credits required by many states. Praxis II tests, however, are language specific and are available only in French, German, Latin, and Spanish. They also require each state to have a minimal number of teacher participants in the rigorous process of validation and standards setting in order to establish the passing scores, which vary from language to language. In most states, French and Spanish Praxis II tests are available; German and Latin scores may be set through multi-state agreements if a state requests to participate in such a network.

There is no Praxis II test available in Chinese or any other less commonly taught language that enables teacher candidates to demonstrate their pedagogical as well as linguistic competence in the target language. Although No Child Left Behind requires only the demonstration of content knowledge and not pedagogical skills, the Praxis II tests inherently cover both the knowledge and skills necessary for being a language teacher. It is important to note, however, that there is a Praxis II test in foreign language pedagogy (planning, teaching, and evaluating instruction) conducted in English. This test may be useful but is not considered evidence of content competence under No Child Left Behind for highly qualified teachers.

In the absence of ETS' Praxis II subject tests in these languages, the speaking (Oral Proficiency Interview) and written tests in 37 different languages offered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) may be a viable solution. Currently five states are using ACTFL's assessments to allow teachers to waive credits for the language portion of their certification. Since these tests are very different from one another, a serious dialogue about how to align the ACTFL and Praxis II tests or develop other tests that are aligned with these existing tests needs to take place. The bottom line is to ensure that all teacher candidates of a particular language will not be treated unfairly in their pursuit of certification. Given the urgent need to solve this issue, all stakeholders from inside and outside the Chinese-language field must be engaged in serious discussion about how best to certify teachers of Chinese.

Professional Development

Because of the relatively small number of programs, teachers of Chinese often do not receive professional support. The teacher licensure renewal or accountability criteria discussed above also require teachers to engage in meaningful professional development related to their disciplines every three or five years. Hence, regional and national efforts to provide the requisite professional development to teachers of Chinese are crucial. Professional development needs include information on materials and resources; student recruitment and program sustainability; instructional strategies and assessment; balancing learners' development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in order to engage in interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communication; incorporating culture into language instruction; and mapping curriculum across grades and content areas.

Over the years, the Chinese Language Teachers Association has offered professional development workshops and training for teachers of all levels. The Chinese Language

Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools has met the needs of its members by securing several Fulbright-Hays Educators Study Abroad grants from the U.S. government and by collaborating with the Taiwanese government and the National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in providing high-quality professional development opportunities. Plans are under way from the College Board to offer regional and national workshops and electronic discussion forums for teachers in preparation for the launch of the AP course and exam.

As part of its online professional development programs, ACTFL is also developing a special section for Chinese-language teachers. Certain existing vehicles for professional development and teacher training could be expanded. The summer intensive program at Ohio State University, for example, could be retooled for K–12 and heritage-language teachers.

Similarly, the cadre of teachers trained through the National Consortium for Teaching about Asia, a Freeman Foundation Initiative, is an untapped resource. These teachers, primarily social studies and English-language arts teachers who have demonstrated enthusiasm for teaching about Asia, could provide important support to new Chinese language programs in their schools.

Increasing Programs in K–12 Schools: Establishment, Articulation and Evaluation

The most logical approach to increasing the number of students who are proficient in Chinese language by 2015 is to increase the number of Chinese-language programs at all levels, i.e., building numerous K–16 Chinese language pipelines. Chinese is classified by the Foreign Service Institute's (FSI) as a Category 4 language.¹⁹ This means that, roughly speaking, it would take an educated English speaker 1,300 hours to achieve the native-like proficiency of

an educated native speaker of Chinese, while it would only take about 480 hours to achieve the same level in French or Spanish, both Category 1 languages on the FSI scale. The time needed to learn Chinese entails study of the language beginning in K–12. The question is how can we increase the number of Chinese-language programs that allow students to develop a high degree of proficiency? The following section suggests some answers to this question.

Building Awareness

Although among certain audiences the need for Chinese is quite clear, the general public does not understand the likely importance of Chinese in the twenty-first century and sees the language as difficult or not immediately applicable. Raising awareness is still a fundamental need. There are many effective ways to do this, including using popular icons to promote the learning of Chinese, launching a media and public relations campaign to address both parents and students, and targeting as an audience the growing number of parents of adopted Chinese children. Although Chinese is a Category 4 language for American-English speakers, it is quite possible to learn and brings many additional cultural and cognitive benefits. Engaging all levels of the community to build on current momentum will require different types of outreach and partnerships.

