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# Parents' Perceptions of Chinese Immersion Programs in Minnesota

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**Parents' Perceptions of Chinese Immersion Programs in Minnesota**

by

Xinming Ren

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to gain information from parents who had enrolled their child/children in selected Chinese language immersion programs during 2016-2017 school year in Minnesota. The study aimed to explore parents' motivations and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. By exploring parents' perceptions, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements were identified. The findings of the study were shared with Chinese immersion programs' administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The findings of the study were used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. In addition, the results of the study may be used by parents who plan to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs to make their final decisions.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

As second language instruction has evolved over the course of the last half century, a method referred to as language immersion has become the favored style of many school systems (Genesee, 1987). In reference to language immersion, the teachers instruct their students only in a second or foreign language (Johnson & Swain, 1997). As Johnson and Swain (1997) stated, “immersion education” was adopted in the 1960s to describe such programs in the context of English-speaking children being taught entirely through the medium of French in selected schools in Quebec, Canada. Language immersion is a method to teach a second or foreign language. “Immersion programs aim to provide the quantity and quality of involvement in the use of the target language that ensures the development of a high level of proficiency” (Johnson & Swain, 1997, p. xiii).

Immersion language learning programs are the most effective methods to developing the second or foreign language skills (Fortune & Tedick, 2003). Foreign language immersion programs in the United States are designed to enrich the education of native English-speaking students by teaching academic subjects in a second language (Fortune & Tedick, 2003). Most immersion students can be expected to reach higher levels of second language proficiency than students in other school-based language programs (Fortune & Tedick, 2003). Due to their success, immersion programs are growing quickly in American schools (Fortune & Tedick, 2003).

There are two general categorizations of language immersion programs which have been outlined by Baker and Center for Applied Linguistics. According to Baker (2006), language immersion programs are split into early immersion (starting in kindergarten or grade 1), middle

immersion (starting in grade 4 or 5), or late immersion (starting in grade 6 or 7). Also, according to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL, 2011), there are three main types of language immersion: total, partial, and two-way immersion. Students start learning second languages at different ages depending upon the chosen language program (CAL, 2011).

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) defines immersion programs according to the following:

**Total Immersion**—Programs in which all or almost all subjects taught in the lower grades (K-2) are taught in the foreign language; instruction in English usually increases in the upper grades (3-6) to 20%-50%, depending on the program.

**Partial Immersion**—Programs in which up to 50% of subjects are taught in the foreign language; in some programs, the material taught in the foreign language is reinforced in English.

**Two-Way Immersion**—Programs that give equal emphasis to English and a non-English language and in which one to two thirds of the students are native speakers of the non-English language, with the remainder being native speakers of English. (CAL, <http://webapp.cal.org/Immersion/>).

Language immersion programs have been proven to be successful and powerful since their implementation in the United States during the beginning of the 1970s (Genesee, 1987). In a total immersion program, the teaching of content, language, academic and social skills are integrated in the same classroom (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Both teachers and students use the target language to communicate inside the classroom (Johnson & Swain, 1997). All academic subjects are taught in the target language. Students ask questions and share their thoughts and feelings in the target language (Desrochers, 2005). Students use the foreign language to learn new knowledge content in different subject areas (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Language immersion programs provide students an effective opportunity to communicate and think in the target language in daily situations (Little, 2005). Consequently, students are immersed in a rich



and natural language environment. They are engaged in meaningful tasks and motivated to use the target language throughout all learning processes (Desrochers, 2005).

Among various language immersion programs, Spanish is the most commonly taught in the United States (CAL, 2011). Also, there are French, Mandarin Chinese, Hawaiian, Japanese, German, and other language immersion programs (CAL, 2011). In China depending on the region, the most commonly spoken languages are Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese. Mandarin is the official language in China and is used by most schools, colleges, and universities, as well as by television programs, movies and radio stations. Mandarin Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world and is one of the six official languages in the United Nations. In the United States, most of Chinese language immersion programs are Mandarin immersion programs. In this study, “Chinese immersion program” will be used interchangeably with “Mandarin immersion program”.

Learning Mandarin Chinese is increasingly popular all over the world due to China’s growing role in the global economy. Over the last decade, Chinese immersion programs have become increasingly popular in the United States. With a population of 1.371 billion in 2015, China recently became the second largest world economy behind the United States (The World Bank, 2016). The relationship between the United States and China, especially regarding the trade economy, are becoming more interdependent. China is increasingly playing an important and influential role in the global economy.

San Francisco’s Chinese American International School opened in 1981 as a private institution and was the first Mandarin Chinese immersion school in the United States. Pacific Rim International School in Emeryville, California (established in 1991) was the second

Mandarin Chinese immersion school to open in the United States. The nation's first public Mandarin Chinese immersion program was launched in Potomac Elementary School in Potomac, Maryland, in 1996. In the same year, the International School of the Peninsula in Palo Alto, California added a Mandarin Chinese immersion program (Weise, 2013).

Mandarin Chinese immersion programs grew slowly and steadily with a few programs opening before 2006. Starting in the fall of 2007, 15 new Chinese immersion programs were launched throughout the United States. Since then, Chinese immersion programs have been expanding rapidly throughout the United States. According to the data collected by Weise (2016), there were up to 227 Chinese immersion programs in the United States by October 2016.

In Minnesota, according to Minnesota Advocates for Immersion Network (MAIN, 2016), seven Chinese immersion programs were functioning by the fall of 2015. All of Minnesota's Chinese immersion programs are designed according to the early and total immersion models at the elementary schools. Chinese immersion continuation programs at middle schools offer Mandarin Chinese Language Arts and Social Studies for at least 2 years (Fortune, Tedick, & Miller, 2015).

The first Chinese immersion school in Minnesota is the Yinghua Academy, which opened in 2006. The Yinghua Academy is the first public Chinese immersion school in the United States, and the first Chinese immersion school in the Midwest. One year later, in 2007, four new Chinese immersion programs opened in Minnesota. Two of four Chinese immersion programs were launched at Scenic Heights Elementary School and Excelsior Elementary School in Minnetonka public schools. XinXing Academy, Chinese immersion program was launched at Eisenhower Elementary School in Hopkins Public Schools. Guang Ming Academy, Chinese

immersion program was launched at Madison Elementary School in St. Cloud School Area School District. In 2011, another two new Chinese immersion programs opened. One is Jie Ming Mandarin Immersion Academy in St. Paul Public Schools, the other one is the Lakes International Language Academy Chinese immersion program at Forest Lake School District. Among seven Chinese immersion programs, Yinghua Academy is the only kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8) full Chinese immersion school. The other six programs are kindergarten through fifth grade (K-5). Yinghua Academy and Lakes International Academy are charter schools. The other five programs are in four public schools (Fortune, Tedick, & Miller, 2015).

An increasing number of parents have recognized the advantages and benefits of language immersion education. They also realize that learning Chinese opens the door to various opportunities for future employment working in important fields of industry shared between the United States and China. By enrolling their children in Chinese immersion programs, parents can offer their children an important path for career and life skills development.

Parents regularly question their decision about enrolling their child in an immersion program (Bolger, 2005). Parents inquire if the language immersion program is well planned, if the curriculum content is effectively being taught in the second language, and if students' first language could be well developed while learning a second language (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Based on these concerns, Johnson and Swain (1997) proposed eight core features of an effective immersion program (Appendix H). For every new language immersion program to create fluent language learners, these eight aspects must be taken into account.

1. Lessons will be completed in the second language, though students will have limited proficiency during initial learning.

2. The immersion academic content-area curriculum is same as local regular curriculum.
3. The students first language development needs readily perceived support from their family.
4. The program aims to achieve a high level of the second language proficiency with normal first language development.
5. Students have limited exposure to the second language outside of classroom activities.
6. Students begin the immersion learning program with similarly limited second language proficiency.
7. The immersion program instructors are fluent in students' first and second languages.
8. The immersion curriculum is structured similarly to standard classroom subjects within the school district.

A school's quality is reflected in the opinions of parents shared with the community (García, Lorenz, & Robison, 1995). Parents' perceptions about a program have an important role in affecting the continuation or the demise of the program (Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007). For language immersion programs, schools need to pay more attention to recruitment of students, particularly by relying heavily on parents' support and provision. Parents decide the enrollment of their children to a new program. Encouragement for parents' support and involvement are key factors in making a school program effective and successful (Heining-Boynton, 1990). Fred Genesee (2005) also emphasized parental involvement as an integral component to the program success due to parents' participation in the program development. From the program's start,

parents have a deep understanding of the program structure and principles, they are knowledgeable of student' progress, and they promote the program.

Parents who decide to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs want their children to learn another language—Mandarin Chinese, as well as content areas. Parents frequently inquire if they have made the right decision by enrolling their children in Chinese immersion programs. They expect that their children will be doing well in learning the regular curriculum in both Chinese and English (Bolger, 2005).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Studies have been conducted on language immersion programs for a long period of time. Researchers assert that parents' support is important for the success of foreign language education programs (Heining-Boynton, 1990). Parents' primary concern is the quality of a child's education. Since Minnesota's first Chinese immersion program began in 2006, little research has been conducted on parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs. Hence, more research is needed to understand parental perceptions about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota is needed to be supplemented.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to gather and examine parental perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in which their child/children attended. The parental perceptions examined in the study were focused on the key factors parents used in making the decision to enroll their child/children in a Chinese immersion program and their experiences with the program that their child/children attended during 2016-2017 school year.

The study aimed to explore parents' motivations and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs regarding the development of seven Chinese immersion programs and four Chinese immersion continuation programs in Minnesota since 2006. By exploring parents' perception, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements were identified. The findings of the study could be shared with Chinese immersion programs' administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The findings of the study could be used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. In addition, the results of the study could be used by parents who plan to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs to make their final decisions.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

Assumptions made for the study include the following:

- 1) Parents are interested and engaged in the success of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.
- 2) The study subjects will be honest when completing their surveys.
- 3) The data gathered from parents is reliable and valid.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

Delimitations of the study consist of factors that the researcher can control to include or not include in the study; and delimitations define the boundaries and limit the scope of the study (Roberts, 2004). Listed below are delimitations of the study identified by the researcher.

1. The study was implemented in three selected Chinese immersion programs in three different school districts in Minnesota. The results of the study may be biased by

- factors or perceptions unique to the three selected programs. There were a total of seven elementary level Chinese immersion programs and four middle school level Chinese immersion continuation programs during 2016-2017 school year in Minnesota. The results may not be able to be generalized for other programs.
2. The study was focused on parent's perceptions about Chinese immersion programs. School administrators, Chinese immersion teachers, and other English program teachers were not surveyed for the study. Only parents of immersion students at three selected programs were invited to participate in the study, because the researcher believed parents were most concerned about the Chinese immersion programs. The parents' perceptions were considered important for the study.
  3. The study was conducted in spring 2017. Parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs might have been very different since the first Chinese immersion program launched in Minnesota in 2006. With the program development, parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs might change in the future as well.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of the study was to examine parental perceptions of the Chinese immersion programs in which their child/children had enrolled during 2016-2017 school year. The parental perceptions examined in the study were focused on the key factors that parents used in making their decision to enroll their child/children in a Chinese immersion Program and their expectations and experiences of the program in which they had enrolled their child/children during 2016-2017 school year.

The study addressed the following five research questions:

1. What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?
2. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?
3. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?
4. What were program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?
5. What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?

### **Definition of Terms**

1. Immersion: "a method of learning a foreign language by being taught entirely in that language." (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/immersion>).
2. Language immersion: "Language immersion is a method of teaching language. By simple definition, when referring to language immersion the meaning is that teachers communicate only in second or foreign language to teach their students." (Johnson & Swain, 1997, p. 1).



3. L1: a person's first or native language.
4. L2: a second/foreign/target language to be taught in a language immersion program.
5. Bilingual education—"education in an English-language school system in which students with little fluency in English are taught in both their native language and English" (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bilingual%20education>).?
6. Additive bilingualism—the learning of the second language, at the same time, also to develop and maintain the first language (Lambert, 1975).
7. Early immersion: students are 5 or 6 year-olds in kindergarten or grade 1 beginning their second language (Baker, 2006).
8. Middle immersion: students are 9 or 10 year-olds in the middle elementary grades, usually grade 4, beginning their second language (Baker, 2006).
9. Late immersion: students are between 11 and 14 year-olds, usually in the first year of secondary school, beginning their second language (Baker, 2006).
10. Total Immersion: "Programs in which all or almost all subjects taught in the lower grades (K-2) are taught in the foreign language; instruction in English usually increases in the upper grades (3-6) to 20%-50%, depending on the program" (<http://webapp.cal.org/Immersion/>).
11. Partial Immersion: "Programs in which up to 50% of subjects are taught in the foreign language; in some programs, the material taught in the foreign language is reinforced in English" (<http://webapp.cal.org/Immersion/>).
12. Two-Way Immersion: "Programs that give equal emphasis to English and a non-English language and in which one to two thirds of the students are native speakers of

the non-English language, with the remainder being native speakers of English.”

(<http://webapp.cal.org/Immersion/>)

### **Organization of the Study**

The dissertation was organized into five chapters. Chapter I includes the introduction to the study, as well as the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, assumptions and delimitations. Chapter II outlines a review of the literature and related research supporting the study of Chinese immersion programs. Chapter III identifies the research methodology of the study. Chapter IV provides an analysis of the data of the findings from the study. Chapter V provides a summary of conclusions, discuss of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations for future studies, and recommendations for Chinese immersion programs' future practices.

## **Chapter II: Literature Review**

Over the past five decades, researches have examined the importance and development of language immersion programs. The purpose of the study is to investigate the perceptions of parents who enroll their children in Chinese language immersion programs in Minnesota. The review begins with a historical overview of language immersion programs, then highlights the development of language immersion programs implemented in the United States. After that, the literature review focuses on the growth of Chinese immersion programs both in the United States and in Minnesota. Finally, the characteristics of the effective Chinese language immersion programs are reviewed.

### **Language Immersion Programs**

Language immersion is a method of teaching a second or foreign language. According to Johnson and Swain (1997), in a language immersion program, the teacher instructs students only in a second or foreign language. Students may start learning a second language at different ages. According to Baker (2006), language immersion programs are split into three groups based on ages when they start to learn a second language. Early immersion students are 5 or 6 years old in kindergarten or grade 1 beginning their second language. Middle immersion students are 9 or 10 years old in the middle elementary grades, usually grade 4, beginning their second language. Late immersion students are between 11 and 14 years old, usually in the first year of secondary school, beginning their second language. According to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL, 2011), there are three main types of language immersion: total, partial, and two-way immersion programs.

Total immersion is also referred to as one-way immersion. The total one-way immersion program is primarily focused on students with little or no second language background (Genesee, 2008). In a partial immersion program, the material taught in the foreign language is reinforced in English. Two-way immersion programs are also referred to as “dual language immersion”. Two-way immersion is characterized by classes composed of students fluent in the majority language group (e.g., English speakers) and also students fluent in the minority language (e.g., Chinese). “Ideally, half of the students in each class are members of the majority language group (e.g., English speakers) and half are members of a minority language program (e.g., Spanish speakers)” (Genesee, 2008, p. 27). Two-way immersion programs offer opportunities for the two groups to support each other in their language development. Two-way immersion programs have three key characteristics: Instruction in two languages, each class focuses on using one language, and students sharing language skills to facilitate fluency development (Christian, 1997).

In a total one-way language immersion program, the classroom teacher is not just a second language teacher. The immersion teacher uses a new language as a medium of instruction to teach subject content. Students are motivated to study the subject content while learning a new language (Desrochers, 2005). Immersion programs use the target language to study other knowledge and skills. Hence, mathematics, science, and social studies are taught in the target language. The teacher instructs subject content by only using the target language. The students are engaged in learning both language and content/skills at the same time (Desrochers, 2005). Inside a language immersion classroom, the effective communication between students and teachers are conducted in the target language. Students have to use the target language to think and acquire content knowledge in several subject areas (Little, 2005).

Language immersion education is not just about learning a second language, but rather it is learning through, and being immersed in, a second language (Genesee, 1987). Lots of studies have demonstrated a correlation between study of a foreign language and other English language subjects' success (Genesee, 1987; Swain, 1981). Since the language teacher and the content-area teacher are one and the same, students are exposed to a much richer language environment rather than being taught in traditional foreign language classrooms (Met & Livaccari, 2012). When students are immersed in a foreign language surrounding, the more they communicate to native-speaking teachers and experience the real culture, the higher language proficiency they could achieve (Fortune & Tedick, 2008). "Immersion programs aim to provide the quantity and quality of involvement in the use of the target language that ensure the development of a high level of proficiency" (Johnson & Swain, 1997, p. xiii).

The first French immersion program started in 1965 in St-Lambert, Quebec, Canada. A group of English-speaking parents wanted to ensure that their children achieved a high level of French, as well as English, so they succeeded in initiating an experimental immersion kindergarten for their children (Johnson & Swain, 1997). The first Immersion program provided students an opportunity to learn Canada's two official languages—English and French. In the one-way immersion classroom, all subjects were taught in students' second language, French (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). All students entered the program with no proficiency in the immersion language (Lambert, 1984), which meant all students could move together towards proficiency in French to the same degree (Fortune & Tedick, 2008). The original goals of the St. Lambert French immersion program were to promote the full development of additive

bilingualism – the learning of the second language, at the same time, also to develop and maintain the first language (Lambert, 1975).

Since 1965, the rest of Canada has become aware of the economical, political, and social value that a knowledge of French might have. Because of the success of the original St. Lambert program, immersion education spread widely and rapidly in Canada during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Since then, French immersion programs have spread across the country and are found in every province and territory in Canada (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Beside French immersion programs, other language immersion programs have also been established in Canada. (Genesee, 2005).

In 1972, the first language immersion program in the United States was established at Coral Way Elementary School in Miami-Dade County, Florida (Johnson & Swain, 1997). It was a Spanish/English two-way immersion program. These parents, originally from Cuba, wanted their children to keep their native Spanish while they were learning English (Ovando, 2003). Both English-learning Spanish speakers and Spanish-learning English speakers were included in the same classroom, and subjects were taught in both languages. Thus, two-way immersion education is used to develop students' bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural abilities (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).

Due to the success of these two forms of language immersion programs in Canada and in the United States, language immersion education has spread to Australia, South Korea, Finland, Hungary, Hawaii, Spain, South Africa, Hong Kong, and Japan (CAL, 2011). The number of language immersion programs is increasing quickly in the United States and all over the world (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).

Since the first language immersion program started by Canadians in 1965, many studies focused on language immersion education have proclaimed benefits such as “academic achievement, language and literacy development in two or more languages, and cognitive skills” (Fortune, 2012, p. 9). Some research suggests that language immersion programs help to enhance students’ academic benefits. Language immersion programs can build solid cognitive foundations at the most beneficial age. Research has found that students with higher proficiency in a second language test with higher scores in English reading and writing, math, and science (Howe, 2012). Some studies have also found that students who had studied a foreign language more than four years score statistically higher on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than those who do not (Marcos, 1998). Additionally, language immersion students have higher capability in learning third or fourth languages than those who only speak one language (Sanz, 2000). These students also demonstrate higher and more effective communication skills (Lazaruk, 2007). Students in language immersion programs learn various skills while studying a second language. These skills increase their metalinguistic understanding and critical thinking abilities (Howe, 2012). Students who study a second language are more innovative at solving complicated problems than those who do not (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991; Cenoz, & Genesee, 1998).

