

Report of the  
**Kansas  
Task Force  
on Chinese  
Language  
Training**

October 2006



Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools  
[www.KansasintheWorld.org](http://www.KansasintheWorld.org)



Report of the

# **Kansas Task Force on Chinese Language Training**

October 2006



**Published by the  
Kansas Committee  
for International  
Education in the  
Schools**

汉语

# Table of Contents

**Executive Summary** ..... 3

**I. Introduction** ..... 5

**II. The Current Situation**..... 6

    Programs ..... 6

        Chinese language in the Shawnee Mission schools ..... 6

        Table 1. Institutions Offering Mandarin Chinese..... 7

    Enrollments..... 7

        Table 2. Enrollment in Mandarin Chinese Classes ..... 9

    Kansas and China: The Business Connection ..... 8

**III. Resources and Opportunities** ..... 9

    Chinese language study at the University of Kansas ..... 10

    Learning Chinese at Johnson County Community College..... 11

**IV. Challenges**..... 12

    Figure 1. Number of languages offered in high schools..... 12

    Figure 2. Languages that high schools offer..... 13

**Appendix 1:** Task force members ..... 16

**Appendix 2:** About the KCIES ..... 16

**Appendix 3:** Useful web sites ..... 17

**Appendix 4:** Resources in Kansas ..... 18

**To order copies of this report, please contact:**

**Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools**  
 Attn: Randi Hacker  
 Center for East Asian Studies  
 The University of Kansas  
 1440 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 201  
 Lawrence, KS 66045  
 785.864.3849  
 785.864.5034 (fax)  
 rhacker@ku.edu  
 www.KansasintheWorld.org



The Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools would like to thank the Asia Society and the Longview Foundation for their generous support of the production of this report.

**About the photos**

**Front cover, top:** A Lawrence student practices calligraphy at an outreach session organized by the University of Kansas Center for East Asian Studies.  
**Front cover, bottom:** Wang Hongli, a visiting teacher from China, explores traditional Chinese musical instruments with a Shawnee Mission class.  
**Back cover:** Jonathan Yi, a visiting scholar at the Confucius Institute at the University of Kansas, teaches Mandarin Chinese by interactive distance learning to students in seven districts across the state.

汉语

# Executive Summary

Americans are increasingly recognizing the rise of China as one of the most important developments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With China’s impressive economic growth and rapid emergence as an international leader, the need to train more American students in the Chinese language is immediate and pressing. How to meet the urgent need for more training in Chinese language is a challenge now being actively discussed by educational leaders across the United States.

Recognizing the significance of Chinese language programs to the future prosperity and security of our youth, our nation, and our state, the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools convened a statewide Kansas Task Force on Chinese Language Training in early 2006. The thirteen-member Task Force surveyed the current state of Chinese language training in Kansas schools, colleges, and universities, evaluated future needs and priorities in Chinese language training, and in this report offers specific recommendations for short- and long-term initiatives. The Task Force’s report is intended not as a rigid blueprint for future action, but as an important first step in starting a statewide discussion on the need for increased Chinese language capacity throughout the Kansas educational system.

Kansas clearly has a long way to go in creating a sustainable and coherent educational pipeline in Mandarin Chinese — with only two school districts offering the language in 2005-2006 and only one certified K-12 teacher of Chinese in the state — but Kansas has many resources and advantages that position it well for the rapid development of Chinese language training capacity in the years ahead. With strong statewide leadership, targeted planning, and broadly based public support, Kansas could well emerge as one of the national pacesetters in building K-12 and post-secondary Chinese language programs over the coming decade.

After considering the challenges and opportunities facing Chinese language training in Kansas, the Task Force proposes the following ambitious but attainable goals:

- By 2011, all K-12 students in Kansas should have the opportunity for exposure to Mandarin Chinese, whether in traditional classroom settings, through interactive distance learning (IDL) or other distance learning platforms, in after-school and summer programs, or as part of introductory world language sessions.
- By 2016, Mandarin Chinese should be one of the three most-taught languages in Kansas schools, measured both by the number of students enrolled and by the number of schools offering the language.

To meet these goals, the Task Force makes the following recommendations to educators, policymakers, and all concerned Kansans:

1. Make a public case for the need for Chinese language training.
2. Emphasize exposure to Mandarin Chinese, especially in elementary and middle schools.
3. Expand distance learning programs.
4. Use existing resources and structures in creative ways.
5. Expand Chinese language training at community colleges.
6. Better articulate programs at different educational levels.
7. Aggressively pursue national grant funding and other opportunities.
8. Develop programs to “prime the pump” in the supply of certified Chinese language teachers.
9. Increase opportunities across the state for lifelong learning of Chinese.

汉语

10. Appoint a dedicated world languages consultant at the Kansas State Department of Education.
11. Convene a statewide summit on the teaching of Chinese and other critical world languages in Kansas.

According to an ancient Chinese saying, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Although the development of a robust infrastructure for Chinese language training in Kansas may seem like an intimidating journey, now is the time to take that all-important first step. A broadly based commitment to building Chinese language capacity, especially in Kansas schools, is essential to the future prosperity, dynamism, and well-being of our youth, our communities, and our state.

*“If you want to get ahead, learn Mandarin.”*

**Time Magazine, June 19, 2006**

*“The task of increasing the number of American students who can demonstrate a functional proficiency in the Chinese language is undeniably urgent.”*

**Asia Society, Expanding Chinese Language Capacity in the United States, 2005**

## I. Introduction

Americans are increasingly recognizing the rise of China as one of the most important developments of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With China’s impressive economic growth and rapid emergence as an international leader, the need to train more American students in the Chinese language is immediate and pressing. Today, the number of students nationwide who are studying Chinese is minuscule: according to recent studies, only about 34,000 American undergraduates and 24,000 K-12 students are enrolled in Mandarin Chinese classes. That compares with the 3 million taking Spanish, the most popular language in America’s schools, with French and German next.<sup>1</sup> How to build the capacity to meet the urgent need for more training in Chinese language is a challenge now being actively discussed by educational leaders across the United States.