Establishing Programs

At the collegiate or private school level, establishing Chinese-language programs is more or less an internal decision within the institution. Interest and enrollment in these sectors is proliferating, as independent and private schools are poised to focus on international/global education. Generally speaking, there are no rigid certification issues to deal with as long as instructors or professors can demonstrate linguistic, cultural, communicative, and pedagogical competence and scholarship in their chosen fields.

In K–12 public school systems, there are a host of other issues. Interest in Chinese is growing, but few school districts know how to start and sustain quality Chinese programs. Many school boards and district superintendents might be hesitant to offer Chinese, perceiving it as too difficult for students to learn, or they may not know how to build community support or where to find teachers or appropriate resources.

To this end, there seems to be a need for an introductory **Handbook on Chinese Language-Programs**. While the National Foreign Language Center's *Guide for Basic Chinese Language Programs* published in 1997 is still a useful resource,²⁰ this new handbook would address the needs of school administrators, school boards, and community leaders unfamiliar with the field of Chinese-language education. Asia Society proposes to work with exemplary language programs (identified through NCSFL and CLASS) to produce an introductory “how to” guide for Chinese, which will be modeled in part on the Japan Foundation's advocacy kit for K–12 Japanese language programs. This guide, to be available in 2006, would be widely disseminated to school boards, states, and national education associations. A list of existing Chinese-language programs in the guide would enable interested readers to go further by contacting or visiting programs in their region.

Ultimately, a technical assistance network or center, similar to those already existing for other languages, will be needed to sustain and enhance new Chinese-language programs.

Funding

With the exception of the modest Foreign Language Assistance Program, most federal programs and legislation aimed at supporting language instruction focus on higher education. Foreign-language programs in K–12 schools derive their funding primarily from state or local sources but are often a low priority, squeezed out by competing programs. While the market may work in encouraging richer districts to offer

opportunities to study Chinese, making Chinese instruction accessible and equitable will require some competitive seed funding, particularly in poorer or rural districts. This seed funding could come from federal or state governments, corporations, or private foundations, such as the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation programs of the 1980s and 1990s.²¹ This funding would partially support a teacher's salary for the initial years of a program. Lessons from the evaluation of the Dodge program suggest that schools need sufficient time and resources to nurture a program over several years for it to reach the point at which student and community support makes it self-sustaining. Ultimately, the expansion of capacity in Chinese and other less commonly taught languages will require investments similar to those in other fields deemed important to the nation. The National Defense Education Act, passed in 1958, after the launching of *Sputnik*, supported a range of strategies to meet science and foreign-language needs, including teacher training, study abroad, and seed funds for language programs in K–12 schools.

Program Design Issues

There is a wide variety of ways of teaching Chinese in schools, each with its own set of goals and strategies, each catering to the needs of a different community of learners.

1) Program Types: If there is a pool of heritage-language students available in an institution of higher education, some adjustment in course offerings is often made. It is now fairly common to see a university offer a regular track, an accelerated track, or the so-called heritage-student track. The variety of Chinese-language courses has also increased to encompass the regular language, film, culture, literature, and Chinese for special purposes courses.

At the secondary level, most Chinese-language programs follow the traditional Level 1 through Level 5 model. Now that the College Board has announced its Chinese AP program

and examination, more discussions on how to build middle school–high school vertical teams are expected to take place soon. Depending on students’ background and grade levels, faculty availability and training, scheduling, and the vision or philosophy of the school or district, schools can also consider offering various types of programs. For instance, two-way developmental, immersion, or partial immersion programs, as well as sequential or enrichment programs are among some of the more popular options.²² Schools in close geographic proximity can also collaborate to form a foreign-language consortium, as five private schools in the Washington D.C. area have done, with each school offering one specific language and allowing students to cross institutional boundaries to study the language of their choice. Student exchanges and partnerships with schools in China are a meaningful and even necessary auxiliary component to different types of Chinese-language programs, allowing learners opportunities to actively use their language.

In the elementary grades, a language program must infuse content to be meaningful.²³ Most of the programs at this level are based on French or Spanish. More content-based instructional design in social studies, science, or the arts in Chinese needs to be developed.