According to Fortune and Tedick (2008), beyond academic and cognitive benefits, immersion education effectively enriched “levels of intercultural sensitivity” (p. 10). Students with knowledge of other languages have access to foreign medias, literatures, and the arts. They are able to communicate with a range people from different countries. They experience other

cultures and societies. Becoming bilingual or multilingual expands students' worldview (Fortune, 2012).

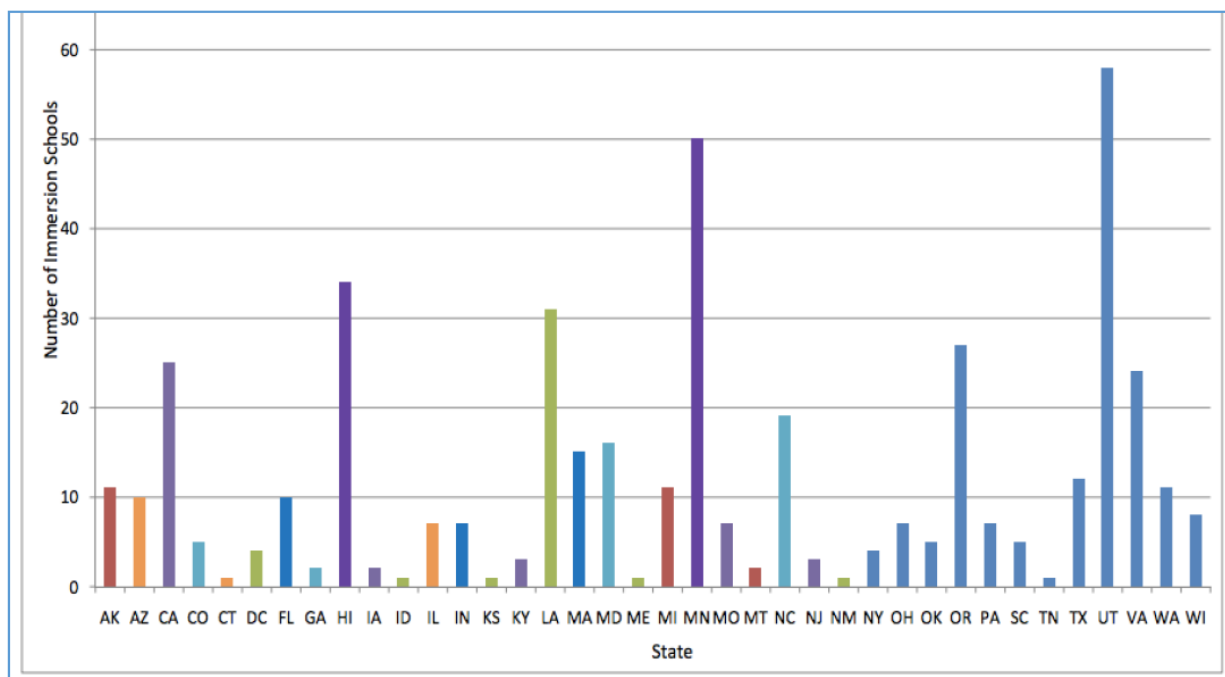
There are numerous significant advantages for young children being bilingual and multicultural (Soderman, Westcott, & Shen, 2007; Soderman & Oshio 2008). With the expansion of the global economy, international businesses and tourism, diplomatic corps, and communications will create demand for more employment possibilities to those with high proficiency in a second language and intercultural competency skills (Mann, Brassell, & Bevan, 2011). In an increasingly interdependent world community, parents desire to provide their children with these skills to cooperate proficiently with people from different places (Fortune & Tedick, 2003).

### **Language Immersion Programs in the United States**

In the United States, the first language immersion program was established in 1972 in Florida. These parents, originally from Cuba, started the two-way Spanish/English program at Coral Way Elementary School in Miami-Dade County, Florida (Fortune & Tedick, 2008). They wanted their children to keep their native Spanish while they were learning English (Ovando, 2003). In the United States, Foreign language immersion programs are designed to enrich the education of native-English-speaking students by learning academic subjects in a second language. Students develop proficiency in the second language by hearing and using it to learn all of their school subjects rather than by studying the language itself (Met, 1991). The goal of a language immersion program is to develop a student's proficiency in both English and a second language, intercultural competence, and academic performance in the content area at or above expectations (Met & Livaccari, 2012). The language immersion education has been proven to be



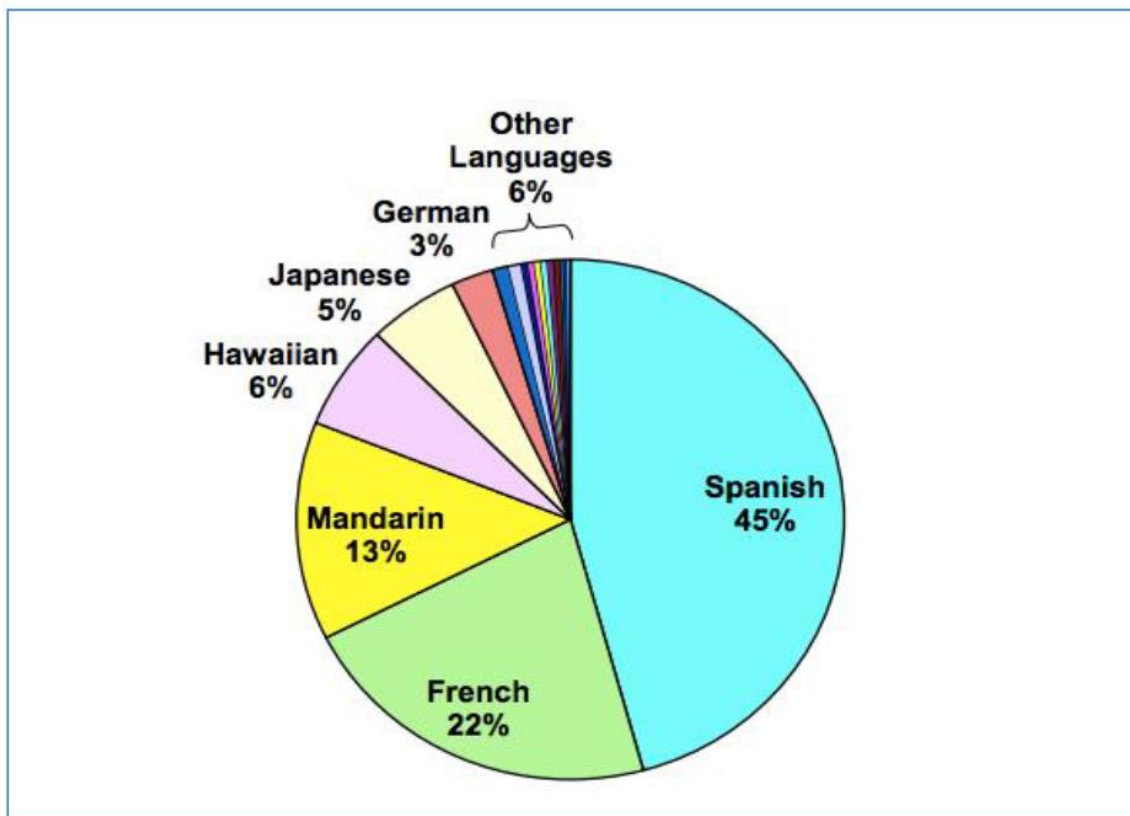
very successful and powerful since its inception in the United States at the beginning of the 1970s (Genesee, 1987). The success of the language immersion education led to the number of immersion programs increasing quickly in the United States (Fortune & Tedick, 2008). Figure 1 provides the number of language immersion schools by state in 2011.



*Figure 1.* Language immersion schools by state, 2011 (adapted from CAL 2011).

According to the Directory of Foreign Language Immersion Programs in U.S. Schools (CAL, 2011), there were 448 language immersion programs in the United States in 2011. The number of immersion schools for each state varied. By the end of 2011, Utah had the most with 58 language immersion programs. It was followed by Minnesota with 50, Hawaii with 34, Louisiana with 31, Oregon with 27, and California with 25. From there, the numbers fell (CAL, 2011). Language immersion programs are growing steadily with new programs opening every year in the United States.

Among all kinds of language immersion programs, Spanish immersion programs were the most common in 2011. Also, there are French, Mandarin, Hawaiian, Japanese, German, and other language immersion programs (CAL, 2011). Figure 2 provides the percentage of immersion programs by language of instruction in 2011 in the United States.



*Figure 2.* Percentage of immersion programs by language of instruction, 2011 (adapted from CAL, 2011)

Language immersion is an effective way to learn a second language by learning all subjects in a second language, which promotes multiculturalism and linguistic diversity within the community (Fortune & Tedick, 2008). Language immersion program is the best way to learn a language successfully in a school context (Fortune & Tedick, 2003). Fortune and Tedick (2003) affirmed most immersion students are expected to reach higher levels of second language

proficiency than students in other school-based language programs. Language immersion students who are fluent in another language can communicate well with native language speakers. They also see the world with a global perspective (Johnson & Swain, 1997). Learning a second language in an immersion program can promote students to understand other cultures (Howe, 2012).

In the United States, there are increasingly essential requirements for employees with different world language capabilities in the field of national security, economic competitiveness, delivery of health care, and law enforcement (Jackson, & Malone, 2009; Mann et al., 2011; Rhodes & Pufahl, 2009). Parents are taking advantage of the various available opportunities and resources of second language learning for the benefit of children (Marcos, 1998). Language immersion education is the fastest growing and most successful method to learn a second language currently available in U.S. schools (Fortune & Tedick, 2003). The numbers of all different kinds of language immersion programs are growing quickly throughout the United States.

### **Chinese Immersion Programs in the United States**

The first private Chinese immersion school in the United States, San Francisco's Chinese American International School, opened in 1981. The idea of starting a Mandarin Chinese immersion school came from a mother who had adopted a son from Taiwan. She wished her son had an opportunity to learn Mandarin Chinese (Weise, 2013). The second Chinese immersion school, Pacific Rim International School in Emeryville, California, opened in 1991. In 1996, the nation's first public Mandarin immersion program was launched at Potomac Elementary in Potomac, Maryland. Also in the same year of 1996, the International School of the Peninsula in

Palo Alto, California, added a Mandarin Chinese immersion program in addition to its original French immersion program. Three of the first four Mandarin immersion programs were located in San Francisco because 30% of San Francisco's population was comprised of Chinese-Americans (Weise, 2013). These families desired to give their children the language of Chinese. Chinese immersion programs were popular among Chinese-American parents before 2006 (Weise, 2013). Recently, Chinese immersion programs have become more popular among non-Chinese parents as well.

Chinese immersion programs grew slowly and steadily with a few programs opening before 2006. In the fall of 2007, 15 new Chinese immersion programs were launched throughout the United States. Since then, Chinese immersion programs have been expanding quickly in the United States. Figure 3 provides the numbers for growth of Chinese immersion programs in the United States by year, from 1981 to 2013 (Weise, 2016).

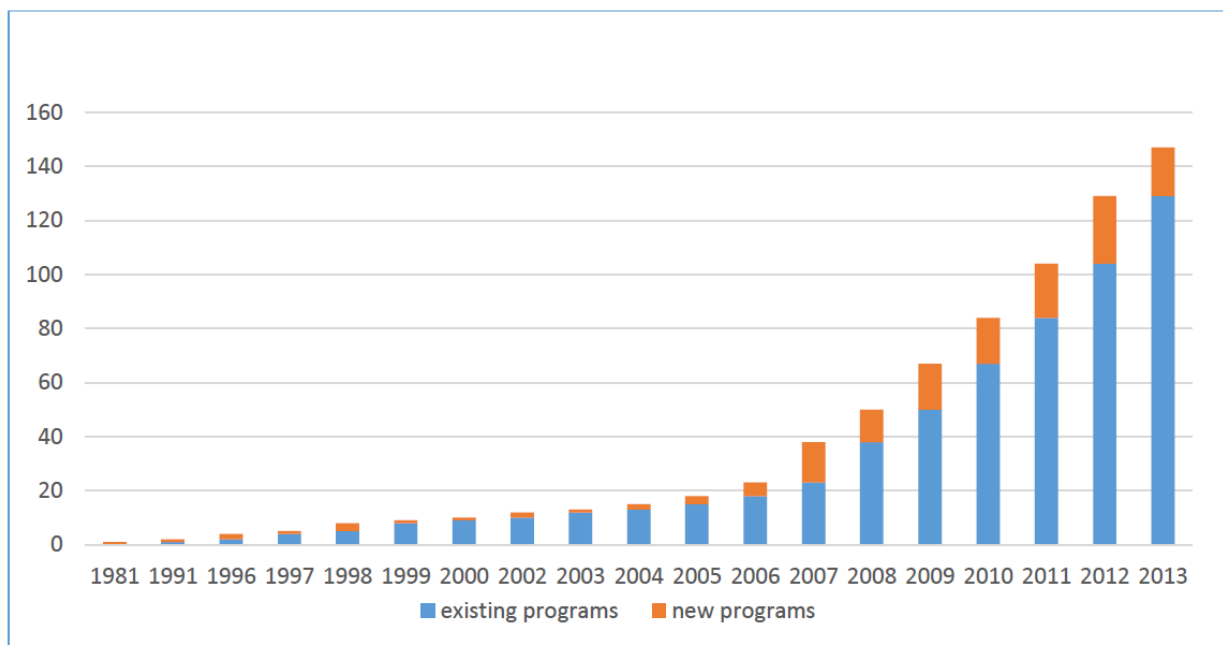


Figure 3. The growth of Chinese immersion programs in the U.S. by year from 1981 to 2013.

Figure 3 shows that since the first Chinese immersion school opened in 1981, the number of Chinese immersion programs grew very slowly during the first 20 years. There were only 13 Chinese immersion programs in 2003. From 2007 to 2013, Chinese immersion programs grew quickly with 124 new programs opening during these 6 years. In 2013, the total number of Chinese immersion programs increased to 147. From 2013 to 2016, 80 new Mandarin Chinese immersion programs opened. The number of Chinese immersion programs had grown to 227 by October, 2016 (Weise, 2016). Chinese language immersion programs are getting more popular and growing very quickly in the United States during the last 10 years.

With a population of 1.371 billion in 2015, China recently became the second largest world economy behind the United States (The World Bank, 2016). In 2015, China's GDP was \$10.87 trillion, and GDP Growth was up 6.9% a year (The World Bank, 2016). China is increasingly playing an important and influential role in the global economy. Learning Chinese has become increasingly well-known in the United States. More and more families are choosing Chinese immersion programs for their children. The number of Chinese immersion programs has been increasing quickly every year.

China has more than 5000 years of history and is one of the world's four ancient civilizations. Mandarin Chinese, the official language in China, is the most widely spoken language in the world. In addition to the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, Mandarin Chinese is also spoken in the important and influential Chinese communities of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines, and Mongolia.

In Chinese immersion programs, students learn several subjects, such as Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Music, and Art in Chinese. They learn content through Chinese, and

learn Chinese while they learn content. Learning both content and Chinese language at the same time in the same classroom is the most important goal of Chinese immersion programs (Met, 2012). Content areas' study is determined by the district and school level curricula. Chinese immersion students are expected to study the same content-area curriculum and reach the same level of proficiency as other students who are not in a Chinese immersion program (Fortune & Tedick, 2008).

Learning Chinese will help students to understand Chinese culture from different perspectives. For most American students, if they are fluent in Chinese, they will have more confidence and opportunities to work in a worldwide economy (Howe, 2012). The relationship between China and the United States are growing more interdependent. China is currently the United States' largest goods trading partner during 2015 (USTR, 2016). China is the United States' largest supplier of goods imports and the third largest goods export market in 2015 (USTR, 2016). Knowing Chinese opens numerous doors to various different important fields between the United State and China. For example, for international trade specialists, overseas media correspondents, diplomats, airline employees, and national security personnel, being familiar with Chinese language and culture is essential for them to do their jobs well. As well as teachers, healthcare providers, customer service representatives, and law enforcement personnel serve their communities more effectively when they can reach across language and culture between United States and China (Marcos, 1998). Americans who are fluent in Chinese can enhance America's economic competitiveness with China, maintain its political and security interests, and work to promote an understanding of Chinese cultural diversity within the United

States (Marcos, 1998). Hence, learning Chinese now in schools will effectively improve students' future employment opportunities between United States and China.

### **The Development of Chinese Immersion Programs in Minnesota**

The first Chinese immersion school in Minnesota, Yinghua Academy, opened in 2006. Yinghua Academy is the first public Chinese immersion school in the U.S. and the first Chinese immersion school in the Midwest (Yinghua Academy, 2016). According to Minnesota Advocates for Immersion Network (MAIN, 2016), there were seven Chinese immersion programs are functioning in Minnesota by the fall 2015. Yinghua Academy is the only from kindergarten through eighth (K-8) grade full Chinese immersion school (Yinghua Academy, 2016). The other six programs are from kindergarten to fifth grade (K-5). Yinghua Academy and Lakes International Academy are charter schools; the other five programs are in four public school districts (Fortune, Tedick, & Miller, 2015).

All of Minnesota's Mandarin immersion programs are the early total one-way immersion model at the elementary schools. Chinese immersion continuation programs at middle schools offer Mandarin Chinese Language Art and Social studies for at least two years (MAIN, 2016).

Table 1

*List of Minnesota Chinese Immersion Programs at Elementary Schools (as of fall 2015)*

<b>Year of Starting</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>School Address</b>
<b>2006</b>	Minneapolis Public Schools	Yinghua Academy, Chinese immersion school, a public charter school, K-8	1616 Buchanan Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413
<b>2007</b>	Minnetonka Public Schools	Chinese immersion program, Scenic Heights Elementary School, K-5	5650 Scenic Heights Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55345
<b>2007</b>	Minnetonka Public Schools	Chinese immersion program, Excelsior Elementary School, K-5	441 Oak Street, Excelsior, MN 55331
<b>2007</b>	Hopkins Public Schools	XinXing Academy, Chinese immersion program, Eisenhower Elementary School, K-5	1001 Highway 7, Hopkins, MN 55305
<b>2007</b>	St. Cloud Area Schools	Guang Ming Academy, Chinese immersion program, Madison Elementary School, K-5	2805 9th St N., St. Cloud, MN 56303
<b>2011</b>	Saint Paul Public Schools	Jie Ming Mandarin Immersion Academy, K-5	1599 Englewood Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104
<b>2011</b>	Forest Lake Area Schools	Lakes International Language Academy, Chinese immersion program, a public charter school, K-5	246 11th Ave. Southeast, Forest Lake, MN 55025-1883



Table 2

*List of Minnesota Chinese Immersion Continuation Programs at Middle Schools (as of fall 2015)*

Year of Starting	District	School Name	School Address
2012	Minnetonka Public Schools	Minnetonka Middle School East, Chinese immersion program, Grade 6-8	17000 Lake Street Extension, Minnetonka, Minnesota 55345
2012	Minnetonka Public Schools	Minnetonka Middle School West, Chinese immersion program, Grade 6-8	6421 Hazeltine Boulevard, Excelsior, Minnesota 55331
2012	Hopkins Public Schools	Hopkins West Junior High, Chinese immersion program, Grade 6-8	3830 Baker Road, Minnetonka, MN 55305
2012	St. Cloud Area Schools	North Junior High School, Chinese immersion program, Grade 6-8	1212 29th Ave N, St Cloud, MN 56303

According to Fortune et al. (2015), the schools with Chinese immersion programs are concentrated in Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area. Forest Lake is right north next to Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area. Saint Cloud is located 65 miles northwest away of Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metro Area along Interstate 94.