Recognizing the significance of Chinese language programs to the future prosperity and security of our youth, our nation, and our state, the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools convened a statewide Kansas Task Force on Chinese Language Training in early 2006. The thirteen-member Task Force surveyed the current state of Chinese language training in Kansas schools, colleges, and universities, evaluated future needs and priorities in Chinese language training, and in this report offers specific recommendations for short- and long-term initiatives. The Task Force’s report is intended not as a rigid blueprint for future action, but as an important first step in starting a statewide discussion on the need for increased Chinese language capacity throughout the Kansas educational system.

Two general observations about the current status of Chinese language training in Kansas are worth noting at the outset. First, as is apparent from even a cursory survey, Kansas has a long way to go in creating a sustainable and coherent pipeline, stretching from the K-12 level to undergraduate education to graduate school, for training students in Mandarin Chinese. Not only are Chinese language classes extremely rare in Kansas schools — with only two districts in the state offering courses in 2005-2006 — but little effort has historically been devoted to training qualified Chinese-language teachers, developing innovative curricula, teaching materials, and delivery systems, or articulating existing offerings across institutions and educational levels. Second, while the present state of Chinese language training in Kansas may not be optimal, it is hardly unusual by national standards. Indeed, although one might well bemoan the fact that Kansas currently has only one certified teacher of high school Chinese and one school of education offering the coursework leading to Chinese certification, that still puts Kansas ahead of most states in the region and the nation. What’s more, Kansas has many resources and advantages that position it well for the rapid development of Chinese language training capacity in the years ahead. With strong statewide leadership, targeted planning, and broadly based public support, Kansas could well emerge as one of the national pacesetters in building K-12 and post-secondary Chinese language programs over the coming decade.

## II. The Current Situation

### Programs

In 2005-2006, regular instruction in Mandarin Chinese was offered at four Kansas universities, one two-year college, and two high schools (see Table 1). Training aimed largely at the children of Chinese heritage speakers was also provided in several informal “community schools” across the state.



#### Teaching Chinese to students in Shawnee Mission schools

Through its Center for International Studies, the Shawnee Mission School District has offered Chinese to its students for over a dozen years. The program is led by Tanya Low, the only certified Chinese instructor in Kansas, and she is assisted by a visiting teacher from China.

This arrangement allows a native-speaking instructor — provided through a grant under the Teachers of Critical Languages Program of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs — to assist in the classroom. Low said in a December 2005 article in the *Kansas City Star* that “the native speaker assistance has been invaluable,” helping with tone authenticity among the students.

As for the Shawnee Mission students studying Chinese, they told the *Star* that “it’s worth the struggles — and even the chuckles of friends — to learn a language they know will be important as they start applying for college and embarking on careers.” Daniel Bernard, Shawnee Mission South junior, added that Mandarin Chinese “opens up a whole new world of opportunities; it definitely sets you apart.”

The Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Kansas offers a full four-year sequence of Chinese language courses and an undergraduate major in Chinese. A three-year sequence of courses has recently been instituted at Kansas State University and an undergraduate minor in Chinese has been approved. Emporia State University offers two years of Mandarin Chinese, and Washburn University one, though on an irregular basis. Chinese has been taught in the past at other universities, notably Wichita State University, and introductory classes are scheduled to begin in fall 2006 at Fort Hays State University.

The only two-year institution currently offering Chinese language classes is Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, which has a four-semester sequence of courses.

At the K-12 level, Chinese training is currently available only in the Shawnee Mission and Olathe school districts in suburban Kansas City. The Center for International Studies at Shawnee Mission South High School in Overland Park has the state’s only certified K-12 Chinese teacher and offers an eight-semester sequence of Chinese classes. Olathe North High School offers two years of Chinese instruction.

Chinese community schools, also known as “weekend schools” or “Sunday schools,” are currently operating in Kansas City, Lawrence, Manhattan, Pittsburg, and Wichita. These schools, usually managed informally by groups of parents, do not offer academic credit and the instructors are generally native speakers without training in language pedagogy.

Table 1.  
SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS  
OFFERING MANDARIN CHINESE, 2005-2006

Institution	Chinese I	Chinese II	Chinese III	Chinese IV	Chinese V	Chinese VI	Chinese VII	Chinese VIII
Olathe North High School	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Shawnee Mission: Center for International Studies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emporia State University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Kansas State University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
University of Kansas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Washburn University	Yes	Yes						
Johnson Co. Community College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				

### Enrollments

In February 2006, staff of the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools conducted a survey of all the educational institutions and community schools offering instruction in Mandarin Chinese in Kansas. As detailed in Table 2, only 24 Kansas high school students were studying Chinese in the spring semester 2006. Based on the estimate of 24,000 K-12 students enrolled in Chinese classes nationwide, that means Kansas only trains one-tenth of one percent of all the pre-collegiate students of Mandarin Chinese in America today. Kansas stacks up far better at the post-secondary level, where Chinese enrollments in spring 2006 totaled 22 in two-year colleges and 147 in four-year institutions. At the same time, 235 children were studying Chinese in

## Kansas and China: The Business Connection

In October 2005, Governor Kathleen Sebelius led a delegation of nearly 50 Kansans on a state trade mission to China. While meeting with Chinese government officials, business leaders, and educational policymakers, the participants in the mission recognized the many promising opportunities offered by partnering with China.

"The bottom line is, we've opened some doors for Kansas businesses and I believe that will result in more Kansas jobs in the future," Sebelius said.