2) Staffing Choices: The traditional model of one language teacher per classroom may not be the most efficient choice for the growth of Chinese language. For example, in rural areas, the number of students who enroll in a Chinese-language program may be small, and a multischool or multidistrict approach would make sense. Since there is a shortage of certified Chinese-language teachers, staffing models may need to involve teams of teachers and assistants with different expertise, e.g., pairing a noncertified Chinese-speaking assistant with a certified social studies or English as a second language teacher in a classroom. Collaborations with local two- or four-year colleges to enable students to

take courses there may work in some settings. Distance learning or online programs may also prove to be popular and effective delivery systems. Whatever program design is selected, the balance of language and cultural learning, real-life interaction with speakers of the language, and immersion opportunities is critical.

3) Use of Technology: Given the lack of qualified teachers and the increasing sophistication of technology that can connect communities worldwide, creating and using effective technology tools would seem to be an effective strategy for advancing Chinese in the United States.

At the tertiary level, the National Foreign Language Center has developed a highly acclaimed LangNet program that targets ACTFL advanced plus and above levels of reading proficiency. Ohio State University uses videoconferencing around a very clear curriculum with students in two high schools. Wisconsin employs two-way interactive distance learning in Chinese and Japanese, and Hawaii administers distance education at the college level.²⁴ There are myriad examples upon which to further develop the use of technological tools in K–12 classrooms.

The CHENGO program is one important model. Funded by the Chinese and U.S. governments and currently being piloted in schools around the United States, it is free of charge for any middle or high school to use in either a CD-ROM or Web-based form. CHENGO uses adventure games and speech recognition software to help beginning students reach ACTFL level 2. The program can be a wonderful supplement to classroom instruction or stand alone and could be used as one of the main tools for a pre-AP program. It needs to be linked to student proficiency assessment so that proper credits may be awarded to participating students.

Many states now have broadband infrastructure that could be used for Web-based instruction in Chinese. For instance, Kentucky is planning to build on its virtual high school and

add Asian languages to its offerings of online courses to schools throughout the state. Some other highly acclaimed language programs could also be models for Chinese. One is the Japanese distance-learning program, *Irasshai*, which is offered through Peach Star, an educational division of Georgia Broadcasting Company. *Irasshai* consists of two levels of Japanese-language instruction and include video lessons, audio interactions, textbooks and activity materials, along with an Internet Web site. Another is the *Muzaji* program in Spanish for K–8 students. Yet another model is *Salsa*, the Spanish program for young children developed by the Georgia Department of Education to meet state foreign-language requirements without resorting to extensive new funding or large increases in the number of certified teachers. It is now used in schools across the country. Similar distance, video, or Web-based learning programs could be developed for Chinese.

4) Joint U.S.-China Programs: Collaboration between schools and language organizations in China and the United States could certainly yield stronger programs. While isolated models exist, there is a genuine need for establishing a broader “culture of exchange” with China, in which educators can work on common challenges together, particularly in the development of new curricula and programs. For example, schools in China and the United States could both offer dual-language programs and be joined daily through technology. Working side by side with international colleagues would permit educators to combine the strengths of both the American and Chinese education systems to reinforce language acquisition and overall instruction.

5) Programs Outside the School Day: Growing pressures on the school day have generated a renewed necessity to think creatively about where a Chinese-language program could fit. After-school programs afford schools and teachers more flexibility in developing innova-

tive curriculum and in building parental support. They could also be a good first step toward building programs during the school day. Other alternatives include Chinese immersion language and culture summer camps or governors’ summer language academies. Such programs could peak students’ interest in a low-risk way, build support, and accommodate different levels of student readiness. Community colleges, which have more flexibility with respect to teacher certification than do K–12 schools, could also make their programs available to high school students and the general public.

Articulation

A major issue for all language programs is lack of articulation, which results in the repetition of the same material or knowledge or skill gaps. In the case of Chinese, there are two dimensions of articulation that need to be considered: intra- and inter-institution.

Intra-institution articulation refers to the alignment and connection among levels of instruction within one institution. Points of consideration include curriculum content and requirements, level alignment, textbook and materials used, standards addressed, methodologies and approaches adopted, formative and summative assessment, promotion criteria, and placement and exit criteria and assessment.