### **The Characteristics of Effective Chinese Immersion Programs**

Bolger (2005) points out the goal of language immersion programs as one “to develop proficiency in two languages as well as in all other subject areas” (p. 33). When planning a language immersion program, it is significant to have well-defined program expectations for both the first and second languages, as well as for subject areas content.

Johnson and Swain (1997) proposed eight core features of an effective immersion program (Appendix G). For Chinese immersion programs to create fluent language learners, these eight aspects must be taken into account.

1. Lessons will be completed in the second language, though students will have limited proficiency during initial learning.

2. The immersion academic content-area curriculum is same as local regular curriculum.
3. The students first language development needs readily perceived support from their family.
4. The program aims to achieve a high level of the second language proficiency with normal first language development.
5. Students have limited exposure to the second language outside of classroom activities.
6. Students begin the immersion learning program with similarly limited second language proficiency.
7. The immersion program instructors are fluent in students' first and second languages.
8. The immersion curriculum is structured similarly to standard classroom subjects within the school district.

Genesee (2005) also summarized a detailed six critical features of effective immersion programs (Appendix F). Planning an effective Chinese immersion program, these six critical features should be considered.

1. The target language is using as the medium for subject areas content instruction and communication between teachers and students in school. The immersion teachers are native (or native-like) speakers of target language and have professional second language teaching experience. Students are encouraged to ask questions and share their thoughts and feelings only in the target language in the classroom.
2. The goal of the immersion program is to achieve high level proficiency in second language, as well as the first language. It is additive bilingualism.

3. Students in the language immersion program are expected to gain the same high level of academic achievement as students in the regular program.
4. The immersion program is planned appropriately on students' existing skills, knowledge and experiences of their grade level. Families to enroll their children in the language immersion program are asked to make a long-term commitment to the program.
5. Immersion teachers and principals are commanding the program to success because they are the key leaders of the program. They know how to teach, they have a deep understanding of findings on immersion education studies, and they are program advocates.
6. Parental involvement as integral to the program success due to parents' participation in the program development. Since the program's start, parents have a deep understanding of the program structure and principles, they are knowledgeable of student' progress, and they promote the program.

Most of language immersion programs are offered within a large public school system. It is an alternative choice for all the students, so Fortune and Tedick (2008) summarized several other distinguishing features of well-implemented immersion programs.

An effective language immersion program should focus on curricular and instructional element. For example,

- Curriculum is content-driven and language-attentive;
- Language, culture and content are integrated;
- Classroom tasks are designed to challenge students both cognitively and linguistically;
- Instructional strategies reflect linguistically and developmentally-appropriate scaffolding and elicit frequent use of the immersion language;
- Classroom interactional dynamics encourage peer-peer communication;

- Cooperative learning techniques seek to build more equitable and socially respectful student relationships. (p. 10)

These characteristics of language immersion programs, along with the eight core features of an effective immersion program (Johnson & Swain, 1997) have been proposed as a guideline for planning and developing successful Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.

As China is playing more important role in global economy, more parents are choosing Chinese immersion programs for their child/children. Chinese immersion education are growing popular in the United States. For parents, these characteristics of language immersion programs will guide them to assess if the Chinese immersion program that their child/children are attending are appropriate, effective, and successful.

### **Chapter III: Methodology**

The first Chinese immersion program, Yinghua Academy, was launched in Minnesota in 2006. There were seven Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota by the fall 2015 (MAIN, 2016). The parents' perceptions of enrolling their children in Chinese immersion programs had not previously been explored. The study was to examine the parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs regarding the development of seven Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The finding of the study could be used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. Parents have various reasons to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs. The purpose of the study was to gather information about parents' major reasons to choose Chinese immersion programs for their children, and their expectations and experiences during their children's attendance of the programs. By exploring the perceptions of parents, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements related to their child/children enrollment were identified. The study also highlighted the importance of parents' support for their children success in Chinese immersion programs. The results of the study could be used by parents to enroll their children in a Chinese immersion program to make their final decisions.

#### **Research Questions**

The purpose of the study was to examine parental perceptions of the Chinese immersion programs in which their child/children had enrolled during the 2016-2017 school year. The parental perceptions examined in the study were focused on the key factors that parents used in making the decision to enroll their children in a Chinese immersion Program and their expectations and experiences of the program in which they had their child/children enrolled.

The study addressed the following five research questions:

1. What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?
2. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?
3. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?
4. What were program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?
5. What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?

### **Participants**

Three Chinese immersion programs were selected for participation in the study. The participants involved in the study were parents who had enrolled their child/children in the selected Chinese immersion programs during the 2016-2017 school year. They had at least one child attending the respective immersion program at the time of participating in the survey.

Participants were willing to share their experiences of enrolling their child/children in Chinese

immersion programs. In a total of 256 parents volunteered to participate in the study. Of the 256 survey participants, 246 survey were valid. Ten of the surveys were uncompleted.

### **Human Subject Approval–Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

Informed consent was documented through the use of a written consent form that was approved by the IRB and signed by all subjects. A copy of the consent form was provided to each study participant to e-sign before they take the online survey. Signed informed consent forms will be retained for three years in accordance with statute 45 CFR 46.116.

The informed consent process included the following steps:

1. Presentation of information that enabled the individual to knowledgeably and voluntarily decide whether or not to participate as a research subject;
2. Documentation of consent with a written form signed by the subject;
3. Responses to the subject's questions/concerns were offered during the research, and the researcher was prepared for any new findings that may affect the subject's willingness to continue participating to be addressed.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher developed a set of parent survey questions (Appendix F) aligned with the purpose of the study and five research questions. A link to the Survey Monkey instrument was e-mailed to all parents who had enrolled their children in three selected Chinese immersion programs. Survey Monkey hyperlink to the parent survey was distributed to study participants by the staff of the Statistical Consulting and Research Center at St. Cloud State University.

Based on the literature, the researcher developed a set of parent survey questions. The parent survey included 17 forced choice questions to collect more reliable data. Seven of 17

questions with several rating scale sub-questions were to ask parents to mark their level of satisfaction or concerns with a set of factors related to Chinese immersion programs. The last two questions were open-ended questions to collect extra information from parents. The 10 of 20 survey questions also provided parents with an opportunity to share any additional comments or experiences about their child/children's participation in selected Chinese immersion programs. The researcher believed that the addition information collected from parents would be more valuable to understand parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs.

The survey questions were designed to collect information needed to achieve survey objectives. The parent survey questions had been field-tested by three different groups. Two different doctoral cohorts of Educational Administration and Leadership program in St. Cloud State University had field tested the parents' survey in different times. The other group was consisted of several parents with children in a Chinese immersion program. After three piloting sessions, the researcher made wording changes on the instruments for clarity purposes and/or consider rearranging of the questions and/or merging questions to shorten the survey.

**Research question one.** *What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?* The first research question was answered by the following survey questions (Appendix F):

- Q 2: How many children do you have enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?
- Q 3: Please select all the grade levels in which you currently have children enrolled in.



- Q 4: How long has your child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program? (Please select the longest period if you have multiple children in the program.)
- Q 5: Which languages are spoken in your home? (Check all that apply)
- Q 9: What was your understanding of the Chinese immersion program before you enrolled your first child in the program?
- Q 10: What has been your level of understanding of the Chinese immersion program since you enrolled your first child in the program?

**Research question two.** *What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?* The second research question was answered by the survey question 11 (Appendix F):

- Q 11: Please select the top 3 reasons you used for enrolling your child/children in the Chinese immersion program?

**Research question three.** *What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?* The third research question was identified by the following survey questions (Appendix F):

- Q 12: How much growth in the following areas have you observed in your child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?
- Q 13: Please rate your level of concern (or worry) related to your child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program.
- Q 14: How much does/do your child/children like learning Chinese?

- Q 15: How often do you help your child/children with Chinese learning?
- Q 16: How often do you help your child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments?
- Q 17: How often do you help your child/children with English reading and writing in general?
- Q 18: For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children's growth.
- Q 20: If you have multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, have your children had similar experiences?

The format of Q14, Q15, Q16 and Q17 were made changes upon the request by the Chinese immersion Program 3 in one school district to address the parents' different experience with different child. Because one parent might be very satisfied with the program for one child in one grade, but not for the other child/children in other grades. Parents might not know how to respond to the survey questions accurately. In order to collect more accurate data from parents, as well as to address the problem parents who had more than one child in the program might have, the researcher changed the format of the survey questions Q14, Q15, Q16, and Q17 for the Chinese immersion Program 3. The different format of Q14, Q15, Q16, and Q17 provided options for parents to differentiate their experience with individual child in different grade level. Same for the Chinese immersion Program 3, an additional survey question 20 "If you have multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, have your children had similar experiences?" was added to provide an option for parents to further explain their different experience with different child.

One format of Q14-Q17 in the parent survey is presented below:

14a. How much does/do your child/children like learning Chinese?

- Extremely likes
- Likes
  
- Dislikes
- Extremely Dislikes

15a. How often do you help your child/children with Chinese learning?

- Never
- Monthly
- A few times per month
- Weekly
- A few times per week
- Daily

16a. How often do you help your child/children with Chinese school work assignment?

- Never
- Monthly
- A few times per month
- Weekly
- A few times per week
- Daily

17a. How often do you help your child/children with English reading and writing in general?

- Never
- Monthly
- A few times per month
- Weekly
- A few times per week
- Daily



**Research question four.** *What were program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?* The fourth research question was answered with the following survey questions (Appendix F):

- Q 7: Please select the 3 most important strengths of the Chinese Immersion Program.  
(Select only 3)
- Q 8: Please select the areas that are in need of improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program (Select all that apply)

**Research question five.** *What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?* The fifth research question was aligned with the following survey questions (Appendix F):

- Two groups of parents based on number of children (Q 2) were compared by Q6 and Q 18.
- Four groups of parents based on different years in the program were compared by Q6 and Q 18.
- Q 6: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children?
- Q 18: For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children's growth.

## **Research Design**

The study used a mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology. “Quantitative social research is about collecting numerical data and analyzing it using statistical methods to explain a

phenomenon” (Haq, 2014, p. 5). For the study, researcher was particularly interested in learning about parent’s thoughts and feelings regarding their child/children’s school experience as well as their expectations and concerns about the selected Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The purpose of the mixed quantitative and qualitative study was to find out the perceptions of parents with children in selected Chinese immersion programs. A mixed quantitative and qualitative research methodology is appropriate due to a collection of data from a large population sample.

The study used a set of parent survey questions to collect data and address five research questions. The large number of parents participating the online survey allowed the researcher to collect data and seek a comprehensive overview of parents’ perceptions of Chinese immersion programs. Such approach aimed to provide comprehensive understanding most of parental perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.

A mixed quantitative and qualitative study was conducted with three selected Chinese immersion programs in three different school districts. Participants were surveyed by using a set of parent survey questions. Descriptive statistical analysis was used for the study. Also, in order to determine the similarities and differences between several selected factors of Chinese immersion programs, a comparative analysis was conducted as well. The comparative approach allowed researcher to broaden the observation base and seek similarities and differences of parents’ perceptions between different groups of parents. In addition, such approach aimed to achieve a more reliable and deeper understanding of parents’ perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.

## **Data Collection**

First, the researcher sent a formal email to the superintendent (Appendix A) with attached document of Project Description (Appendix D) to request permission to conduct a research study in each school district. After the approval was granted, each school principal received a formal email (Appendix B) with an explanation regarding an undergoing study on parental perceptions of Chinese immersion programs. The principal then further informed parents about the survey and encourage their participation. Parent participants who have enrolled their child/children from kindergarten to ninth grade received an email (Appendix C) with a survey link from the principal.

One school could not share their parents' email addresses, and were not comfortable with the principal having to email parents and send out reminders. As an alternative approach, the researcher handed out the printed copies of the parent letter (Appendix C) to all immersion students to ask them to take the hard copies back home in that school. These parents could choose to participate in the study by typing in the link to the survey which was provided on the hardcopy of the letter.

The three separated parent surveys with Survey Monkey hyperlink were distributed to three selected Chinese immersion programs located in three different school districts by the staff of the Statistical Consulting and Research Center at St. Cloud State University. Through the survey link, participants had access to log their responses, should they decide to respond the online survey. Survey responses were collected in the Survey Monkey database.

The first introductory and formal request e-mail was sent to three superintendents in the later March, 2017. A timeframe for conducting the survey was identified by the researcher and

the district superintendents and school principals. Three surveys were distributed on different dates during late April. The surveys were kept open for at least four weeks. Participants' responses were recorded during the data collection period. A second e-mail were distributed to participants after the surveys were open for two weeks. The purpose of the reminding e-mail was to increase return, as well as to thank those who have completed the survey. Survey Monkey has the ability to track completed responses. The three surveys were closed on June 1st, 2017. The total number of respondents was 256.

### **Data Analysis**

After the surveys were closed, the survey data were downloaded from Survey Monkey and data analysis began. The director and graduate assistants of the Statistical Consulting and Research Center at St. Cloud State University had assisted with data analysis. The total number of respondents is 256. Because ten of them did not respond to more than half of survey questions, the data collected from ten participants were treated as missing data. Statistical analysis was based on all cases with valid total data of responses from 246 participants.

Combined data collected from the survey respondents were finally analyzed by the researcher to examine and report on each of the research questions. Descriptive statistical analysis was mainly used for the mixed quantitative and qualitative study. Also, comparative analysis was drawn with relation to number of children and years in program to determine if those factors influence parents' decision to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs and parental perceptions of their child/children's experience in Chinese immersion program. Statistical comparisons were presented by using T-test or One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the survey question 2 and 4. An independent T-test was used to compare the



means of two different groups. ANOVAs is used compare the means of two or more groups. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Significance level (p) were compared and analyzed along with data. Statistical significances are reported in each category of Significance level (p) less than 0.05. Based on the responses, there is a statistical significant difference between groups if  $p < .05$ ; or there isn't a statistical significant difference between groups if  $p > .05$ . Each of the categories was presented individually with an explanation of the findings for five research questions. The development of conclusion, and the final summary were completed by the end of the study in July 2017.

### **Summary**

This chapter addresses the research design, instrumentation, purpose of the study, site selection, participants, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Regarding the development of seven Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota schools since 2006, the mixed quantitative and qualitative study was investigated the parents' perceptions of three selected Chinese immersion programs at three school districts. Data were collected through the use of an online survey. Data were analyzed after data collection. Final analysis of the data, the development of conclusion, and the final summary were completed by the end of the study.

## **Chapter IV: Results**

The purpose of the study was to gain information from parents who had enrolled their child/children in Chinese language immersion programs in Minnesota about why they chose Chinese immersion education, and what they perceived to be advantages and disadvantages for their child/children as a result of their enrollment in Chinese language immersion programs. The study aimed to explore parents' motivations and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs regarding the development of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota since 2006. By exploring parents' perception, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements were identified. The findings of the study could be shared with Chinese immersion programs' administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The findings of the study could be used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. In addition, the results of the study could be used by parents who plan to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs to make their final decisions.

### **Research Questions**

The study addressed the following five research questions:

1. What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?
2. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?

3. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?
4. What were program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?
5. What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?

### **Research Design**

A mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology was used in the study. Based on the literature, the researcher developed a set of parent survey questions on Survey Monkey to collect data and address five research questions.

The parent survey included 17 forced choice questions to collect more reliable quantitative data. Seven of 17 questions with several rating scale sub-questions were to ask parents to mark their level of satisfaction or concerns with a set of factors related to Chinese immersion programs. The last two survey questions were open-ended questions to collect additional qualitative data from parents. The 10 of 20 survey questions also provided parents with an opportunity to share any additional comments or experiences about their child/children's participation in selected Chinese immersion programs to collect additional qualitative data. The researcher believed that the qualitative information collected from parents would be more valuable to understand parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs. Such approach aimed to provide comprehensive understanding most of parental perceptions of Chinese

immersion programs in Minnesota. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the question and analyzed separately. Qualitative responses were transcribed and analyzed to identify themes consistent with the research. Quantitative and qualitative findings are presented independently.

### **Data Collection**

The three separated parent surveys were distributed to three selected Chinese immersion programs located in three different school districts. After the surveys (Appendix F) were closed, the survey data were downloaded from Survey Monkey and data analysis began. The separated data from three school districts were combined together for data analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis and comparative analysis were used for the mixed quantitative and qualitative study.

The same format survey (Appendix F) was distributed to two Chinese immersion programs in two school districts. The Program 3 in third school district used a different survey version with four different formats with four questions. The format of Q14, Q15, Q16, and Q17 were made changes upon the request by the Program 3 in one school district to address the parents' different experience with different child. Because a parent might be very satisfied with the program for a student in one grade, but not for a student in another grade, a parent might not know how to respond to the questions accurately. In order to collect more accurate data from parents, the researcher made the changes of Q14, Q15, Q16, and Q17 for the Program 3 in that school district. The different format of survey questions provided an option for parents to differentiate their experience with individual child in different grade level. Same for Program 3 in that school district, an additional question 20, "If you have multiple children in the Chinese

immersion program, have your children had similar experiences?” was added to provide an option for parents to further explain their different experiences.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was done with the help of the director and graduate assistants at the Statistical Consulting and Research Center at the St. Cloud State University by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Using SPSS, Chronbach’s Alpha was computed to be 0.804 of question 6 and 18, and 0.678 of questions 6, 12, 13, and 18. The alpha is above 0.7 indicating the sample has high internal consistency and reliability.

### **Participants**

The participants involved in the study were parents who had their child/children enrolled in three selected Chinese immersion programs during the 2016-2017 school year. They had at least one child attending the respective immersion program at the time of participating in the survey. Participants were willing to share their experiences of enrolling their child/children in a Chinese immersion program. A total of 256 parents responded to the survey with agreeing to the informed consent and volunteered to participate in the study. Ten parents did not respond to more than half of survey questions, the responses were treated as missing data. Of the 256 survey participants, 10 of the surveys were incomplete. There were 246 valid surveys. Statistics were based on all cases with valid data.

This chapter reported the findings of the study. The data were analyzed and findings were organized according to each research question. For each research question, the data were presented in frequency distribution tables for each question reported by survey respondents. Each factor was presented with the answer choices, the number (N) and percentage (%) of respondents

in each category. For some questions, the valid total number of responses was less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the questions. The findings of each research questions are presented below.

**Research question one.** *What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?*

The first research question was answered by the following survey questions:

**Survey question 2:** How many children do you have enrolled in the Chinese immersion program? Results from this survey question are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

*Q 2: Number of Children Parents had Enrolled in the Chinese Immersion Program*

Number of Children	N	Percent
1	139	56.5%
2	89	36.2%
3	15	6.1%
4	3	1.2%
Valid total	246	100.0%

As shown in Table 3, the majority of parents (N = 139, 56.5%) reported that they had enrolled one child in the Chinese immersion program. Eighty-nine parents (N = 89, 36.2%) reported that they had enrolled two children in the program. Fifteen (N = 15, 6.1%) reported that

they had three children in the program, and three parents ( $N = 3$ , 1.2%) reported they had four children in the Chinese immersion program.