Indeed, as John Watson, director of the Kansas Department of Commerce's Trade Development Division explained to *The Wichita Eagle*, "There's a natural symmetry of trade interests between Kansas and China." Over the years, China has grown to be Kansas's third largest international market (behind Canada and Mexico) with more than 80 Kansas companies doing business there. The Kansas Department of Commerce calculates that in 2005 over \$500 million in Kansas goods were exported to Greater China (a 49 percent increase from the prior year). Many Kansas companies have a long history with China, while others are just getting started:

### Black & Veatch

Black & Veatch is a global engineering, consulting, and construction company that specializes in infrastructure development. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, and with operations in Overland Park, the privately owned firm has more than 90 offices worldwide, including in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Taipei.

China's commitment to developing its water, energy, and information infrastructures has provided Black & Veatch with the opportunity to cultivate a mutually beneficial, long-term relationship with the country.

### Koch Industries, Inc.

Koch Industries is a highly diversified corporation that was founded in Wichita in the 1940s. The company has a presence in 60 countries worldwide and is a leading employer in Kansas.

Koch has invested heavily in China in order to gain access to one of the fastest growing economies in the world. With a strong presence "in country," Koch Industries and its subsidiaries have been awarded numerous contracts for the paving of highways, maintained a leadership position in the fiber and polymer industries, and are currently expanding activities in the provision of pollution control equipment.

### SOR, Inc.

SOR manufactures high-quality pressure and level-measuring instruments for industry. The company places a strong emphasis on relationships and collaboration, so it is no surprise that it has found success in exporting to China.

Headquartered in Lenexa, SOR also has a satellite office in China. SOR participated in the Seventh China International Cement Industry Exhibition and Technology Conference in March 2006.

### Global Ground Support, LLC

Global Ground Support is an Olathe-based manufacturer of airline support products. While Global has been selling to China for nearly twelve years, it recently won major contracts to supply the Civil Aviation Administration of China with de-icing trucks to "advance the speed and efficiency of de-icing operations at Chinese airports."

According to an article in the *Kansas City Business Journal*, the company partially credits the sales to face-to-face presentations in China. "Chinese business is heavily influenced by relationships," company CEO Rick Smith said. Global Ground Support's experience demonstrates how important knowledge of Chinese language and culture can be to successful business transactions.

汉语

community schools in Kansas City, Lawrence, and Pittsburg. Overall, then, less than 500 Kansans were actively taking formal classes in Chinese in early 2006, a miniscule two one-hundredths of one percent of the population of the state.

**Table 2.  
ENROLLMENTS IN MANDARIN CHINESE CLASSES, SPRING 2006**

Type of Institution	Chinese I	Chinese II	Chinese III	Chinese IV	Chinese V	Chinese VI	Chinese VII	Chinese VIII
University	33	67	9	20	3	6	0	9
2-Year College		15		7				
High School	11	7	2	3	1			
Middle School								
Elementary School								
Community Schools	235							

## III. Resources and Opportunities

Although one might well conclude that Kansas has "no place to go but up" when it comes to training in Chinese (especially at the K-12 level), the state actually has a number of important resources for building Chinese language capacity. Moreover, a variety of new initiatives on the state and national level should have a significant impact on the development of Chinese language programs, especially in Kansas high schools. Among the most important existing resources and emerging opportunities are:

**Well-developed Chinese language programs at the post-secondary level.** The extensive offerings in Mandarin Chinese at the state's universities and community colleges provide significant options for Kansas students in higher education. There is existing capacity in all the institutions to train additional students, including undergraduates arriving at college with substantial high-school coursework in Chinese language.

**Existing programs to train and certify K-12 Chinese teachers.** The University of Kansas School of Education is one of a small number of institutions nationally — and currently the only institution in the Great Plains region — with undergraduate and graduate programs in place to produce certified teachers of Chinese language. Few students have ever availed themselves of these programs, but the degree programs and coursework are in place to immediately begin training and certifying Mandarin Chinese teachers.

**A network of professional outreach programs in East Asian studies.** The Center for East Asian Studies (CEAS) at the University of Kansas is a federally designated National Resource

汉语

Center for the study of China, Japan, and Korea. CEAS outreach programs support K-12 teachers across the state with instructional resources, curricular materials, and professional training. The Kansas Consortium for Teaching About Asia (KCTA), also at the University of Kansas, offers seminars for K-12 educators interested in integrating the study of East Asia into their classrooms. The KCTA also sponsors study tours to Asia, professional development and enrichment activities, and an online course on Asian history and culture for K-12 teachers.

### Chinese Language study at the University of Kansas

A leader in East Asian language instruction in the region, the University of Kansas has been teaching Chinese since 1959. The program in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALC) is supplemented by the work KU's Center for East Asian Studies, a federally designated National Resource Center. KU also has an extensive East Asian library collection with over 160,000 volumes in Chinese. Since the mid-1970s, KU students have participated in direct exchange programs with Nanjing, Nankai, and Zhengzhou universities.

Keith McMahon, chair of the EALC Department, notes that KU's Chinese language program aims to "train students in Chinese according to nationally established academic standards. Our Chinese students are competitive with students in any other Chinese program in the United States." Students can earn a Bachelor of Arts in East Asian Languages with a concentration in Chinese language and literature. Beginning last year, for the first time, the department expanded its introductory offerings to two sections of first-year Chinese to meet the strong student demand.

"Our graduates have gone on to jobs in China at universities, schools, and companies," McMahon said. "Some have continued their studies in graduate school, medical school, and law school in the United States." Opportunities abound for those with Chinese language skills, especially in business and government. "One student went on to join a consulting firm in Washington, D.C., another joined Hallmark International in Kansas City, a third joined United Airlines to be an attendant on flights to Asia, a fourth now studies public health in China at Johns Hopkins University, and a fifth graduate works as an editor at a newspaper in Shanghai."

