Key Features of Effective Chinese Language Programs:
A CELIN Checklist

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Introduction

Chinese language programs are emerging in new ways in schools, school districts, and states across the United States. They take the form of world language, immersion, and dual language programs, primarily in elementary school, but increasingly in middle and high school as well. Program leaders are seeking to build effective programs that provide learning pathways, from Pre-K through university, in which students develop high levels of oral proficiency and literacy in Chinese language that allow them to participate effectively in academic settings, the workplace, and the world.

Based on the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007; Howard et al., 2018) and numerous conversations with experts and practitioners in the field, nine features of effective Chinese dual language programs are identified and analyzed in a checklist form. The purpose of this checklist is to provide a way for

practitioners (teachers and administrators) to review their programs, in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement of their programs. With such knowledge, they can then develop plans to advance their programs to the next level.

The nine features are as follows:

1: Program Design, Funding, Leadership, & Accountability
2: Curriculum
3: Assessment
4: Instruction
5: Staff Quality & Professional Development
6: Materials, Resources, & Technology Tools
7: Program Articulation
8: Family Support & Community Engagement
9: External Networking & Partnerships

After this checklist was developed, it was reviewed by CELIN Advisors (listed at the end of this document). Their input and suggestions are incorporated into the current document. We invite researchers and practitioners in the field to further pilot test this checklist, as it is a work in progress.

Our Path Toward "Distinguished"

How to Engage in Program Self-Assessment

When a program is ready to conduct a self-assessment using this checklist, we suggest that staff follow this process:

1. Understand that this is a long-term process that may require several months, or even a school year, to conduct the assessment and progress checking, set a deadline for completing the tasks, and publicly release the report.

2. Identify and invite key stakeholders who are knowledgeable about the program and have the will and ability to carry out the needed actions for program improvement. Form a committee or task force of these individuals. Set up a schedule for reviewing the key features and developing an actionable plan.

3. Implement the activities for program improvement. Document the process and analyze the results.

4. Compile the collected data and documents, analysis, and action outcomes in a meaningful report, including using the template for formative/summative assessment (found at the end of this checklist).

5. Share the report with the community of interest and invite further comments for continuous improvement.

How to Use the Rubric

The nine features below are presented in a matrix with specific indicators, on a scale of "Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, and Distinguished." The table below gives guidelines for making these selections. As program staff engage in self-assessment, using this checklist, team members may enter comments or record ideas for further consideration or action.

A: Approaching	SE: Somewhat Evident	CE: Clearly Evident	DI: Distinguished
Little or no evidence of examples for the indicator is present.	Some evidence of examples for the indicator is present.	Strong evidence of examples for the indicator is present.	Evidence of examples for the indicator is fully present. This program could serve as an example for other programs in this area.