**Survey question 3:** Please select all the grade levels in which you currently have children enrolled in. Results from this survey question are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

*Q 3: Number of All the Grade Levels in Which Parents had Children Enrolled In*

Grade level	N	Percent
Kindergarten	63	25.6%
1	57	23.1%
2	45	18.2%
3	42	17.0%
4	40	16.2%
5	31	12.6%
6	31	12.6%
7	20	8.1%
8	26	10.5%
9	15	6.0%
Valid total	370	

As shown in Table 4, parents responded to survey question 3 with a total of 370 students were enrolled in different levels. The majority of parents ( $N = 63$ , 25.6%) reported that they had their child/children enrolled in Kindergarten. Fifty-seven ( $N = 57$ , 23.1%) parents reported that they had their child/children enrolled in 1st Grade. Forty-five ( $N = 45$ , 18.2%) parents reported that they had their child/children enrolled in 2nd Grade. Forty-two ( $N = 42$ , 17.0%) parents

reported that they had their child/children enrolled in 3rd Grade. Forty parents (N = 40, 16.2%) reported that had their child/children enrolled in 4th Grade.

**Survey question 4:** How long have your child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program? (Please select the longest period if you have multiple children in the program.) Results from this survey question are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

*Q 4: The Length of Year Parents had Enrolled Their Child/Children in a Chinese Immersion Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
First year in the program	37	15.0%
1-3 years in the program	67	27.2%
4-6 years in the program	70	28.5%
7 or more years in the program	72	29.3%
Valid Total	246	100.0%

As shown in Table 5, the majority of parents (N = 72, 29.3%) reported that they had their child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program for 7 or more years. Seventy parents (N = 70, 28.5%) reported that they had their child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program for 4-6 years. Sixty-seven (N = 67, 27.2%) reported that they had their child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program for 1-3 years. Thirty-seven parents (N = 37, 15.0%) reported that it was the first year they had their child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program.

**Survey question 5:** Which languages are spoken in your home (Check all that apply)? Results from the survey question are presented in Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8.



Table 6

*Q 5: Languages are Spoken in Home (check all that apply)*

Language	N	Percent
Chinese	21	8.5%
English	240	97.5%
German	1	0.4%
Spanish	12	4.8%
French	2	0.8%
Others (Please specify)	16	6.5%
Total	246	

As shown in Table 6, the majority of parents (N = 240, 97.5%) reported that they spoke English in home. Twenty-one parents (N = 21, 8.5%) reported they spoke Chinese in home. Twelve parents (N = 12, 4.8%) reported that they spoke Spanish in home. Two parents (N = 2, 0.8%) reported they spoke French, and one parent reported the he/she spoke German in home. In addition of the languages listed for answer of choices, sixteen parents (N = 16, 6.5%) reported that they spoke other languages in home that was shown in Table 7.

Table 7

*Q 5: Other Languages Spoken in Home (please specify) (N = 16)*

Language	N	Percent
Cambodian	1	0.4%
Creole	1	0.4%
Farsi	1	0.4%
Hebrew	2	0.8%
Hungarian	1	0.4%
Indonesian	2	0.8%
Japanese	1	0.4%
Korean	1	0.4%
Portuguese	1	0.4%
Romanian	1	0.4%
Russian	2	0.8%
Thai language	1	0.4%
Tamil	1	0.4%

As shown in Table 7, two parents reported that they spoke Hebrew in home. Two parents reported they spoke Indonesian spoken in home, and two parents reported Russian spoken in home. The other ten additional languages: Cambodian, Creole, Farsi, Hungarian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, and Thai language, were reported as spoken languages in ten individual families.

Table 8

*Q 5: Number of Different Languages Spoken in Home*

Number of languages spoken in home	N	Percent
1	209	84.9%
2	31	12.6%
3	4	1.6%
4	2	0.8%
Valid total	246	100.0%

The data collected from survey question 5 were analyzed by computing new variable to find out number of monolingual, bilingual, trilingual, and quadrilingual families. The result of number of different languages spoken in home were shown in Table 8. The majority of parents (N = 209, 84.9%) reported that they spoke only one language in home. Thirty-one parents (N = 31, 12.6%) reported that they spoke two languages in home. Four parents (N = 4, 1.6%) reported they spoke three languages in home. Two parents (N = 2, 0.8%) reported that they spoke four languages in home.

**Survey question 9:** What was your understanding of the Chinese immersion program before you enrolled your first child in the program? Results from the survey question are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

*Q 9: Level of Parents' Understanding of the Chinese Immersion Program before Enrolling the First Child in the Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
I/we had limited information about the program	26	11.0%
I/we had only general information about the program	63	26.7%
I/we had learned enough details to help me understand how the program works	36	15.3%
I/we had learned enough details to help me make a decision to enroll my child in the immersion program	111	47.0%
Valid total*	236	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 9, parents were asked to indicate what was their understanding of the Chinese immersion program before they enrolled their first child in the program. Two hundred thirty-six parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 9, before these parents enrolled their first child in the Chinese immersion program, the majority of parents (N = 111, 47%) reported that they had learned enough details to help them make a decision to enroll their child in the immersion. Sixty-three parents (N = 63, 26.7%) reported that they had only general information about the program. Thirty-six parents (N = 36, 15.3%) reported that they had learned enough details to help them understand how the program works. Twenty-six parents (N = 26, 11.0%) reported that they had limited information about the program. Also, parents shared lots of additional thoughts that they had in relation to this survey question. The results are presented in the Table 10 below.

Table 10

*Q 9: Additional Thoughts Parents had Shared in Relation to This Survey Question*

<b>Additional Thoughts</b>	<b>N</b>
We talked to other parents and students.	3
I spoke with many parents with children in the program before deciding to enroll.	
I made the decision based on little information provided by the school, and almost entirely from other parents.	
Chinese is tonal language and needs to be learned early while Spanish can be learned later.	1
I understood that in a true immersion program, no English instruction is given until 3rd grade. Most parents don't really get that and are constantly pressuring the school to do more around English early on, which dilutes the immersion experience (at least according to the research I was reading).	1
I think a more thorough explanation of the program is needed so that it can help parents determine if it would be a good fit. Parents need to know that they will need to dedicate a lot of time in the evening to assist with homework each night.	2
There were many logistical questions only answered by parents of older students.	
I loved the fact that was full immersion.	7
We had previously enrolled in an immersion pre-school and were happy with that experience.	
I went to college with several people that had been in an immersion language program in elementary school and they all spoke highly of it and were bi lingual adults. This made a huge impact on my decision to enroll my son.	
My school experience projected to me the expected program.	
We were excited about immersion learning, so we didn't need many details to make the decision.	
We knew a lot about immersion programs.	
We were committed just finding out it was immersion.	
We attended webinars and open houses as well as met directly with the school's principal - all of these activities were extremely helpful to us in our decision-making process.	9
We attended the Open House night.	
The school tour given to prospective parents was amazing and very helpful.	

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School administrators shared as much as they could.

We had toured a few schools and talked to a principal at another school to learn about immersion programs.

We took a tour with the principal and she answered all of our questions.

We went to a couple information sessions and found them very helpful on our decision making process.

We attended many introduction sessions.

We were deciding between three other schools and this one had the best administration and happiest kids.

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We had very limited information, in fact we were not aware of such a program that our daughter could potentially attend.

4

We were the first year so we had very limited information.

Being the very first year, we knew that things would need to change and adapt as time went on.

We weren't aware of the program until shortly before our oldest child was to enter kindergarten. We had considered a charter school due to the child's high level of aptitude.

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***Survey question 10:*** What has been your level of understanding of the Chinese immersion program since you enrolled your first child in the program? Results from the survey question are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

*Q 10: Level of Parents' Understanding of the Chinese Immersion Program since Enrolling Their First Child in the Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
I/we had received limited information about the program	1	0.4%
I/we had received only general information about the program	15	6.4%
I/we had learned enough details to help me understand how the program works	51	21.8%
I/we had learned enough details to help me make a decision to keep my child in the immersion program	167	71.4%
Valid total*	234	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 10, parents were asked to indicate what were their understandings of the Chinese immersion program since they enrolled their first child in the program. 234 parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 11, since these parents enrolled their first child in the Chinese immersion program, the majority of parents (N = 167, 71.4%) reported that they had learned enough details to help them make a decision to keep their child in the immersion program. Fifty-one parents (N = 51, 21.8%) reported that they had learned enough details to help them understand how the program works. Fifteen parents (N = 15, 6.4%) reported that they had received only general information about the program. One parent (0.4%) reported that he/she had received limited information about the program. Also, parents shared lots of additional thoughts they had in relation to this question. The results are presented in the Table 12 below.

Table 12

*Q 10: Additional Thoughts Parents had Shared in Relation to this Survey Question*

<b>Additional Thoughts</b>	<b>N</b>
Experience has been the best source of information on how the program actually works.	1
Every year when progress test scores come out, it reaffirms why we continue to have our children in this program.	1
Expectations brings requirements.	1
School District has done an outstanding job of keeping parents informed and engaged.	2
There are informational nights after school to help parents further understand how it works in each grade.	
For us the major factor has been the kids can speak Chinese. Information received from school beyond that is nice but not critical.	1
Most information has been through other parents.	2
I believe we need more engagement from the program administrators to guide us through the decisions for Chinese Immersion and impacts on overall education.	
It would be helpful for parents to have a better understanding of what general curriculum/expectations each year so they can determine if it is a good fit for their child and family.	1
it would be very helpful to be able to have planned interactions/town hall or coffee hour with parents of kids in the program who are older.	2
It would help give pointers, and alleviate anxiety over “did I do the right thing?” putting him in this program. Plus, it would be great to know other parents passionate about their child being multi-lingual.	
I still constantly wonder if it was the right choice.	1
There is a lot of involvement/commitment from parents that needs to be better explained. As an example what happens after grade school? What are the options for the students as they enter middle school and then high school?	1
I would like to know more about the curriculum, structure of class, student expectations in the language, and how we can assist at home.	1
Initially didn't realize the importance of studying at home.	1



The communication about how children catch up by 5th grade was spot on and encouraging. These parent meetings have been very beneficial in keeping my child in the immersion program.	1
On the job of understanding of expectations.	1
Given higher level inconsistency in the grade school teacher experience, we did have what I would call a ""lost year"".	1
Moving away from the immersion model due to parental pressure and pressure from other staff at the school who don't fully understand a true immersion model.	1
The district support (which is improving) and the parental understanding (which doesn't seem to be improving) are the biggest areas for improvement.	1
Because of their dyslexia, each year has been a conscious decision to re-enroll.	1

**Research question two.** *What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?*

The second research question was answered by the survey question 11:

**Survey question 11:** Please select the top three reasons you used for enrolling your child/children in the Chinese immersion program. Results from this survey question are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

*Q 11: The Top Three Reasons Parents Used for Enrolling Their Child/Children in the Chinese Immersion Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
The personal benefits for my child to be bilingual and bi-cultural	213	86.5%
The possibility for career opportunities for my child by being bilingual and bi-cultural	165	67.0%
Information about the benefits about the Chinese immersion program read online	36	14.6%
Desire to have our child/children to learn about another culture	75	30.4%
The ability to speak Mandarin, the most widely spoken first language in the world	129	52.4%
My child/children was/were adopted from China	12	4.8%
One of parents or both parents are from China or other Asian countries	13	5.2%
One or more family members speak Chinese	16	6.5%
China has a close trade and economic relationship with the United States	23	9.3%
Family plans to travel to China in the near future	5	2.0%
Family plans to live in China in the near future	3	1.2%
Valid total	246	

In survey question 11, parents were asked to select the top three reasons they used for enrolling their child/children in the Chinese immersion program. 246 parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 13, “The personal benefits for my child to be bilingual and bi-cultural” was selected by the majority of parents (N = 213, 86.5%). “The possibility for career opportunities for my child by being bilingual and bi-cultural” was selected by 165 parents (N = 165, 67.0%). “The ability to speak Mandarin, the most widely spoken first language in the world” was selected by 129 parents (N = 129, 52.4%). Also, parents shared lots of additional

reasons not listed above or any other thoughts they used for enrolling their child/children in the Chinese immersion program in relation to this question. The results are presented in the Table 14 below.

Table 14

*Q 11: Additional Reasons not Listed Above or Any Other Thoughts Parents had in Relation to This Survey Question*

<b>Additional reasons and thoughts</b>	<b>N</b>
A good challenge for precocious English language learners.	4
Academic challenges for my advanced learners.	
Child is gifted and needed to be academically challenged.	
Intellectual and academic challenge for a child who is significantly academically advanced.	
The benefit of being bi-lingual are huge.	6
Being bi-lingual helps brain development in many other areas not directly related to language. We think this experience has made him better at problem solving and has influenced the way he approaches mathematics, for example.	
Complex thinking skills developed while learning another language.	
Neurodevelopmental benefits of a bilingual brain.	
The brain development involved with being bilingual early in life.	
The challenge added by learning a language along with the other subjects.	
My children were bilingual and bi-cultural (Spanish and English) before entering kindergarten so we wanted them to learn mandarin and have the top 3 widely spoken languages in the world.	2
For us it was the benefits if our children being tri-lingual & tri-cultural.	
Multi-lingual, multi-Cultural, different ways to think, understand and express themselves.	2
It gives them a really profound sense of their place as a global citizen at a really young age.	
To progress their ability to learn a language faster at a young age, rather than an adult.	1
Family lived in China for a few years and child attended Chinese preschool there. / I've had Chinese friends.	4

Family member speak Chinese, not fluently but an area of interest.	
My child's friend was going to Chinese immersion program and he wanted to go too.	
To prepare child for the Chinese dream or idealism of bettering oneself and the society through economical, political, and cultural development.	
We found that tonal languages like Chinese are easier learned when young while languages like Spanish and French are not as difficult to learn as an adult.	3
Building new brain connections by immersing in a tonal language.	
The challenge and difficulty learning Chinese helps develop the young mind and benefit my child in future academics.	
We read a lot of education research and found that immersion programs are very beneficial for lifelong learning.	2
In high school I met one of my teacher's children who attended an immersion. I was shocked by how well he could speak Spanish as a seven-year-old and I was an AP Spanish senior who could barely understand him. I vowed if I ever had children I would put them in an immersion as well.	
Better math program, more stringent/accountable learning environment.	2
Administrative support & program development.	
Smaller cohort - better relationship building and partnership opportunities.	2
I wanted my child to be in a classroom with other children whose parents made this choice for them. The decision to enroll a child in an immersion program takes planning, thought, and research. We want our family to be a part of an educational community that takes these decisions seriously and also shares our values of cultural competence, tolerance, and diversity.	
It was the closest immersion school to our home and (at the time) had guaranteed enrollment.	1
To be missionaries in China	2

**Research question three.** *What do parents of children in the selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and their child's enjoyment in the Chinese immersion classroom?*

The third research question was answered by the survey questions 12-19:

**Survey question 12:** How much growth in the following areas have you observed in your child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program? The level of

growth in areas include ability to speak and understand Chinese, ability to learn English, intellectual development, self-confidence of being bilingual, social skills development, and development of intercultural sensitivity. Results for each area from this survey question are presented in Table 15 to Table 21.

Table 15

*Q 12.1: Level of Growth in Ability to Speak and Understand Chinese*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant growth	201	86.6%
Moderate growth	24	10.3%
Some growth	7	3.0%
16.9	0	0.0%
Valid total*	232	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 12.1, parents were asked to indicate how much growth in ability to speak and understand Chinese they had observed in their child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred thirty-two parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 15, the majority of parents (N = 201, 86.6%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a significant growth. Twenty-four parents (N = 24, 10.3%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a moderate growth. Seven parents (N = 7, 3.0%) reported that they had observed their child/children with some growth. None of them reported that they had observed their child/children with no growth.

Table 16

*Q 12.2: Level of Growth in Ability to Learn English*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant growth	73	31.7%
Moderate growth	104	45.2%
Some growth	42	18.3%
No growth was observed	8	3.5%
NA*	3	1.3%
Valid total**	230	100.0%

\* NA means students in a total Chinese immersion program haven't started learning English until 3rd grade (Total Immersion – Programs in which all or almost all subjects taught in the lower grades (K-2) are taught in the foreign language; instruction in English usually increases in the upper grades (3-6) to 20%-50%, depending on the program.)

\*\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 12.2, parents were asked to indicate how much growth in ability to learn English they had observed in their child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program. 230 parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 16, the majority of parents (N = 104, 45.2%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a moderate growth. Seventy-three (N = 73, 31.7%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a significant growth. Forty-two (N = 42, 18.3%) parents reported that they had observed their child/children with some growth. Eight parents (N = 8, 3.5%) reported that no growth they had observed. Three parents (N = 3, 1.3%) responded with NA because their children did not start learning English before third grade.

Table 17

*Q 12.3: Level of Growth in Intellectual Development*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant growth	147	63.4%
Moderate growth	72	31.0%
Some growth	10	4.3%
No growth was observed	2	0.9%
NA	1	0.4%
Valid total*	232	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 12.3, parents were asked to indicate how much growth in intellectual development they had observed in their child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program. 232 parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 17, the majority of parents (N = 147, 63.4%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a significant growth. Seventy-two parents (N = 72, 31.0%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a moderate growth. Ten parents (N = 10, 4.3%) reported that they had observed their child/children with some growth. Two parents (N = 2, 0.9%) reported with no growth had been observed, and one parent (N = 1, 0.4%) responded with NA.

Table 18

*Q 12.4: Level of Growth in Self-confidence of Being Bilingual*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant growth	101	43.9%
Moderate growth	82	35.7%
Some growth	39	17.0%
No growth was observed	6	2.6%
NA	2	0.9%
Valid total*	230	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 12.4, parents were asked to indicate how much growth in self-confidence of being bilingual they had observed in their child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred thirty parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 18, the majority of parents (N = 101, 43.9%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a significant growth. Eighty-two parents (N = 82, 35.7%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a moderate growth. Thirty-nine parents (N = 39, 17.0%) reported that they had observed their child/children with some growth. Six parents (N = 6, 2.6%) reported that no growth had been observed, and two parents (N = 2, 0.9%) responded with NA.



Table 19

*Q 12.5: Level of Growth in Social Skills Development*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant growth	92	39.8%
Moderate growth	94	40.7%
Some growth	39	16.9%
No growth was observed	5	2.2%
NA	1	0.4%
Valid total*	231	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 12.5, parents were asked to indicate how much growth in social skills development they had observed in their child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred thirty-one parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 19, the majority of parents (N = 94, 40.7%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a moderate growth. Ninety-two parents (N = 92, 39.8%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a significant growth. Thirty-nine parents (N = 39, 16.9%) reported that they had observed their child/children with some growth. Five parents (N = 5, 2.2%) reported that no growth they had observed, and one parent (N = 1, 0.4%) responded with NA.

Table 20

*Q 12.6: Level of Growth in Development of Intercultural Sensitivity*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant growth	96	42.1%
Moderate growth	80	35.1%
Some growth	45	19.7%
No growth was observed	6	2.6%
NA	1	0.4%
Valid total*	228	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 12.6, parents were asked to indicate how much growth in development of intercultural sensitivity they had observed in their child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-eight parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 20, the majority of parents (N = 96, 42.1%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a significant growth. Eighty parents (N = 80, 35.1%) reported that they had observed their child/children with a moderate growth. Forty-five parents (N = 45, 19.7%) reported that they had observed their child/children with some growth. Six parents (N = 6, 2.6%) parents reported with no growth had been observed. One parents (N = 1, 0.4%) responded with NA.