### A new Confucius Institute for promoting Chinese language and culture.

The Confucius Institute at the University of Kansas, a cooperative project with the Chinese Language Council International, opened at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park in May 2006. The fourth such institute in the nation (and one of 80 in 39 countries around the world today), the Confucius Institute at the University of Kansas will offer Mandarin classes for the general public, promote Chinese language training in schools and universities, and develop programs to increase the number of certified K-12 Chinese teachers.

### An ambitious new distance learning initiative.

The Southeast Kansas Educational Service Center (Greenbush), in association with the Confucius Institute at the University of Kansas, will introduce a new interactive distance learning (IDL) course in Mandarin Chinese for high schools in fall 2006. The course will make introductory Chinese languages courses available to over 40 students in Auburn-Washburn, Deerfield, Holcomb, Lawrence, Maize, Marysville, and Winfield. It is anticipated that second-year Chinese will be added in 2007-2008 and the program expanded to allow additional schools to participate. Major grant proposals to further develop IDL delivery of Mandarin Chinese to Kansas schools have been submitted by Greenbush and the University of Kansas; funding decisions are currently pending.

汉语

汉语

**A range of national programs to promote Chinese language training.** National interest in Chinese language training, especially at the K-12 level, is high, and America's need for expanded programs in Chinese has attracted considerable attention in the media. President Bush's National Security Language Initiative, announced in January 2006, will target government funding to develop programs and pipelines in languages including Mandarin Chinese. An Advanced Placement (AP) examination in Chinese language and culture will be launched in 2007 and the College Board, in cooperation with the Chinese Language Council International and other entities, is developing programs to increase the number of schools offering Chinese and improve pedagogical methods, curricula, and teaching materials.

### Support from the state government.

The Kansas Department of Commerce has long been active in promoting trade with China, and the state opened an office in Beijing in 2005 to facilitate economic, educational, and governmental relations between Kansas and China. Governor Kathleen Sebelius led a trade mission to China in October 2005 and signed a memorandum of understanding with Chinese Minister of Education Zhou Ji that included a number of provisions for promoting the teaching of Chinese in Kansas schools and universities.<sup>2</sup>

### A variety of community resources related to China.

The Chinese American population in Kansas is small (only about 9,000 according to the 2000 Census) but a significant community exists in the Kansas City metropolitan area and in other Kansas cities, including Lawrence. Another potentially valuable resource is the significant number of Chinese students studying at Kansas universities and colleges: at Emporia State University, for example, the number of undergraduate and graduate students from China is increasing rapidly. Wichita maintains a sister city relationship with Kaifeng, and Kansas has an active sister state/province relationship with Henan Province. Many Kansas businesses have well established ties with customers and suppliers in China.

**Active school exchanges linking Kansas and China.** Three Kansas high schools — Lansing, Olathe North, and Shawnee Mission South — currently offer student and faculty exchanges with partner schools in Kaifeng, China. These programs, supported by a grant from the Freeman Foundation and facilitated by the KCTA, send groups of Kansas teachers and students on two-week exchanges to Kaifeng, and bring their Chinese counterparts on short-term

### Learning Chinese at Johnson County Community College

Offering four semesters of Chinese language, Johnson County Community College works to meet the demands of students and the community in Johnson County. JCCC has many partners in China, including Northwest Polytechnical University in Xi'an and Zhejiang Wanli University in Ningbo. Faculty are exchanged for year-long programs through these arrangements, and students also have the opportunity to study abroad. The college is one of 17 regional centers for the infusion of Asian content in the American undergraduate curriculum under the Asian Studies Development Program of the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii.

A new, pilot Chinese language program will soon be launched by the Blue Valley School District. The five-hour college-credit class will be offered after school and will be taught by a JCCC instructor. "This is the first time the college will be delivering a Chinese language class to a high school," Lorelee Stevens, coordinator of community outreach for credit instruction at JCCC, told the Kansas City Star in March 2006. The program will be a test to determine if enough interest is present to offer more classes.

visits to the Kansas schools.

**Pilot programs to meet short-term needs.** In order to meet immediate, pressing demand at the K-12 level, the Shawnee Mission school district has taken advantage of two new national programs designed to provide qualified language instructors from China on a short-term basis to U.S. schools. Working with the KCTA, the Center for International Studies at Shawnee Mission South received a native-speaking instructor for the 2005-2006 school year under the “Volunteer Program for International Chinese Teachers” of the Chinese Language Council International. Starting in fall 2006, a Chinese teacher will work in middle schools in the Shawnee Mission district through the Teachers of Critical Languages Program of the U.S. Department of State.

## IV. Challenges

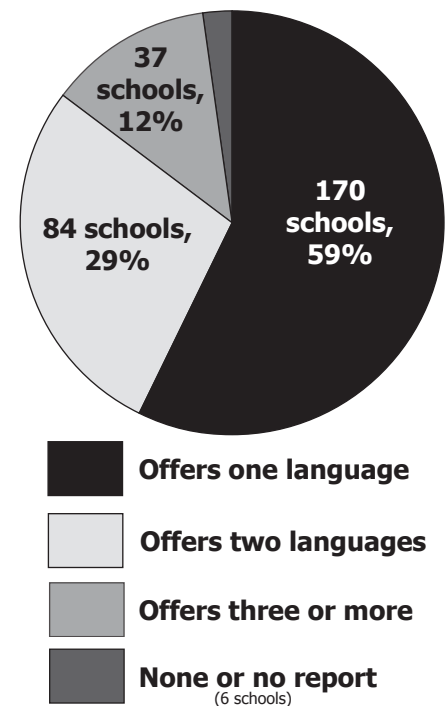
For all the momentum gathering behind the expansion of Chinese language training in Kansas and across the nation, many challenges remain, especially at the K-12 level. Some of the more significant challenges facing the development of Chinese language programs in Kansas are:

**An uncertain commitment to world language training in Kansas schools.** All Kansas high schools must offer at least one world language to their students. According to statistics collected in 2005-2006 by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), almost 60 percent of high schools offer the bare minimum, only one language. Only 70 schools statewide offer two world languages, and a mere 25 schools provide instruction in three or more languages (Figure 1). Figure 2 details the languages taught in 2005-2006: not surprisingly, Spanish dominates, followed by French and German; other languages (Latin, Japanese, Russian, Chinese, Italian, and Arabic) are taught only in a handful of schools across Kansas. One indication of the low stature of world language training in Kansas schools is the fact that the KSDE does not have a dedicated world languages consultant on staff.