Feature 1: Program Design, Funding, Leadership, and Accountability
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. The vision, goals, and plan for the program are in place.				
2. Program design is based on a research-based framework and best practices tailored to meet the needs of local and state contexts.				
3. Program funding is sound, and a plan for further development is in place and actively pursued.				
4. Program administrators are knowledgeable about immersion education and Chinese language and culture.				
5. Program administrators and key staff demonstrate collaborative leadership.				
6. Infrastructure for supporting all students (including those with special needs) is in place.				
7. A governing board (or committee) works in collaboration with program administrators in all aspects of program implementation, including fidelity to mission, budget management, advocacy, and community relations.				
8. A system of accountability is in place and clear to all staff.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 8 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 8 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 2: Curriculum
(AP: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. A curricular framework and guiding principles are in place. (Your program may have developed your own guiding principles or followed those of your district. There are nationally endorsed guiding principles available as well. For example, ACTFL has a list of Guiding Principles for Language Learning related to high-leverage teaching practices: https://www.actfl.org/guiding-principles).				
2. The curriculum is aligned with appropriate national standards (e.g., ACTFL Language Standards, Common Core State Standards, Next-Generation Science Standards, Career Pathway Standards) or state or district standards.				
3. The curriculum is articulated and coherent across grades for each content area taught in Chinese and English.				
4. The curriculum is thematically organized and connected to content and culture.				
5. There is a clear statement of the role and allotment of language and literacy development in Chinese and English to achieve the goal of developing bilingual, biliterate, bicultural learners (with guidance regarding the balance of Chinese and English, including percent of language use in all content areas).				
6. Language learning targets are described clearly, based on a nationally or internationally accepted language proficiency scale. (See References, Useful Resources, and Appendix A for detail).				
7. A clear learning path for Chinese-specific topics is in place (e.g., teaching of reading and writing in Chinese; use of traditional and simplified Chinese characters; when and how to introduce and use Pinyin; articulation of issues of handwriting and computer keyboarding; teaching of reading and writing; and teaching of content areas).				
8. A process for discussing, implementing, revising, and enhancing the curriculum involves all instructional staff.				
9. Staff and parents understand the curriculum and its goals.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 9 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 9 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 3: Assessment
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Learning objectives, expected outcomes, and learning paths are based on a national or internationally recognized proficiency scale (e.g., ACTFL or other internationally recognized Proficiency Guidelines, Hanban (HSK), Singapore, CEFR), and assessments used at each grade level are clearly articulated. (See Appendix A for a list of assessments used in the United States.)				
2. Teachers have received adequate training in administering and interpreting assessments and are able to clearly show progress towards achieving the program's language, literacy, culture, and content goals and desired student learning outcomes.				
3. Formative and summative assessments of student proficiency in Chinese and English (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) are in place and administered in an effective and timely fashion, in line with the three modes of communication: Interpersonal (Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing); Interpretive (Listening, Reading, and Viewing); and Presentational (Speaking, Writing, and Media Representation).				
4. Appropriate assessments in content areas and other languages learned are identified and used.				
5. Assessments of non-linguistic or non-content areas (e.g., socio-emotional skills, global perspectives, attitudes, intercultural competency) are identified and used. Evidence of these domains is collected, analyzed, and reported.				
6. Data from student assessments are analyzed and used for student placement, diagnosis, and to guide instruction (including differentiated instruction).				
7. Assessment data are communicated clearly to parents and other stakeholders.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 7 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 7 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 4: Instruction
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Selection and use of language of instruction (Chinese and English; separation of languages) is by design, intentional, and purposeful.				
2. Language immersion techniques and best practices are used in instruction.				
3. Instruction is geared toward the development of students' language proficiency, content knowledge, literacy, media skills, cultural knowledge, and global competency.				
4. Instruction is learner-centered; differentiation is consciously planned and implemented to support each learner. Teachers address individual learning needs, abilities, and interests by using a variety of differentiation strategies, grouping techniques, and tasks, which involve multiple intelligence and different modalities-listening, speaking, viewing, reading, and writing, by hand and by computer. Instructional strategies, classroom activities, and interactions are engaging, meaningful, and contextualized.				
5. Engaging, meaningful, and contextualized techniques and strategies for language immersion and content learning are used in instruction, classroom activities, and social interactions.				
6. Students are encouraged to inquire, explore, and experiment.				
7. The classroom is well managed, and the learning environment is nurturing and safe.				
8. All languages and cultures in the student body and the community are valued, and students are encouraged to identify commonalities and differences in languages, cultures, perspectives, and practices.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 8 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 8 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 5: Staff Quality and Professional Development
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Teachers are effective in instruction, assessment, classroom management, and addressing individual students' differences.				
2. Teacher qualifications (including content knowledge, pedagogical skills, language proficiency, and certifications) are clearly articulated, and support for earning them are available throughout teachers' professional lives.				
3. The administrative structure and staff (e.g., bilingual guidance counselor; bilingual library resource staff; bilingual teachers; teachers of art, music, PE) are adequate to support all students and teachers.				
4. Teachers and relevant administrators hold regular meetings to discuss student learning, planning, and key issues that arise.				
5. A system is in place for observing classroom instruction and providing feedback, mentoring, coaching, and evaluation.				
6. Meaningful and targeted professional development is provided for teachers throughout the school year.				
7. Systems are in place for teacher recruitment, induction, certification, and professional development for teacher and/or teacher leader.				
8. Program staff participates in local, district, state, or national professional organizations, conferences, or workshops.				
9. If the program employs guest teachers, a system of support (for professional work and living in the local community) is in place.				
10. Paraprofessionals in the program (if any) are bilingual in Chinese and English, are familiar with both Chinese and American cultures, and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in and out of the classroom.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 10 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 10 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 6: Materials, Resources, and Technology Tools
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Materials and resources used in the program are rich in language, content, and culture.				
2. Materials are authentic, age appropriate, and engaging for students of intended language proficiency levels.				
3. Technology tools are adequately provided and used effectively in instruction and classroom activities.				
4. There is a materials selection or adaptation guide that is research-based for language and content learning and that includes materials selection standards, use of authentic material and realia, and learning goals.				
5. Materials are developed, selected, and adapted in line with the guide mentioned above.				
6. A process is in place for translating materials into Chinese or adapting them for instruction in this program: E.g., How is this is done? Who does it? Who updates the Chinese materials when the English curriculum and texts are updated?				
7. Useful websites are identified and used in instruction, learning, assessment, and family support.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 7 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 7 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 7: Program Articulation