For survey question 12, parents shared lots of additional areas of growth in relation to this question. The results are presented in the Table 21 below.

Table 21

*Q 12: Additional Areas of Growth Parent Shared in Relation to This Survey Question*

<b>Additional areas of growth and thoughts</b>	<b>N</b>
Ability to read and write Chinese characters.	2
Math, art, music, science abilities correlated to language immersion.	1
Knew it would take extra time for English reading to catch on, about third grade, and it did catch on great.	1
In general, self confidence. Our daughter now understands that ""most"" kids her age aren't learning a second language.	1
Learning gender bias/stereotypes/oppression from other children and our current political climate that support it (very bad).	1
We have been very impressed and satisfied with his growth this first year.	1
I do not know that his growth is as a result of the immersion program or just maturation./ I don't know if the significant growth comes from the program or my child's background and environment - we are a multicultural family who travels a lot./ I don't know that you can attribute my children's intercultural growth to the Chinese program as we are a multi-cultural family.	3
I have no idea how to measure intercultural sensitivity growth in a 6 year old.	1
One child is doing really well and the other child is practically failing, so not the same for all children.	1

**Survey question 13:** Please rate your level of concern (or worry) related to your child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. The level of concern (or worry) in areas include ability to speak and understand Chinese, ability to learn English, intellectual development, self-confidence of being bilingual, social skills development, and development of intercultural sensitivity. Results for each area from the survey question 13 are presented in Table 22-Table 28.

Table 22

*Q 13.1: Level of Concern (or worry) in Ability to Speak and Understand Chinese*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant concern	7	3.1%
Moderate concern	20	8.9%
Some concern	44	19.6%
No concern	153	68.3%
Valid total*	224	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 13.1, parents were asked to rate their level of concern (or worry) in ability to speak and understand Chinese related to their child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-four parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 22, the majority of parents (N = 153, 68.3%) reported that they had no concern. Forty-four parents (N = 44, 19.6%) reported that they had some concern. Twenty parents (N = 20, 8.9%) reported that they had moderate concern. Seven parents (N = 7, 3.1%) reported that they had significant concern.

Table 23

*Q 13.2: Level of Concern (or worry) in Ability to Learn English*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant concern	16	7.0%
Moderate concern	30	13.2%
Some concern	54	23.8%
No concern	127	55.9%
Valid total*	227	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 13.2, parents were asked to rate their level of concern (or worry) in ability to learn English related to their child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-four parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 23, the majority of parents (N = 127, 55.9%) reported that they had no concern. Fifty-four parents (N = 54, 23.8%) reported that they had some concern. Thirty parents (N = 30, 13.2%) reported that they had moderate concern. Sixteen parents (N = 16, 7.0%) reported that they had significant concern.

Table 24

*Q 13.3: Level of Concern (or worry) in Intellectual Development*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant concern	16	7.0%
Moderate concern	30	13.2%
Some concern	54	23.8%
No concern	127	55.9%
Valid total*	227	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 13.3, parents were asked to rate their level of concern (or worry) in intellectual development related to their child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-five parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 24, the majority of parents (N = 192, 85.3%) reported that they had no concern. Sixteen parents (N = 16, 7.1%) reported that they had some concern. Twelve parents (N = 12, 5.3%) reported that they had moderate concern. Five parents (N = 5, 2.2%) reported that they had significant concern.

Table 25

*Q 13.4: Level of Concern (or worry) in Self-confidence of Being Bilingual*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant concern	3	1.3%
Moderate concern	22	9.8%
Some concern	40	17.8%
No concern	160	71.1%
Valid total*	225	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 13.4, parents were asked to rate their level of concern (or worry) in self-confidence of being bilingual related to their child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-five parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 25, the majority of parents (N = 160, 71.1%) reported that they had no concern. Forty parents (N = 40, 17.8%) reported that they had some concern. Twenty-two parents (N = 22, 9.8%) reported that they had moderate concern. Three parents (N = 3, 1.3%) reported that they had significant concern.

Table 26

*Q 13.5: Level of Concern (or worry) in Social Skills Development*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant concern	7	3.1%
Moderate concern	14	6.1%
Some concern	50	21.9%
No concern	157	68.9%
Valid total*	228	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 13.5, parents were asked to rate their level of concern (or worry) in social skills development related to their child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-five parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 26, the majority of parents (N = 157, 68.9%) reported that they had no concern. Fifty parents (N = 50, 21.9%) reported that they had some concern. Fourteen parents (N = 14, 6.1%) reported that they had moderate concern. Seven parents (N = 7, 3.1%) reported that they had significant concern.



Table 27

*Q 13.6: Level of Concern (or worry) in Development of Intercultural Sensitivity*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Significant concern	2	0.9%
Moderate concern	6	2.7%
Some concern	27	12.1%
No concern	189	84.4%
Valid total*	224	100.0%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 13.6, parents were asked to rate their level of concern (or worry) in development of intercultural sensitivity related to their child/children progress in the Chinese immersion program. Two hundred twenty-four parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 27, the majority of parents (N = 189, 84.4%) reported that they had no concern. Twenty-seven parents (N = 27, 12.1%) reported that they had some concern. Six parents (N = 6, 2.7%) reported that they had moderate concern. Two parents (N = 2, 0.9%) reported that they had significant concern.

For survey question 13, parents shared lots of additional areas of concern in relation to this question. The results are presented in the Table 28 below.

Table 28

*Q 13: Additional Areas of Concerns Parent Shared in Relation to This Survey Question*

<b>Additional areas of concern and thoughts</b>	<b>N</b>
There are all sorts of tests in English, so the pressure to read and write in English is inappropriately strong.	1
The students have a lot to catch up on and learn come third grade when it comes to English but I am not sure I have recommendations on how to do it differently. The students catch up to their peers but I will say that reading to your children in English has a significant impact on their ability to learn English. I know we are told that all the time by the teachers and it is SO true. This is pertinent regardless if your children are in immersion or not.	2
We worked very hard on English literacy at home. We made the commitment right away to read to and have our child read to us in English every day.	
Learning to read in English is a significant concern.	2
The English incorporation is minimal.	
I'm hearing that the program highly understated the likelihood and severity of being behind the child's English-schooled counterparts.	
Lag in teaching of fairness and social responsibility.	1
For students who are not as proficient as their peers, we would hope that the teachers are aware of self-esteem issues that the child faces. The child knows they are not as proficient as many of their peers so what can be done to assist with the child in helping them feel more important/productive in class?	2
No concerns for one child and significant concerns for other.	1
Chinese teachers are too over loaded.	1
Social challenges due to misbehaved children in the classroom.	2
The small cohort size is a concern, as there are only limited amounts of children to socialize with K-5.	
My child does not speak Chinese at home. I do not know if he will be able to communicate if/when we travel to China.	2
Student is extremely shy around native speakers we meet in public.	
Chinese students are not divided up dependent upon their math ability. They all learn the same things at the same time unlike the English students who are divided up based on their level.	1
There was a point in which my eldest child was having some issues in Chinese and there were no tutoring options available, we don't speak Chinese at home so I felt I had no options to help my child	1

The number of already bilingual cultural kids showing up to information sessions for the Chinese immersion programs keeps increasing.	1
Education brings development.	2
I think just keeping an open mind is great in this program and realizing we're all learning as we go.	

Survey questions 14, 15, 16, and 17 have two different formats. Data analysis are presented separately with two formats. Data analysis for Q14-Q17 of combined data of Program 1 and Program 2 are presented first in Table 29 to Table 32, then followed by the data analysis of Program 3 in Table 33 to Table 36, Table 37, and Table 38.

***Survey question 14:*** How much does/do your child/children like learning Chinese?

Results are presented in Table 29 below.

Table 29

Q 14: How Much Their Child/Children like Learning Chinese

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Extremely likes	57	44.9%
Likes	62	48.8%
Dislikes	8	6.3%
Extremely dislikes	0	.0%
Valid total	127	100.0%

In survey question 14, parents were asked to indicate how much their child/children like learning Chinese. As shown in Table 29, the majority of parents (N = 62, 48.8%) reported that their child/children liked learning Chinese. Fifty-seven parents (N = 57, 44.9%) reported that their child/children extremely liked learning Chinese. Eight parents (N = 8, 6.3%) reported that

their child/children disliked learning Chinese. None of parents reported that their child/children extremely disliked learning Chinese.

**Survey question 15:** How often do you help your child/children with Chinese learning?

Results are presented in Table 30 below.

Table 30

*Q 15: How Often Parents Help Their Child/Children with Chinese Learning*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Never	31	24.4%
Monthly	8	6.3%
A few times per month	14	11.0%
Weekly	25	19.7%
A few times per week	21	16.5%
Daily	28	22.0%
Valid total	127	100.0%

In survey question 15, parents were asked to indicate how often they help their child/children with Chinese learning. As shown in Table 30, the majority of parents (N = 31, 24.4%) reported that they **never** helped their child/children with Chinese learning. Twenty-eight parents (N = 28, 22.0%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese learning **daily**. Twenty-five parents (N = 25, 19.7%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese learning **weekly**. Twenty-one parents (N = 21, 16.5%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese learning **a few times per week**. Fourteen parents (N = 14, 11.0%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese learning **a few times per month**.

Eight parents (N = 8, 6.3%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese learning **monthly**.

*Survey question 16:* How often do you help your child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments? Results are presented in Table 31 below.

Table 31

Q 16: How Often Parents Help Their Child/Children with Chinese Schoolwork Assignments

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Never	33	26.0%
Monthly	11	8.7%
A few times per month	18	14.2%
Weekly	19	15.0%
A few times per week	26	20.5%
Daily	20	15.7%
Valid total	127	100.0%

In survey question 16, parents were asked to indicate how often they help their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments. As shown in Table 31, the majority of parents (N = 33, 26.0%) reported that they **never** helped their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments. Twenty-six parents (N = 26, 20.5%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments **a few times per week**. Twenty parents (N = 20, 15.7%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments **daily**. Nineteen parents (N = 19, 15.0%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments **weekly**. Eight parents (N = 8, 6.3%) reported that they

helped their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments **a few times per month**.

Eleven parents (N = 11, 8.7%) reported that they helped their child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments **monthly**.

*Survey question 17:* How often do you help your child/children with English reading and writing in general? Results are presented in Table 32 below.

Table 32

*Q 17: How Often Parents Help Their Child/Children with English Reading and Writing*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Never	4	3.1%
Monthly	4	3.1%
A few times per month	21	16.5%
Weekly	16	12.6%
A few times per week	27	21.3%
Daily	55	43.3%
Total	127	100.0%

In survey question 17, parents were asked to indicate how often they help their child/children with English reading and writing in general. As shown in Table 32, (N = 55, 43.3%) of them indicated they helped their child/children English reading and writing in general **daily**. Twenty-seven parents (N = 27, 21.3%) reported that they helped their child/children with English reading and writing in general **a few times per week**. Twenty-one parents (N = 21, 16.5%) reported that they helped their child/children with English reading and writing in general **a few times per month**. Sixteen parents (N = 16, 12.6%) reported that they helped their child/

children with English reading and writing in general **weekly**. Four parents (N = 4, 3.1%) reported that they helped their child/children with English reading and writing in general **monthly**. Four parents (N = 4, 3.1%) reported that they **never** helped their child/children with English reading and writing in general.

Data analysis for Q14---Q17 of Program 3 are presented in Table 33 to Table 37 below.

**Survey question 14:** How much does/do your child/children like learning Chinese?

Results are presented in Table 33 below.

Table 33

*Q 14: How Much Their Child/Children Like Learning Chinese (Program 3)*

Answer of choices	First oldest or only child	Second oldest child	Third oldest child
	N / Percent	N / Percent	N / Percent
Extremely likes	44 / 42.3%	18 / 27.7%	3 / 7.7%
Likes	55 / 48.1%	29 / 44.6%	4 / 10.26%
Dislikes	9 / 8.7%	3 / 4.6%	0
Extremely dislikes	0	0	0
NA	1 / 0.96%	15 / 23.1%	32 / 82.1%
Valid total	104 /100%	65/100%	39 /100.0%

**Survey question 15:** How often do you help your child/children with Chinese learning?

Results are presented in Table 34 below.

Table 34

*Q 15: How Often Parents Help Their Child/Children with Chinese Learning (Program 3)*

Answer of choices	First oldest or only child	Second oldest child	Third oldest child
	N / Percent	N / Percent	N / Percent
Never	42 / 40.4%	15 / 23.1%	4 / 10.5%
Monthly	5 / 4.8%	2 / 3.1%	1 / 2.6%
A few times per month	10 / 9.6%	4 / 6.2%	0
Weekly	13 / 12.5%	9 / 13.9%	2 / 5.3%
A few times per week	17 / 16.4%	9 / 13.9%	1 / 2.6%
Daily	15 / 14.4%	13 / 20%	0
NA	2 / 1.9%	13 / 20%	30 / 78.9%
Valid total	104 / 100%	65 / 100%	38 / 100.0%

**Survey question 16:** How often do you help your child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments? Results are presented in Table 35 below.



Table 35

*Q 16: How Often Parents Help Their Child/Children with Chinese Schoolwork Assignments (Program 3)*

Answer of choices	First oldest or only child	Second oldest child	Third oldest child
	N / Percent	N / Percent	N / Percent
Never	42 / 40.4%	15 / 23.1%	4 / 10.5%
Monthly	5 / 4.8%	2 / 3.1%	1 / 2.6%
A few times per month	10 / 9.6%	4 / 6.2%	0
Weekly	13 / 12.5%	9 / 13.9%	2 / 5.3%
A few times per week	17 / 16.4%	9 / 13.9%	1 / 2.6%
Daily	15 / 14.4%	13 / 20%	0
NA	2 / 1.9%	13 / 20%	30 / 78.9%
Valid total	104 / 100%	65 / 100%	38 / 100.0%

**Survey question 17:** How often do you help your child/children with English reading and writing in general? Results are presented in Table 36 below.

Table 36

*Q 17: How Often Parents Help Their Child/Children with English Reading and Writing in General (Program 3)*

Answer of choices	First oldest or only child N / Percent	Second oldest child N / Percent	Third oldest child N / Percent
Never	15 / 14.6%	8 / 12.7%	2 / 5.1%
Monthly	14 / 13.6%	2 / 3.2%	1 / 2.6%
A few times per month	12 / 11.7%	3 / 4.8%	1 / 2.6%
Weekly	12 / 11.7%	10 / 15.9%	0
A few times per week	23 / 22.3%	13 / 20.7%	1 / 2.6%
Daily	27 / 26.2%	13 / 20.1%	4 / 10.3%
NA	0	14 / 22.2%	30 / 76.9%
Valid total	103 / 100%	63 / 100%	39 / 100.0%

**Survey question 20:** If you have multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, have your children had similar experiences? Results are presented in Table 37 below.

Table 37

*Q20: If You Have Multiple Children in the Chinese Immersion Program, Have Your Children had Similar Experiences? (Program 3)*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
I only have one child	50	48.5%
Yes, my children have had similar experiences	38	36.9%
No, one or more of my children has/have had a different experience	15	14.6%
Valid total	103	100%

In survey question 20, parents were asked to indicate if they have multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, had their children had similar experiences? As shown in Table 37, the majority of parents (N = 50, 48.5%) reported that they only had one child. Thirty-eight parents (N = 38, 36.9%) reported that their children had similar experiences. Fifteen parents (N = 15, 14.6%) reported that one or more of their children had a different experience. These parents explained further detailed different experiences presented in Table 38 below.

Table 38

*Q 20: Different Experience Parent Shared in Relation to This Survey Question (Program 3)*

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**Different experience with different child**

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Children have different experiences but same family spirit.

Excelling student versus failing student. One was above English reading in 3rd grade and the other is below English reading level starting 5th grade and needing serious tutoring.

For one of my children, the focus of their/our time and attention from 1st grade to the end of 4th grade was related to classroom behavior issues. Navigating our way with these issue in addition to learning a second language has not been a good experience. If I had to do it over again, I would pull my child from the program. The cultural and language differences with the teachers is a part of the challenge, in our opinion.

I have a younger child that has not yet entered Kindergarten but has been attending a Chinese immersion preschool for several years. He seems very comfortable with it and I think will have several advantages his older brother didn't have because he started learning Chinese in Kindergarten. The earlier they can start learning the

language, the better.

I have one child in Chinese immersion and one who is not in Chinese immersion. Their school experiences have been very different, but enriching for each.

I have one child that change schools because Chinese immersion was too difficult for him. My other child is doing just fine in Chinese immersion

I would answer these questions differently for each child. I am not satisfied with my 8th grader's Chinese writing growth or his English writing growth. I am satisfied with my 5th grader's growth in both areas.

Mostly the difference is because of parental engagement. We were much better at helping my oldest hold with his Chinese in the early years than to date we have been with our second child. Our fault which we are now trying to rectify

My first child is a quicker learner than my younger child. My younger child takes longer to learn the concepts so it has been more challenging for her.

My first child quit the Chinese Immersion Program after fighting it for about 2 years in Jr. High. He was in the first charter class so every year was the first year of having the "new teacher". He and pretty much most of his classmates disliked their 8th grade teacher so when my 2nd child (who is only a year younger) had the benefit in that the 8th grade teacher went from teaching 2 of the Chinese classes to only 1 class. I am assuming because of the issues my son's class had with her so my daughter only had this particular teacher for only 1 class. Better for my daughter than it was for my son.

My youngest will begin the immersion program in kindergarten next year.

One of my children has a harder time with Chinese reading than the other, but I don't believe that it has too much to do with differences in their teaching. It was hard for them to adjust at first to the rigor of the program but once acclimated they did just fine.

One of my children managed to pull through, but the other cannot stay in the program. It comes down to attitude, severity of learning disability, and self-confidence (and to some extent peer environment, which is not controllable)

Our fourth grader is a mature student who likes school and has excelled with Chinese. We have no concerns about her academic performance or growth. Our second grader struggles at times, but we think would likely struggle in an English classroom as well. He is easily distracted and doesn't stay focused at school or when completing assignments at home. If he were in an English classroom we might help him more, but we don't know Mandarin so our ability to help him with some homework is limited. He is not failing, his teacher describes him as somewhere in the middle of the class, so we've not had a strong reason to move him from Chinese to English. We're not sure how he'll keep up as the work becomes more complex.

The kids that could read prior to Kindergarten & excelled at math had an easier time adapting to Chinese immersion. They had the bandwidth to be learning "extra". For my child who was perhaps more "average" it has been more difficult because their English skills lag other students.

The younger child has had a much stronger Chinese reading and writing experience than my older child.

They both excel at non-Chinese learning due to the rigor and challenge of learning Chinese. The non-Chinese school work seems to be much easier for them.

Youngest had to be held back a grade.

I'm not happy with the changes I've seen since my 6th grader started versus my 1st grader. My 1st grader has more homework and seems to have more weekly testing than my 6th grader did in elementary school, but my 1st grader is struggling in Chinese much more than my 6th grader ever did. Not sure if it is a difference in my kids or a change in curriculum but we have not been as pleased with the experience of our younger child. Given the differences in the experiences of both of our kids, it was difficult to answer the questions in the survey accurately.