**A shortage of trained and certified Chinese language teachers.** As is the case across the United States, Kansas suffers from a longstanding shortage of certified K-12 teachers of Mandarin Chinese. The program to train and certify Chinese teachers at the University of Kansas has attracted few students over the years and districts searching for Chinese teachers (as Olathe, Shawnee Mission, and others on the Missouri side of the Kansas City metropolitan area have discovered) face considerable frustration in recruiting qualified classroom instructors. No substantial long-term expansion of Chinese language training capacity in Kansas will be possible without an increased supply of professional, certified Chinese teachers in the state.

**Competition for resources, time, and a place in the K-12 curriculum.** The introduction of Chinese language training into Kansas schools raises many concerns all too familiar to Kansas

Figure 1.  
**Number of languages offered in Kansas high schools, 2005-2006**



Source: Kansas State Department of Education

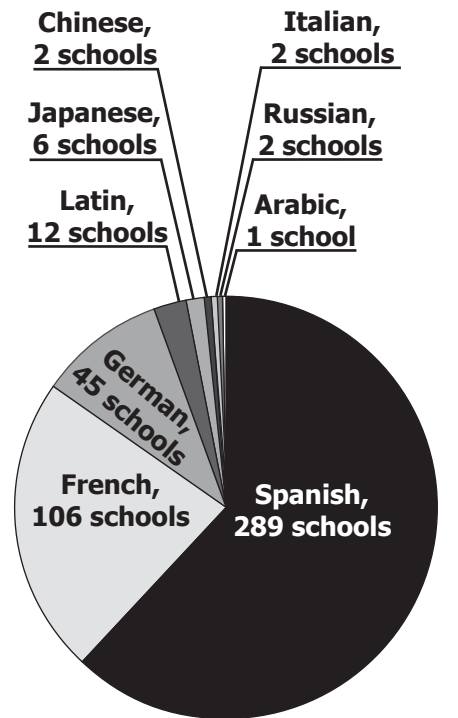
educators and school administrators: Where will the financial resources to support another world language come from? Do students have time, in their already busy daily schedules, to fit in an additional elective like Chinese? Is the high school curriculum a zero-sum game, so that if Chinese language is gained, then something else has to be lost? How will offering Chinese affect enrollments in languages like French and German?

**The demands of No Child Left Behind.** Educators around the nation have expressed concern that the federal No Child Left Behind Act, with its strong emphasis on reading and mathematics assessments, will lead many school districts to divert resources, energy, and classroom time away from other curricular areas, notably world languages.

**Untested interest in Chinese among students and communities.** Since training in Mandarin Chinese has never been an option in the vast majority of Kansas towns and cities, the demand for Chinese language classes among students and their parents is largely unknown. Qualitative evidence suggests that interest in Chinese training in the schools is rising, a fact confirmed by the strong response from across the state to the new Greenbush/Confucius Institute IDL course. A 2003 survey of 3,000 Kansans by the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools revealed the strong public belief that, after Spanish, training in East Asian languages (Chinese and Japanese) was most important for the future of Kansas youth.<sup>3</sup>

**The challenges of learning Mandarin Chinese.** Chinese is generally accepted as a difficult language for most native English (and Spanish) speakers to master. The U.S. State Department groups Mandarin Chinese (along with Arabic, Cantonese, Japanese, and Korean) among the most time-consuming languages for American students seeking advanced proficiency. This relative difficulty only underlines the importance of strong pedagogical methods, rigorous foundational training, effective teaching materials, well articulated pipelines of instruction, and ongoing institutional commitment to the long-term development of successful programs in Chinese in our schools, colleges, and universities.

Figure 2.  
**Languages offered in Kansas high schools, 2005-2006**



Source: Kansas State Department of Education

## V. Recommendations

Given the rising importance of China to the economic, political, and cultural future of Kansas, the United States, and the world, increased public knowledge of Mandarin Chinese should be a leading educational priority in our state and across the nation. To prepare young Kansans for the complex global economy and diverse political and culture landscape of the coming decades, the Task Force on Chinese Language Training proposes the following ambitious but attainable goals:

- By 2011, all K-12 students in Kansas should have the opportunity for exposure to Mandarin Chinese, whether in traditional classroom settings, through IDL or other distance

汉语

汉语

learning platforms, in after-school and summer programs, or as part of introductory world language sessions.

- By 2016, Mandarin Chinese should be one of the three most-taught languages in Kansas schools, measured both by the number of students enrolled and by the number of schools offering the language.

To meet these goals, the Task Force makes the following recommendations to educators, policymakers, and all concerned Kansans:

**1. Make a public case for the need for Chinese language training.** Businesses, legislators, the media, communities, and youth all need to be engaged, informed, and mobilized. The importance of training in Chinese language and culture to workforce development and to the preparation of young Kansans for the jobs and careers of the future should be emphasized. Colleges and universities, community and government leaders, and organizations like the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools need to be in the forefront of this campaign to raise public awareness.