Inter-institution articulation concerns program alignment from one institution to another, which may refer to making the connection and alignment between a heritage school and the formal educational system, an after-school program and a formal course of study, an online or distance-learning course and a traditional Carnegie unit-based course, an elementary and a secondary school, or K–12 schools and colleges and universities. In addition to all the elements mentioned above, the consideration of student population and concurrent linguistic, educational, and sociocultural needs is indispensable.

New developments that will help to resolve some of these articulation issues are the College

Board's AP program in Chinese language and culture, which provides universities with a common standard for students graduating from myriad high school programs, and the NSEP's Chinese Flagship Initiative, which will offer a model of how to align K–16 instruction.

As the number of Chinese speakers from all levels increases, there is an emerging need to develop Chinese-language courses around specific disciplines, e.g. Chinese for business, engineering, or medicine. These courses will no doubt improve student motivation in making them aware that what they learn in the classroom will contribute to their human and economic capital.

Evaluation

As accountability throughout the educational system is increasingly emphasized, program evaluation is an essential part of building capacity in the field. Without good programs, instruction in and learning of Chinese will not be able to grow deep roots in our schools, colleges, and universities. Nor can we expect students to develop high-level achievement in Chinese language and culture.

Although some studies have been conducted, more are needed in order to develop research-based instruction, curriculum, student performance assessment, and to raise school and student achievement. Intergroup relationships; students' worldviews; cultural knowledge and understanding; cross-cultural communicative competence; social gains; and program cost effectiveness are other important measures of program success.

Curriculum, Materials and Assessment

Over the past two decades, there has been an increasing exchange and sharing of curriculum, materials, and assessment in the Chinese-language-teaching field. The exchanges, however, seem to be compartmentalized and have stayed

within the heritage-language, K–12, and tertiary sectors. Although each sector has its distinct needs, there needs to be increased dialogue across them.

Curriculum

Each sector has its internal and external needs, strengths, and constraints. In the Chinese-language-teaching field, however, at least two prominent issues in curriculum design must be addressed. First, while most K–12 programs are standards based, university programs have a different orientation, goal, and approach and do not typically use the National Foreign Language Content Standards for Chinese.²⁵ The curricular disconnect between these two sectors often leads to student frustration and confusion. Second, in heritage-language schools, as well as heritage-language programs in the regular K–12 and tertiary sectors, first- and second-language acquisition principles have often been glaringly omitted from curriculum design. In other words, heritage-language students have very different abilities, identities, and sociocultural understanding of Chinese language and culture. Linguistically, they are at the juncture of native language, bilingual, and foreign-language education. Curriculum design must take into account the characteristics of heritage-language students.

Materials

In the past, materials development was left to individuals or groups of teachers or professors in collaboration with publishers specializing in Chinese materials. There are some new developments in the field. The College Board is engaging in a curriculum review process, evaluating materials that are appropriate for high school third- and fourth-year study along with first- and second-year college study. The resulting compilation of information on textbooks, periodicals, and other media is expected to offer a rich body of materials and analysis of gaps, as well as generate responses from publishers. Analysis of

curriculum materials for other grade levels will follow in subsequent years.

The National Office on Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language is also planning to identify a mechanism for obtaining rights to educational materials and films produced in China and making them accessible to U.S. classrooms. Some joint agreements with other countries, such as Spain and Italy have yielded useful resource centers housed in universities. For example, the Cervantes Institutes bring Spanish culture to life with lectures and visiting experts from Spain, while many Italian centers offer materials for content-based instruction. Similar centers focusing on Chinese language and culture could perform linguistic, cultural, and professional development functions and prove to be beneficial.

In the Chinese field, however, there is a distinctive issue underlying the development of materials, that is, the linguistic changes that the Chinese language has undergone in the past fifty years after the political split of the two parties in China. It is interesting that the adoption of the writing system does not seem to be a huge problem in materials development. Because of the easy computer convertibility of the writing systems and the recognition that any educated Chinese-language user needs to be able to read texts written in either simplified or traditional orthography, the argument about which writing system to use has somewhat subsided in the past ten years. Textbooks and materials use either the traditional or simplified version, or even display both simultaneously.