Children are different. Need to really assess before they enter immersion their capabilities. It is so hard to transition out of immersion when you finally understand that they are having difficulties in English.

I am very satisfied with the Chinese immersion program however I believe depending on the individual, my son is quite shy having to speak and utilize his mandarin when being asked to speak it. When he is on his own and speaking out of his own will. I am stunned by how much he actually knows.

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Survey question 18: For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children's growth:

- 18.1. How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese speaking growth?
- 18.2. How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese reading growth?
- 18.3. How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese writing growth?
- 18.4. How satisfied are you with your child/children's English speaking growth?
- 18.5. How satisfied are you with your child/children's English reading growth?
- 18.6. How satisfied are you with your child/children's English writing growth?

Results for each sub-question from the survey question 18 are presented in Table 39 to Table 44.

Table 39

*Q 18.1: Level of Parents' Satisfaction with Their Child/Children's Chinese **Speaking** Growth*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very Satisfied	144	62.1%
Satisfied	80	34.5%
Dissatisfied	7	3.0%
Very Dissatisfied	1	0.4%
Valid total*	232	

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 18.1, parents were asked to rate their level of *satisfaction with their child/children's Chinese **speaking** growth?* Two hundred thirty-two parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 39, the majority of parents (N = 144, 62.1%) reported that they were very satisfied. Eighty parents (N = 80, 34.5%) reported that they were satisfied. Seven parents (N = 7, 3.0%) reported that they were dissatisfied. One parent (N = 1, 0.4%) reported that he/she was very dissatisfied with their child/children's Chinese **speaking** growth.

Table 40

*Q 18.2: Level of Parents' Satisfaction with Their Child/Children's Chinese **Reading** Growth*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very Satisfied	144	62.1%
Satisfied	80	34.5%
Dissatisfied	7	3.0%
Very Dissatisfied	1	0.4%
Valid total*	232	

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 18.2, parents were asked to rate their level of *satisfaction with their child/children's Chinese **reading** growth?* Two hundred thirty-two parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 40, the majority of parents (N = 115, 49.6%) reported that they were very satisfied. Ninety-nine parents (N = 99, 42.7%) reported that they were satisfied. Sixteen parents (N = 16, 6.9%) reported that they were dissatisfied. Two parents (N = 2, 0.9%) reported that they were very dissatisfied with their child/children's Chinese **reading** growth.

Table 41

*Q 18.3: Level of Parents' Satisfaction with Their Child/Children's Chinese **Writing** Growth*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very Satisfied	119	51.3%
Satisfied	98	42.2%
Dissatisfied	12	5.2%
Very Dissatisfied	2	0.9%
NA	1	0.4%
Valid total*	232	

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 18.3, parents were asked to rate their level of *satisfaction with their child/children's Chinese **writing** growth*? Two hundred thirty-two parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 41, the majority of parents (N = 119, 51.3%) reported that they were very satisfied. Ninety-eight parents (N = 98, 42.2%) reported that they were satisfied. Twenty parents (N = 12, 5.2%) reported that they were dissatisfied. Two parents (N = 2, 0.9%) reported that they were very dissatisfied with their child/children's Chinese **writing** growth. One parent (N = 1, 0.4%) responded with NA.



Table 42

*Q 18.4: Level of Parents' Satisfaction with Their Child/Children's English **Speaking** Growth*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very Satisfied	122	52.8%
Satisfied	98	42.4%
Dissatisfied	9	3.9%
Very Dissatisfied	1	0.4%
NA	1	0.4%
Valid total*	231	

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 18.4, parents were asked to rate their level of *satisfaction with their child/children's English **speaking** growth*? Two hundred thirty-one parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 42, the majority of parents (N = 122, 52.8%) reported that they were very satisfied. Ninety-eight parents (N = 98, 42.4%) reported that they were satisfied. Nine parents (N = 9, 3.9%) reported that they were dissatisfied. One parent (N = 1, 0.4%) reported that he/she was very dissatisfied with their child/children's English **speaking** growth. One parent (N = 1, 0.4%) responded with NA.

Table 43

*Q 18.5: Level of Parents' Satisfaction with Their Child/Children's English **Reading** Growth*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very Satisfied	97	41.8%
Satisfied	87	37.5%
Dissatisfied	37	15.9%
Very Dissatisfied	7	3.0%
NA	4	1.7%
Valid total*	232	

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 18.5, parents were asked to rate their level of *satisfaction with their child/children's English **reading** growth*? Two hundred thirty-two parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 43, the majority of parents (N = 97, 41.8%) reported that they were very satisfied. Eighty-seven parents (N = 87, 37.5%) reported that they were satisfied. Thirty-seven parents (N = 37, 15.9%) reported that they were dissatisfied. Seven parents (N = 7, 3.0%) reported that they were very dissatisfied with their child/children's English **reading** growth. Four parents (N = 4, 1.7%) responded with NA.

Table 44

*Q 18.6: Level of Parents' Satisfaction with Their Child/Children's English **Writing** Growth*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very Satisfied	97	41.8%
Satisfied	87	37.5%
Dissatisfied	37	15.9%
Very Dissatisfied	7	3.0%
NA	4	1.7%
Valid total*	232	

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 18.6, parents were asked to rate their level of *satisfaction with their child/children's English **writing** growth*? Two hundred thirty-two parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 44, the majority of parents (N = 99, 42.7%) reported that they were satisfied. Sixty-four parents (N = 64, 27.6%) reported that they were very satisfied. Fifty-three parents (N = 53, 22.8%) reported that they were dissatisfied. Nine (N = 9, 3.9%) reported that they were very dissatisfied with their child/children's English **writing** growth. Seven parents (N = 7, 3.0%) responded with NA.

**Survey question 19:** Please share any additional comments or feedback about your child/children's participation in the Chinese immersion program in the box below. Lots of parents shared their comments or feedbacks about your child/children's participation in the Chinese immersion program. The results are presented in the Table 45 below.

Table 45

*Q 19: Parents' Comments or Feedbacks about Their Child/Children's Participation in the Chinese Immersion Program*

Key words	Comments or feedbacks	N
Positive feedback	<p data-bbox="378 527 500 552">Awesome!</p> <p data-bbox="378 590 602 615">Wonderful program!</p> <p data-bbox="378 653 1312 709">No complaints, I recommend it to other parents often. So happy we made the choice to enroll him.</p> <p data-bbox="378 747 646 772">I am very proud of them.</p> <p data-bbox="378 810 1333 867">I am very grateful for the high quality and level of engagement of the Chinese Immersion program.</p> <p data-bbox="378 905 1312 1052">I am SO grateful the district initiated an immersion program 10 years ago. It is phenomenal to watch the students learn and grow in their second language. I am a true believer that this is the way to learn an alternative language. I encourage all parents to enroll their children in immersion. I know our children don't even realize what a gift they have by being fluent in Chinese.</p> <p data-bbox="378 1089 1328 1146">I am very satisfied and happy about of having this immersion program being available to us. I believe it's very good for the kids even just for their brain development.</p> <p data-bbox="378 1184 1295 1241">I love the Chinese immersion program and the benefits that it brings to my child. It is amazing to see the kids communicate with their teachers in mandarin.</p> <p data-bbox="378 1278 1321 1335">I recommend Chinese immersion program any chance I get! We are so fortunate to have this high-quality program available in our local school district!</p> <p data-bbox="378 1373 1260 1430">We love the program and hope it continues! Our next child starts kindergarten in 4 years!! :)</p> <p data-bbox="378 1467 500 1493">We love it!</p> <p data-bbox="378 1530 1289 1587">This program is a huge asset to our community and is giving our children an amazing opportunity.</p> <p data-bbox="378 1625 1312 1734">This has been a great program for the children. Not only are they more involved in activities in and outside the classroom than their English only counterparts in the elementary school, but the parents are much more involved than the regular Elementary School parents.</p> <p data-bbox="378 1772 1317 1881">The Chinese immersion program is awesome. It is way beyond my expectation. I will keep my child in the program forever, until whenever it's available. I, too, as a parent have learned a lot from the program. Not only limited to the words or characters, but how the program has given the opportunity to learn other culture and open-mindedness.</p>	14

	<p>Thank you!</p> <p>I applaud school for taking on this challenge and hope for the best. / Our child appears to be doing quite well in both Chinese and English.</p> <p>I love the program and think the kids have a great opportunity with Chinese and English.</p> <p>I think our child is right where he needs to be as a first year immersion student. I volunteer in the classroom occasionally and am extremely impressed with the children's auditory skills. They absolutely know what is being said and can respond appropriately. And I noticed that within the first 2 months of school.</p> <p>Both kids could read English prior to starting kindergarten. We chose Chinese Immersion as a further challenge in their academics.</p> <p>Chinese language challenges student to succeed.</p>	
English learning	<p>I say I am satisfied with the English because I understand the immersion model. But I am concerned because there is so much pressure from other areas of the school to be able to read and write in English. This is really stressful for my child, especially since other parents hire tutors, etc. to catch up their kids to peers in the other parts of school.</p> <p>The program is very demanding of parent interactions and education. My understanding of the program was in the home we focus on the development of native language skill.</p> <p>Just starting to read English, self-initiated learning. No self-directed English writing.</p> <p>I do wish they would do some English language instruction in 1st grade instead of waiting until 3rd grade.</p> <p>We expect English skills to develop quickly in the near future.</p> <p>We had to trust the program and go along with starting English reading in 3rd grade. It works. My second child's reading and writing skyrocketed in 3rd grade. My first child could read before kindergarten so this was never a concern.</p> <p>We knew that our child would not be getting English instruction, however, we have not been given any information as to where our child should be at reading/writing English. We are told that will start in 3rd grade. There needs to be more guidance or guidelines for the parents as to how to help their children and where their children should be in English. Maybe an option for an after school program to help them with their English. Also separating the kids into math groups based on their level as they do in the English classes would be good.</p> <p>His English reading and writing skills started more slowly than his older siblings, but by 5th and 6th grade he was entirely caught up and now exceeds expectations. Parents of younger children should not worry if their children are a little slower to learn English reading and writing in the early grades. They will catch up and probably pass students in the standard English classes.</p> <p>We understand that the English reading/writing development lags when compared to a child not in an immersion class. We do more English reading at home than writing.</p>	22

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It is very hard to gauge where the children should be at in English before third grade. I'd recommend being able to share some type of growth they should be having prior to being taught English in school.

I think a lot of my child's success with English is the work we do at home and his love for books. Pakrat helped him with his reading immensely.

It is hard to wait for kids to fully develop English language skills & the disparity can be very challenging to the kids' confidence in grade school.

It is known that immersion students will bump up on an English learning after 3rd grade

I feel like they need more instruction in English writing- grammar, spacing, punctuation in general since there is such a difference between Chinese and English writing. I feel like limited skills in English writing may be a barrier in the future (I have a 5th and 3rd grader).

I have twins that have been through the program and one struggled with reading writing English and the other one did not. My biggest concern is making sure they can be at the same English level as their non-immersion students because that is how they will be measured in the future.

I know that as a kindergarten student my son has not had English literacy in school, but I am a little disappointed that he has not started to pick it up from the reading and intentional guidance at home, but I'm hoping it will be improved.

In the first few years, we were told to simply read to our daughter and her English skills would come along. We hired after school tutors in 3rd and 4th grade but it is not until this last semester of 5th grade that her English reading and writing is up to grade level. We feel that parents should be told before kindergarten that they need to be actively teaching English reading and writing at home. Alternatively, English should be handled more in depth during the school day prior to grade 3.

The format of the immersion program is such that English learning doesn't begin until 3rd grade. Since my daughter is in 2nd grade she hasn't learned in English yet. Her only English learning is at home.

Our hope is that when 3rd grade comes around, his ability to write and read English will improve significantly.

I think she fell behind in English writing growth, I realize there is an expectation of the parental involvement; however, I didn't have the tools as to what to teach her.

My daughter struggles with English reading and spelling, but excels in Chinese reading and writing. I'm being patient, and am confident that her English skills will improve over time.

My biggest concern is the lack of writing kids need in general. There really is one trait that kids need to be successful in HS and college and it is writing. There is not enough emphasis on writing in the Chinese program and probably not in the English program. Our children read very well, but their writing is abysmal. It is well below grade level. I'm not thinking just about their spelling skills, but their ability to construct a sentence with

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	<p>subject/verb agreement and write a coherent paragraph is very low. I blame this on the lack of time spent in writing.</p>	
Chinese learning	<p>When I commented that I never help them with Chinese work at home, that is simply because Chinese work is not provided for me to help them with, not because we do not desire to help them with this work.</p> <p>I wish that they would bring Chinese listening and reading work home, or have access to Better Immersion or some other Chinese learning program at home so that we could feel more connected to them learning Chinese and more able to help them in developing their Chinese language skills.</p> <p>We have hired a tutor to keep up on Chinese school work since the second grade.</p> <p>Very hard for English-speaking parents to help with Chinese homework.</p> <p>The only help I have to give them with their Chinese language learning is helping/encouraging flashcard study and games or apps. I don't actually need to know any Chinese to be able to help them.</p> <p>They are not as fluent as I thought they would be. We have difficulty finding materials that match ability with interest level in Chinese.</p> <p>There needs to be advanced Chinese classes that separates and supports students that excel and need to be pushed. There is just common sense that needs to be applied in that there are students that excel and those that do not. Neither group should be ""punished"" for their own learning pace but rather they should be supported. Accelerated students need to be pushed while late bloomers/struggling students need to be supported with the basics.</p> <p>It is difficult not being able to help my daughter when she was young and in total immersion classes. None of us speak Chinese so it is impossible to assist. This was challenging at times.</p> <p>I cannot accurately access reading and writing in Mandarin, but my child struggles with spelling in Mandarin and does not seem to be able to read Mandarin.</p> <p>Need to generate more enthusiasm among the children for learning Chinese.</p> <p>It helped me as a parent to have older children in English program and know we all learn differently and just relax. My daughter loves when she meets someone new who is Chinese and they are able to speak together in their native language. It's not something that happens every day, but enough, and it's a very positive experience. I can see how it puts the other person at ease also. She absolutely loves speaking Chinese with Chinese and that's probably an understatement.</p>	11
Curriculum	<p>There is an inconsistency in the quality of the English curriculum between the grade school and middle school. The middle school is significantly stronger and more of an adjustment due to the relatively weak grade school curriculum for the immersion kids.</p> <p>I thought my child could have received more direct reading/writing instruction (phonics) and history lessons (both Chinese and American).</p>	9

	<p>I think there are some opportunities to improve this program. Right now, the biggest challenge is the middle school social studies. This program has not prepared them for this level of work. The 7th grade U.S. History immersion class is a total disaster. PLEASE don't require immersion students to take this course. It is a waste and we are just getting through it in order to stay in Chinese.</p> <p>I think they could have more growth and opportunity than they currently get. I think there should be opportunities for more advanced learning in Chinese and English for the Chinese Immersion Program, just as there is for Maths.</p> <p>I worry that my child's science and social studies is not keeping up.</p> <p>Because of the public school setting I love that my child can participate in orchestra and summer programming.</p> <p>Feel more comfortable about it at the elementary level than the middle school and beyond level.</p> <p>I feel that at the Middle School level, there could be more than 2 classes in Mandarin. I know it would be difficult with Math and Science because of the different levels. Maybe PE?</p> <p>I think the program could be even more rigorous than it is. The kids who are in the program are quite capable and could probably handle more than they are given.</p>	
Teacher	<p>Our child is very happy with the program and so are we. My main concern moving forward is making sure there are enough teachers in the classroom to assist. She has a low ratio now and I think in this program it's necessary to keep this ration low in this immersion program. They need more attention than a traditional English speaking class. As I mentioned before, we have an incredible teacher that gives us lots of updates and that's something we really appreciate since we do not speak the language, it still helps us parents stay involved in what she is learning. I worry that not all teachers moving forward will live up to her high standards that she has set for us.</p> <p>The experience is largely based on the teacher my child has each year, like any teacher some engage the kids and inspire to learn and others do not. When the teacher is not engaging it impacts my child's performance.</p> <p>My daughter had a learning disorder which makes reading difficult as it is but she is supported 100% by her teacher who encourages her in a positive way where she loves to learn and keep working through it. We were so impressed with the program!</p> <p>I think the Chinese teachers need a bit more cultural training. My kids love their American teachers and strongly dislike most of their Chinese teachers.</p> <p>I think the Chinese teachers teach like they are in China. The kids say that they are ""mean"" and put kids down. I think this is okay in China but it is not okay here. They are not to blame, just some more training. In theory I love the program and will stick with the Chinese LA all the way.</p> <p>Another opportunity I see is the teaching culture. Several of my kid's friends have dropped the program because they literally ""hate"" the classes. I don't think they hate</p>	7



	<p>Chinese so much but the classes aren't as engaging.</p> <p>I had 2 kids but my oldest dropped out after 8th grade. Still have my second child in the program. Disappointed how it all turned out with my oldest. Jr. High was not great, and the teachers at Jr. High killed any desire to learn Chinese. He went from enjoying Chinese in elementary (K-6th) to hating it 7-8th grade.</p>	
Homework	<p>We believe the curriculum needs to be reviewed as there is too much homework that is expected.</p> <p>Many parents we have talked to have had their children crying about all the homework and assignments. When you include the daily Chinese and math assignments, as well as English spelling words and reading 20 minutes each night, typing agent 3 times a week, quite often large packets of math are sent home with a quick turnaround that needs parents' assistance, periodic special projects that parents to assist with.</p> <p>There is quite a bit of homework each night, even in 1st grade, so I don't feel we get enough time to work on English reading. We don't do any English writing at home. That is a concern. But we are limited with time due to the time needed for Chinese and math homework.</p> <p>Some of the homework want written English but they don't learn that at school.</p> <p>The English teachers at our school NEVER send home English homework and communicate very little with the parents. Parents have grown increasingly concerned about whether their children will be prepared for middle school English.</p>	5
Testing	<p>Practicing for many state and district required tests.</p> <p>English assessment at an immersion schools needs to be framed carefully.</p> <p>The testing culture is toxic. Really horrible for young kids and I wish my tax money did not support it. There are other ways to do assessment that are more real and more useful.</p> <p>I worry about teaching to the tests (HSK, YCT). The vocabulary often does not reflect typical language for an elementary student. For example, learning HSK words like beer and smoking a cigarette. It seems like the tests are meant for college aged individuals. Too much time is spent on learning these words and many students don't even know how to read or write the high frequency words. Plus, it is difficult for elementary school students to remember hundreds of difficult, not commonly used, vocab words. Far too much teaching time and homework time is devoted to studying for the assessment tests.</p> <p>My child becomes quite anxious over all the tests and this is setting her up to hate school and to fail in school over fear, not ability.</p>	5
Parent community	<p>One of the most surprising aspects of this program is that the kids and families become a unit, of sorts, inside the general public system.</p> <p>Parents know each other very well and the parental involvement is relatively high. Nice little community here!</p> <p>I'm a big supporter of the program. One extra reason we enrolled is that we knew every kid in the program had parents who took the time to learn about the program in advance,</p>	3

	so that was a ""filter"" to tell us the classmates would be more likely to have involved parents.	
Gaps between two groups	<p>I stated it before, but the Chinese (Mandarin) program and the English program need more opportunities to engage. I feel there is a rift between the parents of the 2 groups, and the teachers don't interact between the groups.</p> <p>We have had issues with categorizing kids into groups 'English' kids 'Chinese' kids. They speak about their non- immersion peers this way and vice versatile. I think unintentionally this has become a divider within the school. This has to be solved.</p>	2
Classroom	Their classroom has better attendance records, no issues with classroom disturbances and much higher test scores across the board. And that's coming from an elementary school that is considered very good for the English side, so sending one's child to an immersion program is a no-brainer.	1
Others	<p>I think my son would have been bored in regular Kindergarten. The daily challenge of having a 2nd language kept him engaged and happy the entire school year. 1st grade has been a similar experience.</p> <p>My child is a man of few words and fewer written words. It's not the Chinese program, that's just his nature.</p> <p>Our older child left immersion for gifted program in English, but is able to rejoin the immersion class this year with very little difficulty. Our younger child will also join the gifted program next year after having two years of immersion.</p> <p>My son has issues with math anxiety. He missed key learnings in K &amp; 1st grade. Thankfully, we have hired a tutor, I tutor him full time at home and he receives extra help from a 4th grade teacher at school. Our focus is to help him learn basic math skills so he doesn't have another emotional breakdown. He also has issues learning science this year in school. He does very well in Chinese but has trouble with the science information.</p> <p>This year has been a very difficult one in which our daughter has been struggling greatly. I feel this has been going on all year, but we were only notified if it recently. We have since gotten a tutor and she is in a special reading class, but don't know if she will be caught up in time to move forward to second grade. If we had been notified of the teacher's concerns sooner, we could have gotten our daughter this help sooner. Also, there has been no indication as to what the expectations are at each grade/age level, i.e. speaking, sentence formulation, comprehension, ability to hold a conversation etc. This would be helpful as a parent to help identify if a child is on track or may be struggling throughout each school year.</p>	5

**Research question four.** *What were program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?*

The fourth research question was answered by the following survey questions:

**Survey question 6:** Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children? Results are presented in Table 46 below.