**2. Emphasize exposure to Mandarin Chinese, especially in elementary and middle schools.** Learning Chinese should be introduced to Kansas students from a young age as something enjoyable, valuable, and achievable. While adding dedicated Chinese languages courses is important, developing student interest in Chinese through early exposure is no less essential to the long-term success and sustainability of a Chinese language pipeline through Kansas schools, colleges, and universities.

**3. Expand distance learning programs.** The delivery of Chinese language training through interactive distance learning and online instruction seems particularly well suited to Kansas, given the state's geography and demographics. IDL programs like the Greenbush/Confucius Institute initiative, which will have an immediate impact around the state, should be extended to include more schools and more levels. Online courses, several of which are currently in development in China and the United States, should be evaluated for use in Kansas. The use of distance learning technology to expand Chinese language training in community colleges should also be explored.

**4. Use existing resources and structures in creative ways.** Student familiarity with and interest in Chinese language can be effectively promoted by working through existing curricula, supplementing familiar programs, and tweaking proven models. The development of summer language camps and after-school programs incorporating Chinese, the creation of Mandarin Chinese “kits” for use in elementary classrooms, and the systematization of “student ambassador” programs (bringing native Chinese speakers studying at Kansas universities into local schools) should be actively pursued.

**5. Expand Chinese language training at community colleges.** Although Mandarin instruction is relatively well developed at the state's public universities and in one major community college, a future “missing link” in the Chinese training pipeline may well be the state's two-year institutions. Priority should be given to developing Chinese language programs, and world language programs more generally, in the state's community colleges.

**6. Better articulate programs at different educational levels.** To create an effective pipeline for students through the schools and on to college or university, better articulation of Chinese language programs (especially between high school and post-secondary institutions, and between community colleges and universities) should be studied and implemented.

**7. Aggressively pursue national grant funding and other opportunities.** Schools

across the state should make the maximum advantage of existing initiatives like the Volunteer Program for International Chinese Teachers as well as actively seek funds to expand Chinese training through grants like the Teachers of Critical Languages Program and the Foreign Language Assistance Program.

**8. Develop programs to “prime the pump” in the supply of certified Chinese language teachers.** In order to meet the state's long-term need for certified Chinese language teachers, immediate action must be taken to start the flow of students through the existing training and certification program at the University of Kansas. Funding should be sought for a scholarship or loan forgiveness program to encourage promising young people to pursue careers as K-12 Chinese language teachers. Initiatives to train certified teachers of other world languages in Chinese and to gain Kansas certification for native speakers of Mandarin Chinese should also be explored.

**9. Increase opportunities across the state for lifelong learning of Chinese.** Community Chinese language courses like those offered by the Confucius Institute and Johnson County Community College should be extended across Kansas. The use of distance learning technology to increase access to Chinese language training for adult learners should also be explored.

**10. Appoint a dedicated world languages consultant at the Kansas State Department of Education.** Such an investment by the State Board of Education would not only substantially support language teaching across the state, but would send an important message about the importance of world languages to the educational system and the future of Kansas. As in some other states, the world languages consultant might also provide leadership and support for international education efforts at the K-12 level.

**11. Convene a statewide summit on the teaching of Chinese and other critical world languages in Kansas.** To build on the work of the Kansas Task Force on Chinese Language Training and forge a broader consensus on the need for increased emphasis on Mandarin Chinese and other strategic languages in our schools, a statewide summit of legislators, policymakers, business leaders, and educators should be convened within the next six months. This summit would raise public awareness of the need for a new commitment to critical world language programs and engage key constituencies in the effort to expand Chinese language training in our schools, colleges, and universities.

According to an ancient Chinese saying, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Although the development of a robust infrastructure for Chinese language training in Kansas may seem like an intimidating journey, now is the time to take that all-important first step. A broadly based commitment to building Chinese language capacity, especially in Kansas schools, is essential to the future prosperity, dynamism, and well-being of our youth, our communities, and our state.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> See Expanding Chinese Language Capacity in the United States (New York: Asia Society, June 2005), pp. 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> The memorandum of understanding, signed October 24, 2005, is available at [internationaled.org/mou/Kansas%20MOU%20with%20China%20final.pdf](http://internationaled.org/mou/Kansas%20MOU%20with%20China%20final.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> A summary of the survey results is available at [www.kansasintheworld.org/kcies/iefocus.asp](http://www.kansasintheworld.org/kcies/iefocus.asp).

## Appendix 1

### Members of Kansas Task Force on Chinese Language Training

**Raffaele DeVito,**  
School of Business, Emporia  
State University and Chair,  
Kansas International Trade  
Coordinating Council

**Manuela Gonzalez-Bueno,**  
School of Education,  
University of Kansas

**Jan Heinen,**  
Director of Middle Level  
Education, Olathe Schools

**Ken Holland,**  
Associate Provost for  
International Programs,  
Kansas State University

**Nancy Hope,**  
Center for East Asian Studies  
and Confucius Institute at the  
University of Kansas

**Carolyn Kadel,**  
Director of International  
Education, Johnson County  
Community College

**Keith McMahan,**  
Chair, Department of  
East Asian Languages and  
Cultures, University of  
Kansas

**Robert F. Riordan,**  
Vice President,  
Black & Veatch

**Melanie Stuart-Campbell,**  
Kansas State Department  
of Education

**Karen Tritt,**  
President, Kansas World  
Language Association

**William M. Tsutsui,**  
Center for East Asian Studies  
and Confucius Institute at the  
University of Kansas  
(Task Force chair)

**Sheree Willis,**  
Center for East Asian Studies  
and Confucius Institute at the  
University of Kansas

**Carol Woolbright,**  
Southeast Kansas Education  
Service Center, Greenbush

## Appendix 2

### About the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools

The Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools (KCIES) is a statewide group of policymakers, educators, representatives of the business community, and other interested individuals first organized in 2003. The KCIES promotes the infusion of international topics into the K-12 curriculum, raises public awareness of the need for international education, and provides resources for teachers, students, parents, and communities. The KCIES also sponsors the annual Kansas in the World Awards for Excellence in International Education. Housed in the Center for East Asian Studies at the University of Kansas, the KCIES has received generous grant funding from the Asia Society, the Longview Foundation, the Freeman Foundation, the American Forum for Global Education, and the Kansas Asia Community Connection.