The more subtle and serious implication comes from the adoption of the phonological systems: the phonetic system used in Taiwan or the pinyin system in the PRC. Depending on which system is used, textbooks and materials are developed with the selected phonological aides. This means that there are different series of textbooks and readers that are associated with a particular phonetic system, which does not cross over easily for young children. Adding to the complexity of content issues in

materials is the incorporation of various voices, perspectives, styles, and genres. This content issue in materials development is often lost in the more obvious arguments about the writing and phonetic systems, and must be taken into account in material development for students who are learning Chinese as a foreign or heritage language.²⁶

Testing and Assessment

Based on the methodology and practice of teachers, time invested, underlying philosophy and overt implementation of curriculum, and materials used, student learning outcomes will vary from classroom to classroom. The choice of assessment and standardized testing as a measure of student achievement or language proficiency must include consideration of these elements. We cannot adequately underscore the importance of aligning assessment with instruction and vice versa. It is equally important to know and choose an appropriate instrument based on the purpose and goal of learning and assessment.

There are numerous in-house formative and summative assessments developed by Chinese-language faculty in classrooms throughout the United States. The more commonly known tests, however, include the Student Achievement Test II in Chinese with listening (SAT II, administered by the College Board); Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK, administered by NOCTFL); Oral Proficiency Interview and Writing Test (OPI, administered by ACTFL); and the Chinese Proficiency Test and Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (CPT and SOPI, administered by the Center for Applied Linguistics). Language Learning Solutions (LLS) is developing an online Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) test in Chinese. Finally, the College Board is developing the Chinese AP course and test, which will be offered nationally in 2006–7.

In emphasizing the need for all teachers of Chinese to develop the knowledge and skills

requisite to selecting and designing valid and reliable instruments to measure students' learning, such as those mentioned above, we call for collaboration in the field. All teachers of Chinese must recognize that good teaching is tailored to the needs and goals of students and best practices require the incorporation of essential elements of various methodologies. Instruction and assessment are still treated as separate curricular considerations in the field. They need to be integrated as symbiotic driving forces.

Conclusion

There are a number of polarities in the discourse on expanding Chinese-language capacity in the United States: whether to address supply by training teachers or demand by building new programs; whether to focus on temporary fixes or long-term solutions; whether wholesale or retail strategies will yield the desired results. These are all questions that require further thinking and discussion. Yet, the field is undeniably "at the beginning of a long, upward curve." Addressing immediate needs that do not require extensive new funding is perhaps the first place to start. The development of systemic solutions and means to scale up existing models, however, should be a top priority. There is a need to develop both strong models and a much larger number of programs, and to focus on building supply and demand simultaneously.

This report analyzes the current status of the Chinese-language field and points out the inadequacy of the current infrastructure to support recruitment of students and teachers as well as the establishment and sustainability of high-quality programs. Based on the background paper and contributions of meeting participants, the report suggests a range of strategies to address the question: **What would it take to have 5 percent of American high school students learning Chinese by 2015?** The main points of the report can be summarized as follows.

1. Tap into Major Developments to Advance the Field. The following initiatives lay a solid foundation upon which the field can begin to expand its capacity:

- AP course and examination in Chinese language and culture, to be offered nationally to high schools by the College Board beginning in fall 2006;
- CHENGO, an online game-based program for beginning Chinese, developed jointly by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the U.S. Department of Education and available free of charge to pilot schools; and
- the Chinese K-16 Pipeline Project of NSEP, which will establish a third university Chinese-language flagship program that includes a model feeder program in local K-12 schools.

2. Take Both Short- and Long-Term Approaches to Create a Supply of Qualified Chinese-Language Teachers. Lack of teachers is the key bottleneck to building capacity in Chinese. In the short term, to expedite the creation of a pool of qualified Chinese teachers, states should work with institutions of higher education to create high-quality, "fast-track," alternate routes to teacher certification for Chinese speakers in the United States; pilot visiting-faculty programs for teachers from China; use technology and multimedia to supplement the shortage of full-time Chinese teachers in classrooms; and explore a multistate system to certify Chinese-language teachers. In the long term, it will be necessary for higher education institutions to invest in full-length teacher preparation programs, similar to those used for other languages, and to extend professional development opportunities to Chinese-language teachers.