Table 46

*Q 6: Level of Parents' Overall Satisfaction with the Chinese Immersion Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
Very satisfied	157	66%
Satisfied	74	31.1%
Dissatisfied	5	2.1%
Very dissatisfied	2	0.8%
Valid total*	238	100%

\* The valid total number of responses is less than the total number surveyed because some of the parents did not answer the question.

In survey question 6, parents were asked to indicate, *overall, how satisfied parents were satisfied with the Chinese immersion program in which they had enrolled their child/children.* Two hundred thirty-eight parents responded to this question. As shown in Table 46, the majority of parents (N = 157, 66%) reported that they were very satisfied. Seventy-four parents (N = 74, 31.1%) reported that they were satisfied. Five parents (N = 5, 2.1%) reported that they were dissatisfied. Two parents (N = 2, 0.8%) reported that they were very dissatisfied *with the Chinese immersion program in which they had enrolled their child/children.*

**Survey question 7:** Please select the 3 most important strengths of the Chinese Immersion Program (Select only 3). Results are presented in Table 47 below.

Table 47

*Q 7: The Three Most Important Strengths of the Chinese Immersion Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
The organization of the program	93	37.8%
The learning environment/climate	158	64.2%
The program curriculum	138	56.1%
The communication from the school/teacher to you	82	33.3%
The school administrator's interest/involvement in the program	51	20.7%
The relationship between your child/children and their teacher(s)	135	54.9%
The student progress reporting	42	17.0%
Total	246	

In survey question 7, parents were asked to *select the three most important strengths of the Chinese Immersion Program (Select only 3)*. Two hundred forty-six parents responded to this question. As results shown in Table 47, the majority of parents (N = 158, 64.2%) selected **the learning environment/climate** as the top most important strength. One hundred and thirty-eight parents (N = 138, 56.1%) selected **the program curriculum** as the second most important strength. One hundred and thirty-five parents (N = 135, 54.9%) selected **the relationship between your child/children and their teacher(s)** as the third most important strength of the Chinese immersion program.

For survey question 7, parents were asked to add any strengths not addressed above or share any comments they had in relation to this question. The results are presented in the Table 48 below.

Table 48

*Q 7: Additional Strengths and Comments Parents Shared in Relation to This Survey Question*

<b>Key words</b>	<b>Additional strengths and comments</b>	<b>N</b>
Teacher	<p>The knowledge and ability of program coordinator.</p> <p>Dedication of staff and teachers to my children.</p> <p>Native-born speaking teachers.</p> <p>The knowledge and ability of the teachers.</p> <p>Teachers from China have a very high standard for expectations regarding behaving in the classroom and amount of homework to be completed.</p>	5
Academic	<p>Further challenges for my advanced learners.</p> <p>Academic rigor.</p> <p>Rigor offered, particularly at the kindergarten level.</p> <p>Program is a model that consolidates the students learning.</p>	4
Program support	<p>I see great support involvement even from the principal and vice principal.</p> <p>Well informed.</p> <p>District Commitment.</p> <p>Connection to University of Minnesota.</p>	4
Parent	<p>Connection with other families.</p> <p>Strong parent organization.</p> <p>I think that being in class with the same children for many years, whose parents also value education, expanded learning, and other cultures, has been a real benefit for our son.</p>	3
Cultural awareness	<p>Cultural Awareness.</p> <p>The cultural awareness that is built into the curriculum, expanding my children's minds to a larger world beyond the classroom.</p>	2
Class size	<p>Small class sizes.</p> <p>Ability to individualize learning without a formal process in place.</p>	2

Student	The students who participate in the program seem to be serious students. The interaction between my child and his peers.	
Public school	Accessibility - public school. Feels like a private school but with public school amenities.	2

**Survey question 8:** Please select the areas that are in need of improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program (Select all that apply). Results are presented in Table 49 below.

Table 49

*Q 8: The Areas in Need of Improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program*

Answer of choices	N	Percent
The organization of the program	29	11.8%
The learning environment/climate	42	17.0%
The program curriculum	30	12.2%
The communication from the school/teacher to you	45	18.3%
The school administrator's interest/involvement in the program	38	15.4%
The relationship between your child/children and their teacher(s)	27	11.0%
The student progress reporting	67	26.9%
Total	246	

In survey question 7, parents were asked to *select the areas that were in need of improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program (Select all that apply)*. Two hundred forty-six parents responded to this question. As results shown in Table 49, the majority of parents (N = 67, 26.9%) selected the student progress reporting. Forty-five parents (N = 45, 18.3%) selected the communication from the school/teacher to you. Forty-two parents (N = 42, 17.0%) selected the learning environment/climate. Thirty-eight parents (N = 38, 15.4%) selected the school

administrator's interest/involvement in the program as the main areas that were in need of improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program.

For survey question 8, parents were asked to add any areas needing improvement not addressed above or share any comments they had in relation to this question. The results are presented in the Table 50 below.

Table 50

*Q 8: Additional Areas Needing Improvement and Comments Parents Shared in Relation to This Survey Question*

<b>Key words</b>	<b>Additional areas needing improvement and comments</b>	<b>N</b>
Cultural difference	We understand the Chinese culture of school is different than the English culture and what are the expectations for the ""culture"" in this program?	1
Chinese Teacher	<p>Hire teachers who have deep understanding and genuine enthusiasm of the Chinese culture and history; not just teach a language.</p> <p>New teachers need more time/education in managing American classrooms and in being comfortable sending behavioral issues to the office - cultural norms are different for handling this.</p> <p>Providing an enriching school experience for high energy kids. Chinese teachers are not as good as their American born/raised counterparts.</p> <p>Some foreign Chinese teachers are uncomfortable with discipline of disruptive children.</p> <p>Teacher quality consistency in the grade school.</p> <p>Letting poor teachers go.</p> <p>Teachers seem to struggle with discipline and keeping students focused on learning.</p> <p>There doesn't seem to be much emphasis on creative thinking or problem solving.</p> <p>Culturally it can be difficult. Chinese teacher expectations are sometimes much higher than the English teachers.</p> <p>We have an incredible teacher that gives lots of updates. I am concerned that in future years, we may not be so lucky and have a teacher that is up to her standards. We have an excellent teacher now and want to make sure that future ones are just as good.</p>	11

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There has been time the teachers tell the kids they will not pass a grade if they don't do well, the pressure put on by teachers sometimes if not necessary.

I don't like that the Mandarin teachers don't interact with the English teachers. The "Teachers council" at the school only has English teachers on it (or did) when half of the teachers are Mandarin teachers. This should not be allowed to happen.

I wish non-immersion staff at school more supportive of program.

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Program and curriculum	At the middle school level and beyond, do not agree with the organization of the program.	10
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Communication between the elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. We have found discrepancies in expectations.

More Chinese at middle school level.

Lacks curriculum that focuses on developing curiosity.

I am most concerned about the secondary curriculum and the opportunities for the students. I feel that the years are less planned in advance and less creative in their thinking.

Support from the district in terms of promotion and growth of the program.

The districts support of this program when the children go to Jr. High or High School (i.e. our child possibly won't get the opportunity to take art because Chinese will take the place of that class).

This is a fairly new program and our daughter is in one of the beginning classes of the program and it currently only goes up through 9th grade.

The full immersion program through 12th grade. Consider bilingual at the high school years. And the ability to allow kids to take a third language starting in elementary.

For program organization - the classroom portion itself seems solid, but the extra-curricular provided is not solid.

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Behavior issues	We have had behavior issues in our class, that I feel somewhat slipped through the cracks. I feel like discipline in the younger grade levels should be conducted in English, so the children understand the consequences for bad behavior.	7
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There are children who struggle behaviorally and are a distraction for the children who are ready to learn.

The children with behavior issues would be better served in an English classroom where their behavior can be more easily managed and the child can understand the corrections and implications of their behavior better. This would better serve those children, as well as the children who are ready to learn in the language.

The learning environment in Chinese class needs improvement.

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	In some grades class, the Chinese learning environment is not very good.	
	Classroom behavior.	
	Cultural differences with child behavior expectations.	
Parental education	I feel I know very little about the organization of the program and the curriculum, and would like to have more information on what students are learning at school and how we can better support them at home with this.	6
	More introduction of the curriculum.	
	More parental education about immersion and how it works.	
	Mostly need to have more parental education so we actually know what the curriculum is and how the years scaffold together—to my knowledge—that has never been shared with the parents.	
	Visibility of the program to incoming families, parent and preschool language learning opportunities.	
	I like how the teacher gives suggestions on how to work at home in Chinese and English.	
	Resources availability for parents for summer.	
Subjects learning	Concern over his math and reading proficiency.	6
	Extra help for children having trouble with math.	
	More English reading.	
	Students need to read a lot more Chinese books.	
	I believe that the kids can be much more fluent than they are currently. They are not as bilingual as we had hoped.	
	There's a need for more activities or events that incorporate the students' use of the target language.	
Progress reporting	Progress reporting is awful right now.	4
	I'm not sure that progress reporting is relevant in 1st grade; I just know we don't get much back on that subject, other than conferences.	
	Particularly in older grades I would like to know more about how my child is doing.	
	The reporting infer from my older child is pretty good, but recently I don't feel like I am getting a report on exam results. It is possible I missed them as I seem to recall getting them in the past.	

Testing	<p>Less testing.</p> <p>Fewer tests and less reliance on test results.</p> <p>The testing of the kids is not helpful as it does not match their curriculum or drive to fluency.</p> <p>Too focused on testing.</p>	4
Class size	<p>Class size should be smaller.</p> <p>Class size is getting too big for immersion especially Chinese. It is one of the most difficult language to learn. The in-class teacher need help if the class size gets any bigger than it is.</p> <p>Lower class size.</p>	3
Homework	<p>Less homework, especially Chinese homework.</p> <p>Clear explanation in English at the beginning of the year on what is expected for homework.</p>	2
Special Ed. needs	<p>Both my kids are dyslexic, and just from the small sample size of their classmates, Chinese Immersion seems to really amplify a disability like dyslexia. I think there needs to be more careful attention to kids in 1st and 2nd grade, when the signs of learning disabilities become apparent, so that there can be interventions to support them (as opposed to my kids' 1st grade teacher being dismissive of them for not working hard enough), because with help even children with dyslexic can be successful in Chinese Immersion.</p> <p>As a parent of a young boy I feel that more understanding of the unique needs of young boys would have helped him to feel happier about the school experience. He had a very difficult transition to the school environment.</p>	2
Satisfied	<p>I really can't think of any major improvements that need to be made. It is a very good program and we are very satisfied.</p> <p>I've been very happy.</p> <p>I have nothing to say on this at this time. Great program.</p> <p>Very well-developed program.</p> <p>We are very satisfied with the current program.</p> <p>There's always room for improvement in all of the categories listed, but, overall, the program is excellent.</p>	6
Other	<p>This model involves the 3 human factors: teacher, student, parents.</p>	1

**Research question five.** *What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?*

The fifth research question was aligned with the following survey questions:

- Q 2: How many children do you have enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?
- Q 4: How long has your child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program?
- Q 6: Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children?
- Q 18: For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children's growth.

The fifth research question was answered by survey questions 6 and 18 in comparison with **survey question 2**: How many children do you have enrolled in the Chinese immersion program? The variable was created by splitting the data into two groups. Parents with one child were coded as 1 and parents with two or more children were coded as 2.

The fifth research question was answered by survey questions 6 and 18 in comparison with **survey question 4**: How long has your child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program? Four groups are first year in the program, 1-3 years in the program, 4-6 years in the program, and 7 or more years in the program.

Statistical comparisons were presented by using T-test or One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the survey questions 2 and 4. An independent T-test was used to compare the means of two different groups. ANOVAs is used compare the means of two or more groups.

Statistical significances are reported in each category of Significance level (p) less than 0.05. Based on the responses, there is a statistical significant difference between two groups or four groups if  $p < .05$ ; or there isn't a statistical significant difference between two groups or four groups if  $p > .05$ . Each of the categories is presented individually with an explanation of the findings. Results for research question five are presented in Table 50, 51, 52, and Table 53.

1. Does the factor of **number of children enrolled** in the program have any impact on **parental perceptions with program satisfaction**? Comparisons were made between responses of parents with one child and parents with 2 or more children in the Chinese program on the program satisfaction represented in **survey question 6**: *Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children?* Upon analysis using a One Way ANOVA test, the Significance level ( $p = .117$ ) is above .05, overall, the level of satisfaction was not significantly different based on number of children. Results of comparison are presented in Table 51 below.

Table 51

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Program Satisfaction between Parents with One Child and Two More Children in the Chinese Program*

	Variable	N	Mean*	Std. Deviation	Sig.
<i>Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children?</i>	1	129	1.3333	.56366	.117
	2+	99	1.4545	.59372	

(\*Mean: 1 = Very satisfied, 2 = Satisfied, 3 = Dissatisfied, 4 = Very dissatisfied)

2. Does the factor of **years in the program** have any impact on **parental perceptions with program satisfaction**? Upon analysis using a One Way ANOVA test, the Significance level ( $p = .003$ ) is less than .05, so the level of satisfaction was significantly different based on

years in the program. Tukey post-hoc tests were run to compare each group individually.

Analysis showed that parents were the longer in the program, they were less satisfied with the program. The biggest difference is between the mean of “7 or more years in the program” is 1.5217 compared with the mean of “First year in the program” is 1.1765. Results of comparison are presented in Table 52 below.

Table 52

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Program Satisfaction between the Factor of Years in the Chinese Program*

	Variable	N	Mean*	Std. Deviation	Sig.
<i>Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children?</i>	First year in the program	34	1.1765	.38695	.003
	1-3 years in the program	61	1.2459	.47102	
	4-6 years in the program	64	1.4844	.64222	
	7 or more years in the program	69	1.5217	.63266	

(\*Mean: 1 = Very satisfied, 2 = Satisfied, 3 = Dissatisfied, 4 = Very dissatisfied)

3. Does the factor of **number of children** enrolled in the program have any impact on **parental perceptions with their child/children’s growth**? Using a T-test, comparisons were made between responses of parents with one child and parents with two or more children in the Chinese program on perceptions of their child’s experiences represented in **survey question 18**: *For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children’s growth*. Based on data analysis of parents’ response to survey question 18, each Significance level (p) is above .05. Overall parental perceptions with their child’s growth was not significantly different based on number of children. Results for all categories of the survey question 18 are presented in Table 53.

Table 53

*Analysis of T-test on Parental Perceptions with Their Child/Children's Growth between Parents with One Child (1) and Two More Children (2+) in the Chinese Program*

	Variable	N	Mean*	Std. Deviation	Sig.
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese speaking growth?	1	127	1.3858	.53522	.110
	2+	96	1.4583	.61416	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese reading growth?	1	127	1.5591	.62556	.732
	2+	96	1.6250	.68441	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese writing growth?	1	127	1.5354	.71041	.408
	2+	96	1.6250	.63660	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English speaking growth?	1	126	1.5397	.66514	.978
	2+	96	1.5417	.61416	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English reading growth?	1	127	1.9449	.99449	.229
	2+	96	1.7604	.81750	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English writing growth?	1	127	2.1102	.97776	.908
	2+	96	2.1458	.91742	

(\*Mean: 1 = Very satisfied, 2 = Satisfied, 3 = Dissatisfied, 4 = Very dissatisfied)

4. Does the factor of **years in the program** have any impacts on **parental perceptions with their child/children's growth**? Comparisons were made between responses of parents of four groups based on the length of years in the Chinese program on their responses on perceptions of their child's experiences represented in **survey question 18**: *For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children's growth.* Using a One Way ANOVA test, each Significance level (p) is above .05, so the level of satisfaction of parental perceptions of their child's experiences was not significantly different based on the factor of years in the program. Results of comparison are listed in Table 54 below.

Table 54

*Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Parental Perceptions with Their Child/Children's Growth between the Factor of Years in the Chinese Program*

	Variable	N	Mean*	Std. Deviation	Sig.
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese speaking growth?	1	127	1.3858	.53522	.110
	2+	96	1.4583	.61416	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese reading growth?	1	127	1.5591	.62556	.732
	2+	96	1.6250	.68441	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese writing growth?	1	127	1.5354	.71041	.408
	2+	96	1.6250	.63660	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English speaking growth?	1	126	1.5397	.66514	.978
	2+	96	1.5417	.61416	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English reading growth?	1	127	1.9449	.99449	.229
	2+	96	1.7604	.81750	
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English writing growth?	1	127	2.1102	.97776	.908
	2+	96	2.1458	.91742	

(\*Mean: 1 = Very satisfied, 2 = Satisfied, 3 = Dissatisfied, 4 = Very dissatisfied)

### Summary

This chapter reported the findings by five research questions with quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The findings were organized according to each research question. For each research question, the data were presented in frequency distribution tables for each question reported by survey respondents. Each factor was presented with the answer choices, the number (N) and percentage (%) of respondents in each category.

## **Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

The purpose of the study was to gain information from parents who had enrolled their child/children in selected Chinese language immersion programs during 2016-2017 school year in Minnesota. The study aimed to explore parents' motivations and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. By exploring parents' perceptions, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements were identified. The findings of the study were shared with Chinese immersion programs' administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The findings of the study were used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. In addition, the results of the study may be used by parents who plan to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs to make their final decisions.

### **Research Questions**

The study addressed the following five research questions:

1. What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?
2. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?
3. What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?