More information on the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools is available online at [www.KansasintheWorld.org](http://www.KansasintheWorld.org).

#### Contact us at

Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools  
Center for East Asian Studies  
The University of Kansas  
1440 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 201  
Lawrence, KS 66045

785.864.3849  
785.864.5034 (fax)  
[rhacker@ku.edu](mailto:rhacker@ku.edu)

汉语

## Appendix 3

### Useful Web Sites

#### Data and documents supporting K-12 Chinese language programs

- [www.askasia.org/chinese/index.htm](http://www.askasia.org/chinese/index.htm) from Chinese Language Programs in American Schools.
- [www.internationale.org/language.htm](http://www.internationale.org/language.htm) from Asia and International Studies in the Schools.
- [www.ced.org/docs/report/report\\_foreignlanguages.pdf](http://www.ced.org/docs/report/report_foreignlanguages.pdf) from Education for Global Leadership.
- [tse.export.gov/](http://tse.export.gov/) from TradeStats Express.
- [www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html) from the CIA.

#### Standards for K-12 Chinese language programs

- [www.classk12.org/Files/about.htm](http://www.classk12.org/Files/about.htm) from the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools.
- [nflrc.iastate.edu/pubs/standards/guide.pdf](http://nflrc.iastate.edu/pubs/standards/guide.pdf) from the National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center.
- [www.actfl.org/files/public/execsumm.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/files/public/execsumm.pdf) and [www.actfl.org/i4a/store/category.cfm?category\\_id=5](http://www.actfl.org/i4a/store/category.cfm?category_id=5) from the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages.
- [www.ksde.org/outcomes/flstd.pdf](http://www.ksde.org/outcomes/flstd.pdf) from the Kansas State Department of Education.
- [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/sub\\_chineselang.html?chineselang](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/sub_chineselang.html?chineselang) from the Advanced Placement (AP) Examination in Chinese Language and Culture.

#### Finding Chinese language teachers and IDL programs

- [www.classk12.org](http://www.classk12.org) from the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools.
- [www.ncuscr.org/TeachersExchange/TEP.htm](http://www.ncuscr.org/TeachersExchange/TEP.htm) from the US-China Teachers Exchange Program; contact Margot Landman, [mlandman@ncuscr.org](mailto:mlandman@ncuscr.org).
- [www.greenbush.org/IDL/home.html](http://www.greenbush.org/IDL/home.html) from the IDL network at SE Kansas Educational Service Center; contact Carol Woolbright, [carol.woolbright@greenbush.org](mailto:carol.woolbright@greenbush.org).
- [english.hanban.edu.cn/market/HanBanE/412362.htm](http://english.hanban.edu.cn/market/HanBanE/412362.htm) from the Hanban Volunteer Teacher Program; contact Nancy Hope, [nfhope@ku.edu](mailto:nfhope@ku.edu).

#### Online materials for Chinese language study

- Chengo | [www.elanguage.cn](http://www.elanguage.cn)
- Linese | [www.linese.com/model/english/pub/index.jsp](http://www.linese.com/model/english/pub/index.jsp)
- Hanban's Online College of Chinese | [www.hanyu.com.cn/en/default.asp](http://www.hanyu.com.cn/en/default.asp)
- Global Chinese Language and Culture Center | [edu.ocac.gov.tw/home\\_en.htm](http://edu.ocac.gov.tw/home_en.htm)
- Learning Chinese On-line | [www.csulb.edu/~txie/online.htm](http://www.csulb.edu/~txie/online.htm)
- Teaching and Learning Chinese | [www2.kenyon.edu/Depts/Mll/Chinese/](http://www2.kenyon.edu/Depts/Mll/Chinese/)
- Conversational Mandarin online | [www.csulb.edu/~txie/ccol/content.htm](http://www.csulb.edu/~txie/ccol/content.htm)
- Chinese Characters and Culture | [zhongwen.com](http://zhongwen.com)
- Basic Chinese grammar | [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~rsimmon/chingram/](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~rsimmon/chingram/)
- Real Chinese | [www.bbc.co.uk/languages/chinese/real\\_chinese/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/chinese/real_chinese/)
- Learn Chinese | [www.chinese-tools.com/learn/chinese](http://www.chinese-tools.com/learn/chinese)
- Languages on Line | [eleaston.com/chinese.html](http://eleaston.com/chinese.html)
- DimSum: Chinese Reading Assistant and Dictionary | [www.mandarintools.com](http://www.mandarintools.com)

汉语

## Appendix 4

### Resources in Kansas

The following are organizations that might offer informational, in-kind, strategic, or financial support for building a Chinese language program:

#### Chambers of commerce, local/state trade offices, economic development offices

##### Asian-American Chamber of Commerce of Kansas City

8645 College Blvd., Suite 101A  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
www.asianchamberkc.com  
Phone: 913.338.0774  
Fax: 913.451.9680

Contact: Renee Stevenson, Executive Director  
rstevenson@asianchamberkc.com

##### Greater Kansas City World Trade Center

911 Main, Suite 2600  
Kansas City, MO USA 64105  
www.kcchamber.com/KcTrade/Index.asp  
Phone: 816.374.5483  
Fax: 816.444.8108

