

***Designing and Implementing Chinese Language Programs:
Preparing Students for the Real World***

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As Chinese is introduced in more K-12 world language programs, many schools face challenges in designing and implementing a program that leads students to attain an advanced level of oral proficiency and literacy in Chinese. This need is particularly acute in an interconnected world, in which proficiency in the Chinese language and the ability to navigate Chinese culture are critically important. Through communicating in Chinese and conducting meaningful negotiations with speakers of the language, K-12 students strengthen their 21st century skills in problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration, while also building a strong sense of global citizenship.

This Brief delineates the essential features that Chinese language programs should have in place to prepare students for college and careers, ensure accountability by having clearly defined language goals aligned with proficiency standards, vigorously promote best practices that foster learner-centered instruction, and cultivate highly qualified and professionally trained teachers. It describes each of the features listed below and illustrates ways that programs can strive to develop them. Examples of programs that have these features in place are listed at the end of the Brief. Interested readers can also see [Program Profiles](#) at the [Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network](#) at Asia Society for an updated list of model programs of different types.

Effective Chinese language programs

- Have the goal of ensuring that students develop global competency for the real world
- Set clear language learning expectations aligned with recognized proficiency scales and career demands
- Are student-centered and experiential in orientation
- Are standards-based and integrate language, subject matters, and culture
- Employ best practices in instruction
- Assess student learning outcomes through performances via multiple measures
- Provide opportunities and support for Chinese language teachers to engage in reflective practice and continuous professional development

Based on essential characteristics of effective Chinese language programs across the country in public, private, and charter schools in the United States, this Brief provides a detailed

explanation of what each feature entails and a blueprint for building a successful K-12 program that prepares students for the real world.

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