3. Leverage Growing Interest to Expand and Improve Chinese-Language Programs. The level of interest in establishing Chinese language programs in K–12 schools is rising rapidly. A 2004 survey found that 2,400 high schools would be interested in offering the AP in Chinese language and culture. Most of these schools, however, do not currently offer Chinese. In order to translate this interest into quality programs, best practices from existing programs must be disseminated through a handbook on establishing Chinese-language programs and through the development of a technical assistance center or network. Beyond this, reaching a goal of 5 percent of U.S. students studying Chinese by 2015 will also require public education campaigns to raise awareness among educators, students, and parents of the growing importance of Chinese; competitive seed funds to make programs available in less affluent school districts; and the building of articulated K–12 or K–16 models to demonstrate how students can attain high levels of proficiency and achievement.

4. Incorporate Research and Technology to Develop Effective Curriculum, Materials, Assessment, and Delivery Systems. Although the supply of teaching materials is growing, they are unevenly developed. Appropriate research-based materials, curriculum, and assessments must be developed in accordance with widely divergent levels of students and types of programs. Innovative ways of using media and technology (television, distance learning, online courses, and communities, digital technological tools, etc.) to enhance and broaden access to language instruction and learning should have high priority.

5. Make a Long-Term Commitment to Invest in the Future. The expansion of capacity in Chinese language will require innovations and investments similar to those in other fields deemed important to the nation. The National Defense Education Act, passed in 1958, after

the launching of *Sputnik*, supported a range of strategies to meet science and foreign-language needs, including teacher training, scholarships for study abroad, and seed funds for language programs in K–12 schools. Today’s economic and national security challenges mandate a larger pool of highly proficient speakers of a wider range of world languages, including Chinese. It is crucial that our national language investments go beyond the current support of languages in higher education to include K–12 schools. We need to begin language study in the early grades, use more intensive research-based approaches, build on the communities of heritage-language learners, and utilize the advantages that technology, easier travel, and virtual connections to schools in China allow.

...

Today’s world demands a dramatic rethinking of what is considered integral to an educated person’s success. Owing in large part to past social and political needs, Romance languages have become embedded in the popular notion of education. Because fluency in French was once considered essential to a learned person’s skill set, the language now holds a nearly unquestioned place in many schools’ foreign-language departments. What will it take to get people to think about Chinese in the same way?

This report has put forth the critical issues that must be addressed and made some suggestions about how to do so. Its purpose is to stimulate broader discussion, support, and action to expand our national capacity in Chinese, a language we as a nation can no longer ignore.

Vivien Stewart and Shuban Wang

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APPENDIX A Contributors

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APPENDIX B

The Role of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the National Office on the Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language

The Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China and the National Office on the Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCTFL or *Hanban*) have renewed their commitment to expanding Chinese-language capacity in the United States. Madame Lin Xu, Director General, National Office of Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language, shared future plans to build bridges connecting China with other countries, peoples, and cultures.

- In creating new teaching materials, the *Hanban* has pledged to involve international experts to work collaboratively to develop high-quality resources, with more innovative uses of technology.
- A new program for overseas volunteer Chinese teachers is in development, along with new teacher training and professional development programs to reinforce contemporary-language teaching theory and methodology in order to help fulfill local standards.
- The *Hanban* plans to revise its Chinese proficiency tests, based on such models as the TOEFL. The new test will be easier and combine levels to attract more Chinese learners.
- The Ministry of Education and the *Hanban* will continue to cooperate on the development of the Chinese AP course and examination, by supporting the development of new teaching materials and modifying existing course books based on AP exam specifications.
- Finally, on July 20–22, 2005, a number of Chinese ministries are coming together to host a conference in Beijing on the Development of Chinese in a Multicultural World. Attendees will include experts from around the world, convened to discuss how to promote Chinese-language teaching worldwide.

APPENDIX C
Useful Web sites

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) | www.actfl.org
Asia Society Education Programs | www.askasia.org; www.internationaled.org
Association of Departments of Foreign Language | www.adfl.org
CHENGO | www.elanguage.cn
Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS) | www.classk12.org
Chinese Language Teacher Association (CLTA) | clta.osu.edu
Chinese School Association in the United States (CSAUS) | www.csaus.org
The College Board AP Home Page | apcentral.collegeboard.com
National Consortium for Teaching about Asia | www.ncta.org
National Council of Associations of Chinese Language Schools (NCACLS) | www.ncaccls.org
National Council of State Supervisors For Languages | www.ncssfl.org
National Flagship Language Initiative | www.nflc.org/nfli
National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland | www.nflc.org
National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (NOCTFL) | www.hanban.edu.cn
Secondary School Chinese Language Center, Princeton University | www.princeton.edu/~ssclc