(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Articulation occurs across content areas, grades, language proficiency levels, and programs/schools (e.g., Pre-K to elementary school; elementary school to middle school; middle school to high school; high school to college).				
2. Sufficient time is allocated for staff who work at different levels and in different areas to meet.				
3. Program pathways are communicated clearly and frequently, at appropriate intervals, to parents and other stakeholders.				
4. There are multiple points for entry into and to exit from the program.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 4 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 4 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 8: Family Support and Community Engagement
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Families and community members understand the program's vision, mission, and goals and expectations for language and literacy development and school achievement.				
2. The program/school offers workshops for parents to show what the intended learning outcomes at different grade levels would look like and share strategies that parents can use to support their children's learning in content areas and in English and Chinese language and literacy.				
3. Program staff discuss strategies and resources that parents, families, and communities can do to support children's learning in a Chinese immersion program and at home (e.g., parents learn about how to engage in reading with their children in Chinese, English, or the child's home language).				
4. Events are held regularly to inform and engage parents and community members in the program.				
5. Parents and community members help organize and conduct program advocacy and funding activities.				
6. There are links that connect the program with entities that help leverage resources (e.g., district, state, and national government; the heritage language community; the community-at-large; businesses; education entities; and parents).				
7. The program has in place a public/community outreach effort that sends out clear messages about Chinese immersion education and related topics (e.g., importance of, research on, and outcomes of language learning; the role and importance of the school and its program).				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS /7 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 7 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Feature 9: External Networking and Partnerships
(A: Approaching; SE: Somewhat Evident; CE: Clearly Evident; DI: Distinguished)

INDICATOR	A	EV	CE	DI
1. Program leaders are aware of the resources available from other schools; state or regional consortia; local Confucius Institutes and postsecondary institutions or programs; state and national organizations; federal projects; private sectors and foundations; and global entities. (See below for examples.)				
2. There are multiple opportunities to pursue funding and partnerships for the program.				
3. The program has a user-friendly and information-rich website for teachers, students, parents, and the community-at-large.				
4. The program is clear about the purposes for domestic or global partnerships and forms partnerships accordingly and manages partner expectations.				
Examples for #1: • State and national organizations may include the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), Asia Society, Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network (CELIN), Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS), College Board, National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL), National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL), and National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL). • Federal projects may include Language Flagships and STARTALK. • Global entities may include Hanban from China and public or private organizations from other Chinese-speaking regions/countries.				
NUMBER OF INDICATORS / 4 TOTAL				
Our Status Is (# /out of 4 elements)				
We are (Approaching, Somewhat Evident, Clearly Evident, Distinguished) on this feature				

COMMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INDICATORS

NEEDS

NEXT STEPS

Summary of Program Review

Program Name	
First Review Date	
Team Members	
Second Review Date	
Team Members	
Third Review Date	
Team Members	

Template for Formative/Summative Assessment of the Program

KEY FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS Based on the numbers and scale of indicators checked for that particular feature, we are:	ROAD MAP Top priorities are numbered and listed as follows; 1 is the most urgent or productive step that will help us move forward
Feature 1: Program Design, Funding, Leadership, and Accountability	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 2: Curriculum	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 3: Assessment	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 4: Instruction	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 5: Staff Quality and Professional Development	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 6: Materials, Resources, and Technology Tools	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 7: Program Articulation	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 8: Family Support and Community Engagement	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	
Feature 9: External Networking and Partnerships	☐ Approaching ☐ Somewhat Evident ☐ Clearly Evident ☐ Distinguished	

In terms of all nine features of program quality and effectiveness, we are…	□ Approaching (1-3 features are present)
	□ Somewhat Evident (4-6 features)
	□ Clearly Evident (7-8 features are present)
	□ Distinguished (all 9 features are present)

FOR PROGRAM DESCRIPTION/PROMOTION, WE CAN SAY (See Appendix B for example)	
Our strengths are	
Our areas for continuous improvement are	
We feel confident we will move one level higher by the following date	

FOR SECOND OR THIRD REVIEW	
Since our previous review, we have made the following improvements	
The needs to be addressed and actions to be taken are	
We will become a distinguished Chinese language/ immersion program by	

Acknowledgments

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Appendix A
Assessment Instruments Used in Chinese Language Programs in Grades K-12

ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) (From this page you can link to Language Testing International) to read more or schedule a test.)
https://www.actfl.org/professional-development/assessments-the-actfl-testing-office/oral-proficiency-assessments-including-opi-opic

ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)
https://www.actfl.org/professional-development/assessments-the-actfl-testing-office/actfl-writing-proficiency-assessments

ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) (Use the left navigation bar to access details on tasks and topics, score reporting, FAQs, demos, and tools.)
https://www.actfl.org/assessment-professional-development/assessments-the-actfl-testing-office/aappl

Avant Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP Assessment)
https://avantassessment.com/stamp4s

College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Examination in Chinese Language and Culture
https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam?course=ap-chinese-language-and-culture

College Board SAT II: Chinese With Listening
https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/practice

Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA)
http://www.cal.org/ela

Hanban Chinese Proficiency Test (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi, HSK)
http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/hsk/105146.htm

Hanban Youth Chinese Test (YCT)
https://confucius.ncsu.edu/testing-scholarship/yct

International Baccalaureate (IB) Program Examinations
http://www.ibo.org

NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements (2017)
https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements

Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA)
http://www.cal.org/ela/sopaellopa

Here is an example of the comments made after a review of Feature 1.

Feature 1. Program Design, Funding, Leadership, and Accountability

Status of the Feature:
Somewhat Evident

Evidence of Indicators:
+ The vision, goals, and plan for the program are stated in the program's mission statement.

+ The program design is based on a research-based framework and best practices and is tailored to meet the needs of local and state contexts.

Needs:
- Program funding is sound, but there is no plan for further program development or growth.

- Program administrators are new and know very little about immersion education and Chinese language and culture.

- Program administrators and key staff are new and are not working together at this point.

- Infrastructure is in place for supporting all students, but staff don't do not yet understand it.

- There is a governing board, but it is new and needs to learn about the program and the community.

- A system of accountability is in place, but staff need to know about it and understand it.

Next Steps:

1. Many of the indicators of this component are not yet in place, because this is a new program, and leaders and staff need to learn a lot about it.

2. Establish a funding committee, which will develop a plan for continued funding and growth.

3. Set up meetings and workshops for administrators and teachers so that they become familiar with all aspects of the program – key features of Chinese language and immersion education, program vision and goals, research base and standards, instructional goals, accountability system.

4. Set up meetings for the governing board to help them learn about the program and the community.