Contact: Mary Pyle, Managing Director  
pyle@kcchamber.com

##### International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City

3013 Main St.  
Kansas City, Missouri 64108  
www.itckc.org  
Phone: 816.285.9040  
Fax: 816.285.9001

Contact: Gabe DiGiorgio, President  
info@itckc.org

#### Chinese language and culture centers

##### Confucius Institute at the University of Kansas

KU Edwards Campus  
Regnier Hall, Suite 270  
12610 Quivira Road  
Overland Park, KS 66213  
www.confucius.ku.edu  
Phone: 913.897.8612  
Fax: 785.864.5034  
Contact: ciku@ku.edu

##### Kansas World Trade Center

111 S. Market St.  
Wichita, KS 67202  
www.kansaswtc.org  
Phone: 316.264.5982  
Fax: 316.264.5983

Contact: info@kansaswtc.org

##### Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Kansas City

3100 Broadway, Suite 800  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
www.teco-us.org/missouri.cfm  
Phone: 816.531.1298  
Fax: 816.531.3066  
Contact: kcteco@sbcglobal.net

##### Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Chicago

Education Office  
3322 W. Peterson Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60659  
www.chinaconsulatechicago.org/eng/jy/  
Phone: 773.279.0701  
Fax: 773.279.0370  
Contact: chinaconsul\_chi\_us@mfa.gov.cn

### Colleges and universities with Chinese language programs

Emporia State University,  
Dept. of Modern Languages and Literature  
1200 Commercial St., Box 4024  
Emporia, KS 66801

www.emporia.edu/modlan/modlan.htm

Phone: 620.341.5424

Fax: 620.341.5681

Contact: stormonl@emporia.edu

##### Johnson County Community College, Community Services Dept.

12345 College Blvd.  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
www.jccc.net/home/depts/001420  
Phone: 913.469.3836  
Fax: 913.469.2586  
Contact: dhandy@jccc.net

##### Johnson County Community College, Foreign Languages Dept.

12345 College Blvd.  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
www.jccc.net/home/depts/1105  
Phone: 913.469.8500 x3903  
Fax: 913.469.2585  
Contact: sknopp@jccc.edu

Kansas State University,  
Dept. of Modern Languages  
104A Eisenhower Hall  
Manhattan, KS 66506

www.k.state.edu/mlangs/

Phone: 785.532.6760

Fax: 785.532.7004

Contact: modlang@k.state.edu

##### University of Kansas, Dept. of East Asian Languages and Culture

1445 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 2118  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
www2.ku.edu/~ealc/ealc.html  
Phone: 785.864.3100  
Fax: 785.864.4298  
Contact: ealc@ku.edu

##### Washburn University, Dept. of Modern Languages

Morgan Hall 375  
1700SW College Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66621  
www.washburn.edu/cas/is/  
Phone: 785.670.1714  
Contact: marva.early@washburn.edu

#### Friends associations and heritage community organizations

##### Edgar Snow Memorial Fund Inc.

2501 Holmes  
Kansas City, MO 64108  
Phone: 816.235.8856  
Contact: Karen Canon  
edgarsnow@umkc.edu

##### Kansas City Chinese Network Association (KCCNA)

kccna.ks.org  
Contact: Jinsong Zhang  
kccna\_committee@yahoo.com.

##### Society for Friendship with China, Inc.

12101 Pawnee Lane  
Leawood, KS 66209  
www.chinagardensociety-kc.org  
Phone: 913.491.6770  
Fax: 913.491.6366  
Contact: Robert S. Chien  
robert@qianchien.com

##### US – China Peoples Friendship Association

201 Woodbridge Lane  
Kansas City, MO 64145  
www.uscpfa.org  
Phone: 816.942.6307  
Fax: 816.363.6603  
Contact: Joyce Cox  
joycecox@worldnet.att.net

汉语

汉语

## **K-12 educational resources**

**Center for East Asian Studies,  
University of Kansas**  
1440 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 201  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
www.ceas.ku.edu/  
Phone: 785.864.3849  
Fax: 785.864.5034  
Contact: ceas@ku.edu

**Kansas State Department of Education  
State and Federal Programs Team**  
120 S.E. 10th St.  
Topeka, KS 66612.1182  
Phone: 785.296.7929  
Contact: Melanie Stuart-Campbell  
mstuart@ksde.org

**Kansas Consortium  
for Teaching about Asia**  
1440 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 201  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
www.kcta.ku.edu  
Phone: (785) 864.3918  
Fax: (785) 864.5034  
Contact: Nancy Hope, Associate Director  
nfhope@ku.edu

**Kansas World  
Language Association**  
www.kswla.org  
Contact: Phyllis Farrar, Executive Secretary  
pfarrar@sunflower.com

## **Sister States/Sister Cities Associations**

**Sister States of Kansas  
and Henan Province, China**  
Kansas Department of Commerce  
& Housing, Trade Development Division  
1000 S.E. Jackson St., Suite 100  
Topeka, KS 66612-1354  
Phone: 785.296.1866  
Fax: 785.296.5263  
Contact: John Watson  
jwatson@kansascommerce.com

**Sister Cities Association of Leawood  
and I-Lan, Taiwan**  
3519 W. 100th St.  
Leawood, KS 66206  
(913) 341-9729  
Contact: Roxanne Wu-Rebein  
r5rebein@kc.rr.com

**Sister Cities Association of Wichita  
and Kaifeng, Henan Province**  
Wichita City Council Office  
455 N. Main St.  
Wichita, KS 67202  
Phone: 316.268.4331  
Fax: 316.268.4333  
Contact: Carla Shull  
cshull@wichita.gov

## **Be sure to check what else is available in your area, including:**

Arts and cultural organizations  
Business associations and local businesses with China connections  
International relations and humanities councils  
Media – radio, print, television  
Service clubs such as Rotary International  
Student organizations  
Travel agencies  
United Nations associations