

[Immersion Education: Creating an Integrated School Culture](#)

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One of the challenges of many Chinese immersion or dual language programs is the lack of coordination and integration of the Chinese component with the rest of the school. Many schools and school districts offer Chinese immersion program as a strand within a school. Frequently, the Chinese component has its own distinct mission; curriculum; schedule; philosophy about student learning; and approaches to managing student behavior, assigning homework, and managing diversity, equity, and inclusion. In the absence of deliberate and intentional collaboration that aligns and integrates the English and Chinese learning of students, how many opportunities are missed? How might teachers and administrators work together to provide a well-integrated learning experience for students? This is also true if the entire school is a dual language immersion school. The Chinese and English components of the school must go hand in hand with each other to ensure student success.

This Brief draws on the experiences of several established Chinese-English dual language immersion schools to describe how to integrate the Chinese and English strands of a school into one cohesive educational program. It lists five critical elements of an integrated school culture:

1. **Leadership:** Mission, Strategic plan, Administration and management, Governing board, Budget
2. **Faculty:** Chinese and English teachers work together, in collaboration and partnership
3. **Approaches for Academic, Social, and Emotional Curriculum Design** in Chinese and English, that are engaging to students
4. **Parents:** Engagement with and support for parents
5. **A Commitment to Building and Accessing Professional Networks** for teachers and administrators

The Brief describes each element in detail, proposes questions for reflection, and offers suggestions for strategic action plans. It includes practical examples that have proven to be successful in various settings.

The authors hope that the ideas presented will inspire thinking, planning, and implementation that make sense in a particular school's context, and that readers will be able to work toward creating and improving their school's culture so that the Chinese and English elements are aligned and integrated. They encourage educational leaders of Chinese immersion programs to not only think about how to run their own schools, but also to learn from and assist peers at other schools. For more information about key components of effective schools, see the CELIN Brief, [Key Features of Effective Chinese Language Programs: A Checklist](#).

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