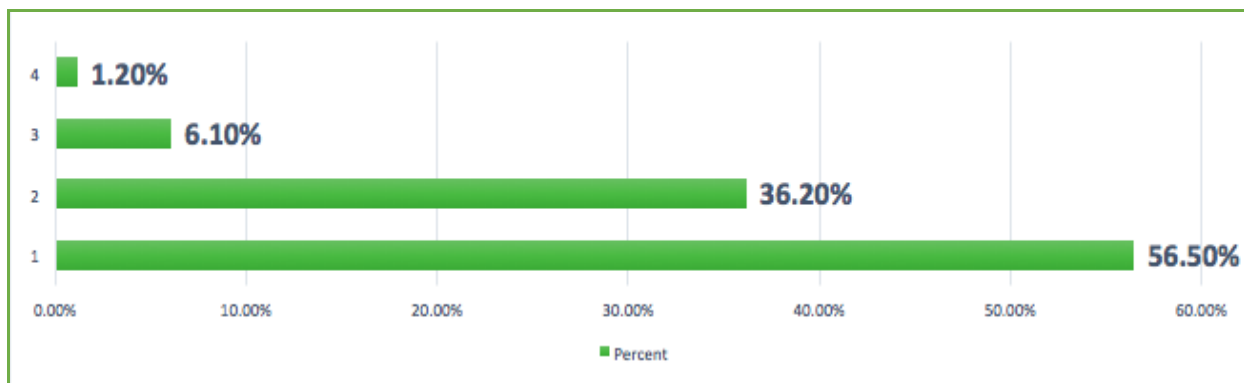


4. What were program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?
5. What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?

This chapter reports the conclusions, discussion, limitations and recommendations for further research and practice.

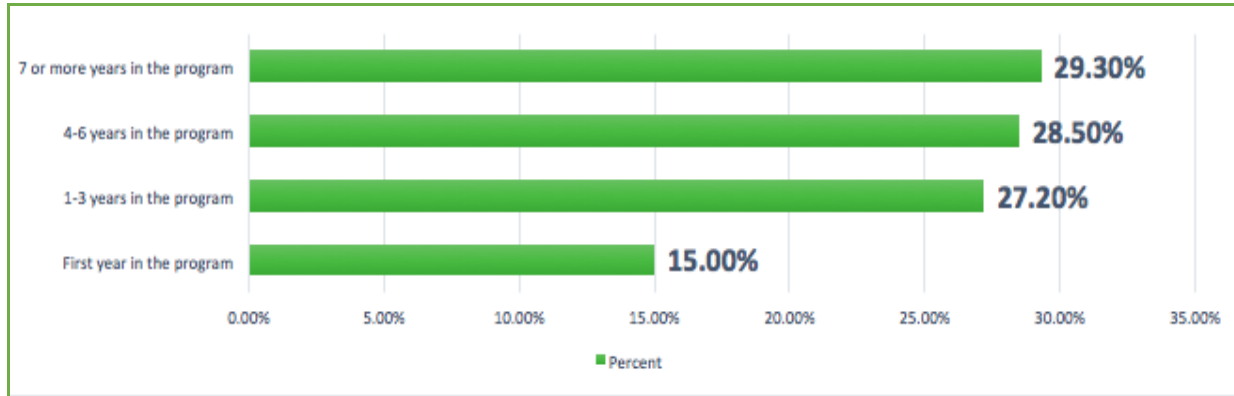
**Research question one.** What did parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, grade levels enrolled, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?

The following conclusions were found for research question one:



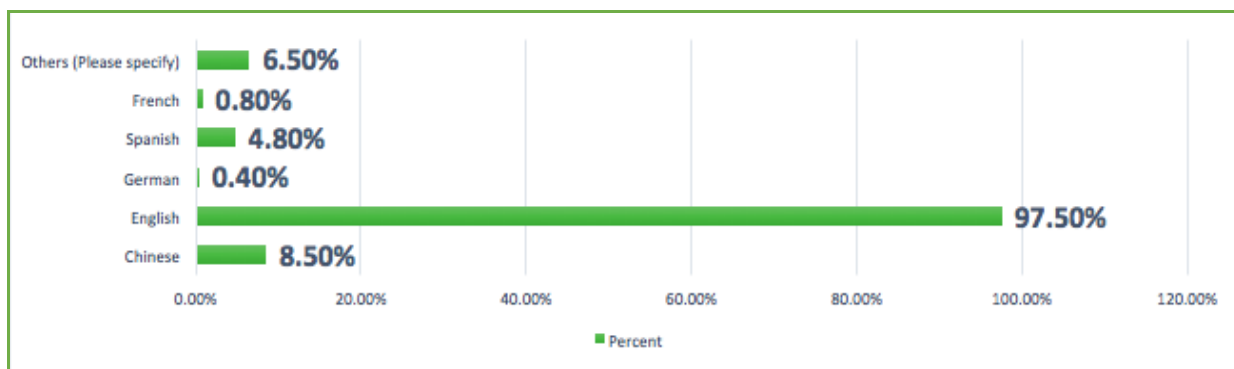
*Figure 4.* How many children have you enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?

The majority of parents ( $N = 139$ , 56.5%) reported they had one child enrolled in the Chinese immersion program, while 89 parents ( $N = 89$ , 36.2%) reported they had two children enrolled in the program.



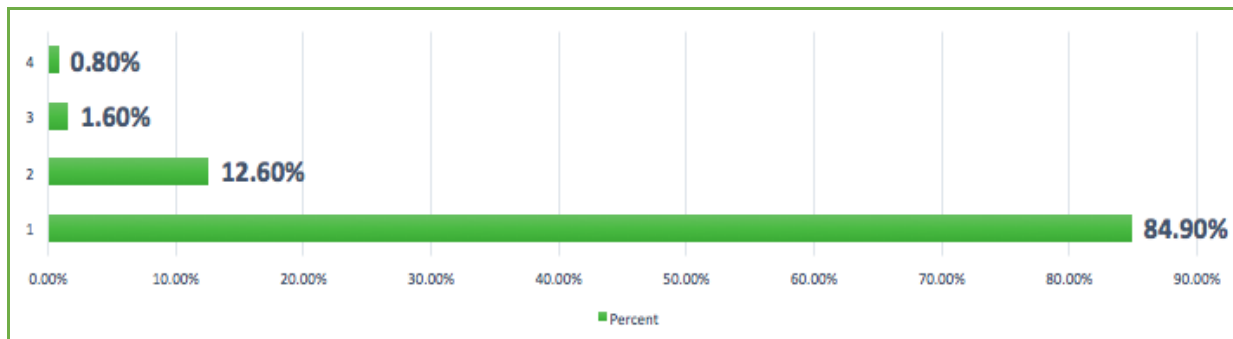
*Figure 5.* How long have your child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program?

Parents who reported their children had been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program for 7 or more years totaled were 72 or 29.3%, Seventy parents (N = 70, 28.5%) reported their children had been enrolled in the program for 4-6 years, while 67 parents (N = 67, 27.2%) reported their children had been enrolled in the program for 1-3 years and 37 parents (N = 37, 15.0%) reported it was the first year that their children had been enrolled in the program.



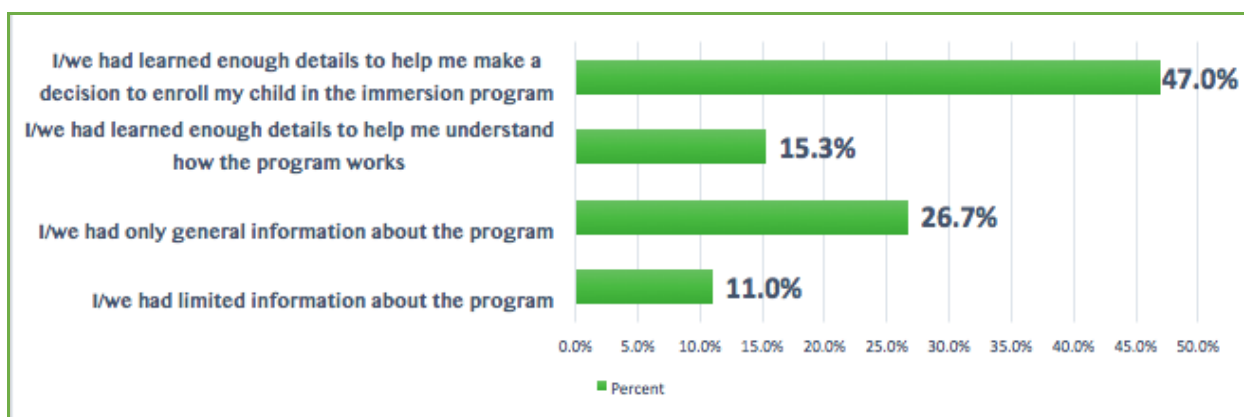
*Figure 6.* Which languages are spoken in your home (Check all that apply)?

Those parents who reported they spoke English in the home numbered 240 or 97.5% of all respondents. The remaining respondents (N = 21, 8.5%) spoke Chinese in the home.



*Figure 7.* How many different languages are spoken in your home?

Only one language was spoken in the homes of 209 or 84.9% of respondents, while 31 families or 12.6% spoke two languages in the homes of students enrolled in selected Chinese immersion programs.



*Figure 8.* What was your understanding of the Chinese immersion program before you enrolled your first child in the program?

Before responding parents enrolled their first child in the Chinese immersion program, 111 or 47% reported they had learned enough details to assist them in making a decision to enroll their children in the program. Sixty-three parents ( $N = 63$ , 26.7%) reported they had only general information about the program. “I think a more thorough explanation of the program is needed so that it can help parents determine if it would be a good fit.” “Parents need to know

that they will need to dedicate a lot of time in the evening to assist with homework each night.”

“There were many logistical questions only answered by parents of older students.”

Thirty-six parents (N = 36, 15.3%) reported they had learned enough details to help them understand how the Chinese immersion program worked. “We talked to other parents and students.” “I spoke with many parents with children in the program before deciding to enroll.” “I made the decision based on little information provided by the school, and almost entirely from other parents.”

Twenty-six parents (N = 26, 11.0%) reported they had limited information about the program. Those parents reported that “We had very limited information, in fact we were not aware of such a program that our daughter could potentially attend.” “We were the first year so we had very limited information.” “Being the very first year, we knew that things would need to change and adapt as time went on.” “We weren't aware of the program until shortly before our oldest child was to enter kindergarten. We had considered a charter school due to the child's high level of aptitude.”

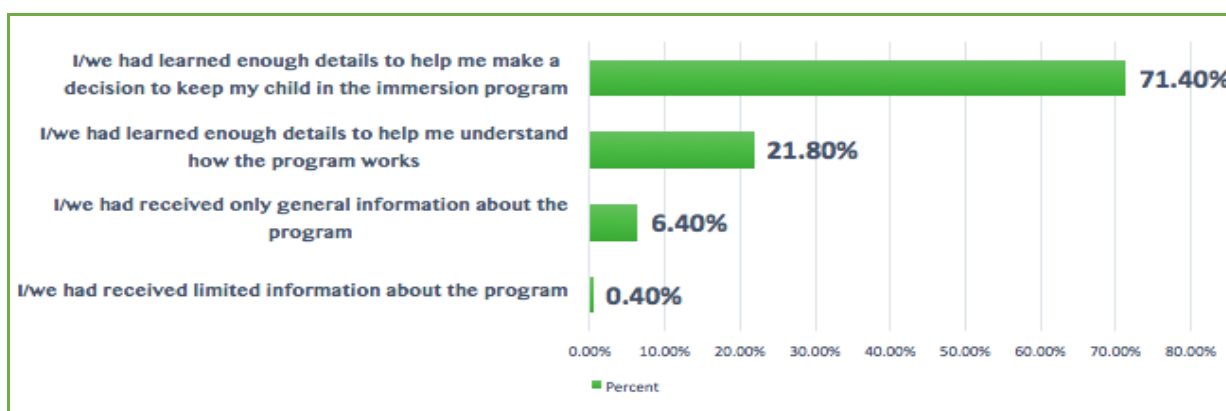
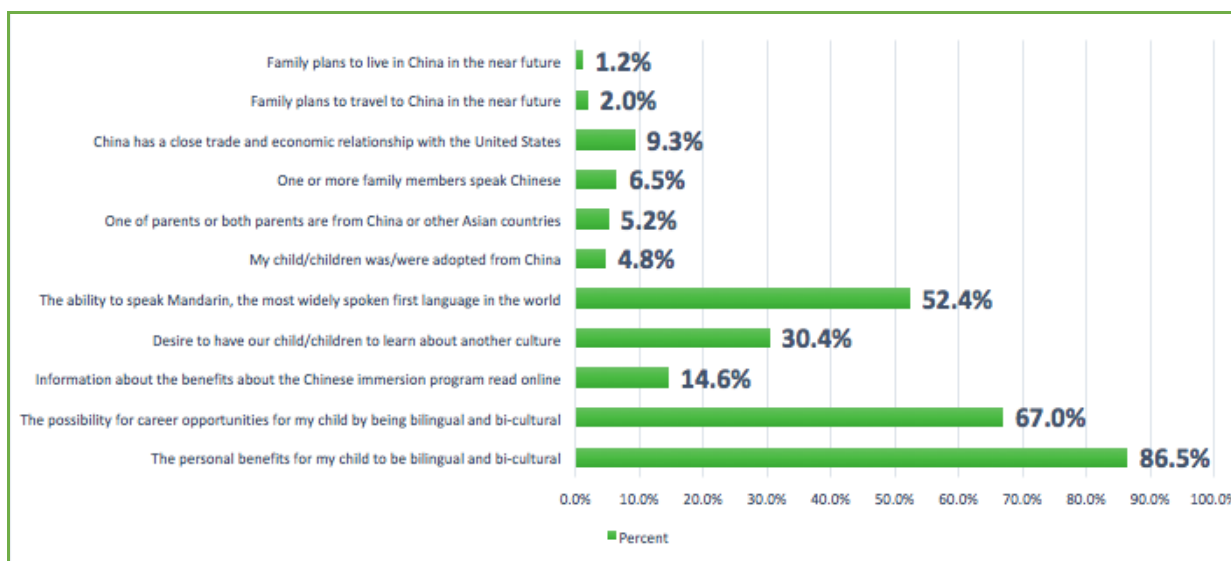


Figure 9. What has been your level of understanding of the Chinese immersion program **since** you enrolled your first child in the program?

Of those parents who had previously enrolled a child in the Chinese immersion program, 167 or 71.4% reported they had learned enough details to assist them making a decision to keep their child in the program, while 51 parents or 21.8% reported they had learned enough details to help them understand how the program worked.

**Research question two.** What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?

The following conclusions were found for research question two.



*Figure 10.* Please select the top three reasons you used for enrolling your child/children in the Chinese immersion program.

The highest reason for enrolling their child/children in the Chinese immersion program was “The personal benefits for my child to be bilingual and bi-cultural” reported by 213 parents or 86.5%. These parents believed that:

- The benefits of being bi-lingual are huge.
- Child is gifted and needed to be academically challenged.
- The challenge added by learning a language along with the other subjects.

- A good challenge for precocious English language learners.
- Academic challenges advanced learners.
- Intellectual and academic challenge for a child who is significantly academically advanced.
- Complex thinking skills developed while learning another language.
- Neurodevelopmental benefits of a bilingual brain.
- Being bi-lingual helps brain development in many other areas not directly related to language. We think this experience has made him better at problem solving and has influenced the way he approaches mathematics, for example.
- The brain development involved with being bilingual early in life.

One hundred sixty-five parents (N = 165, 67.0%) reported “The possibility for career opportunities for my child by being bilingual and bi-cultural” as the second highest reason for them to enroll their child/children in the Chinese immersion program.

“The ability to speak Mandarin, the most widely spoken first language in the world” was reported by 129 parents or 52.4% as the third highest reason for enrolling their children in the Chinese immersion program.

**Research question three.** What did parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children’s experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?

The following conclusions were found for research question three.

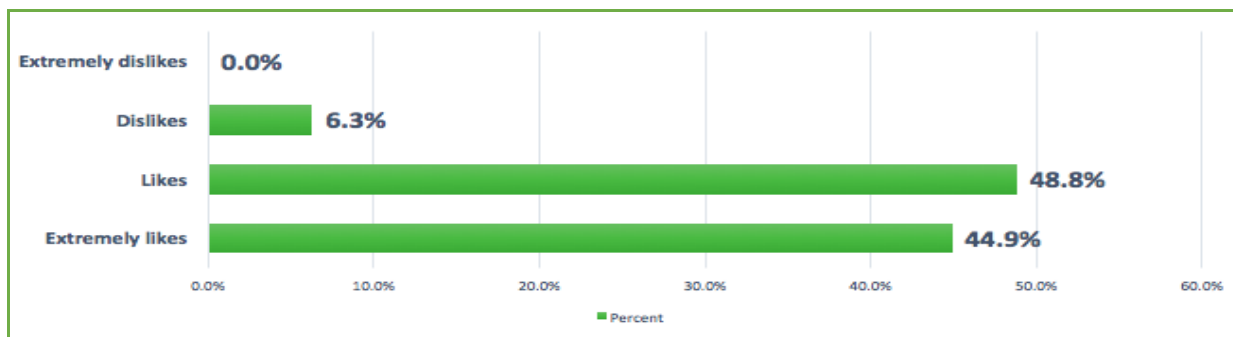


Figure 11. How much does/do your child/children like learning Chinese?

Data revealed that 119 parents or 93.7% whose children were enrolled in a Chinese immersion program reported that their children liked or extremely liked learning Chinese. None of the responding parents reported that their children extremely disliked learning Chinese.

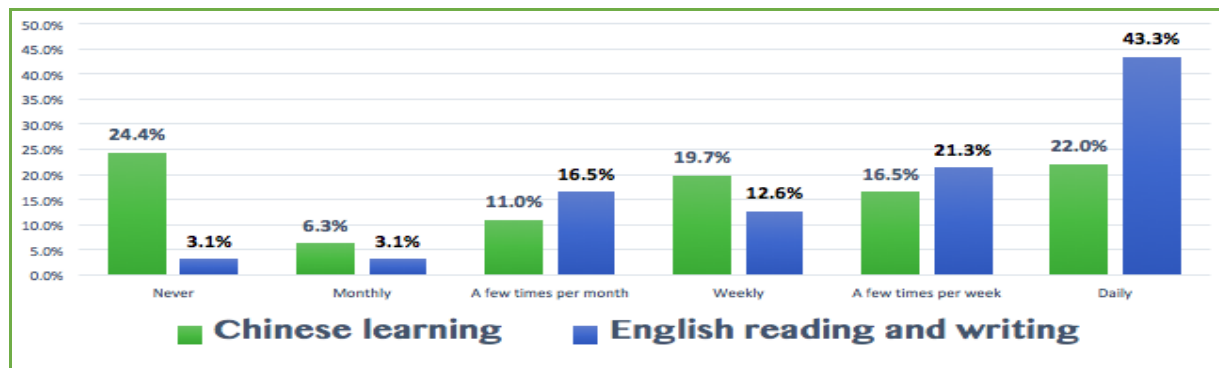


Figure 12. How often do you help their child/children with Chinese learning and English reading and writing?

Based on data gathered, 31 parents or 24.4% reported they never helped their child/children with Chinese learning because many of them were not able to speak the language, while 28 parents or 22.0% reported they helped their child/children with their Chinese learning daily. One parent shared they could feel more connected to learning Chinese by helping their child/children in developing Chinese language skills. Those parents numbered 55 or 43.3% of all

respondents who reported they helped their children with English reading and writing daily.

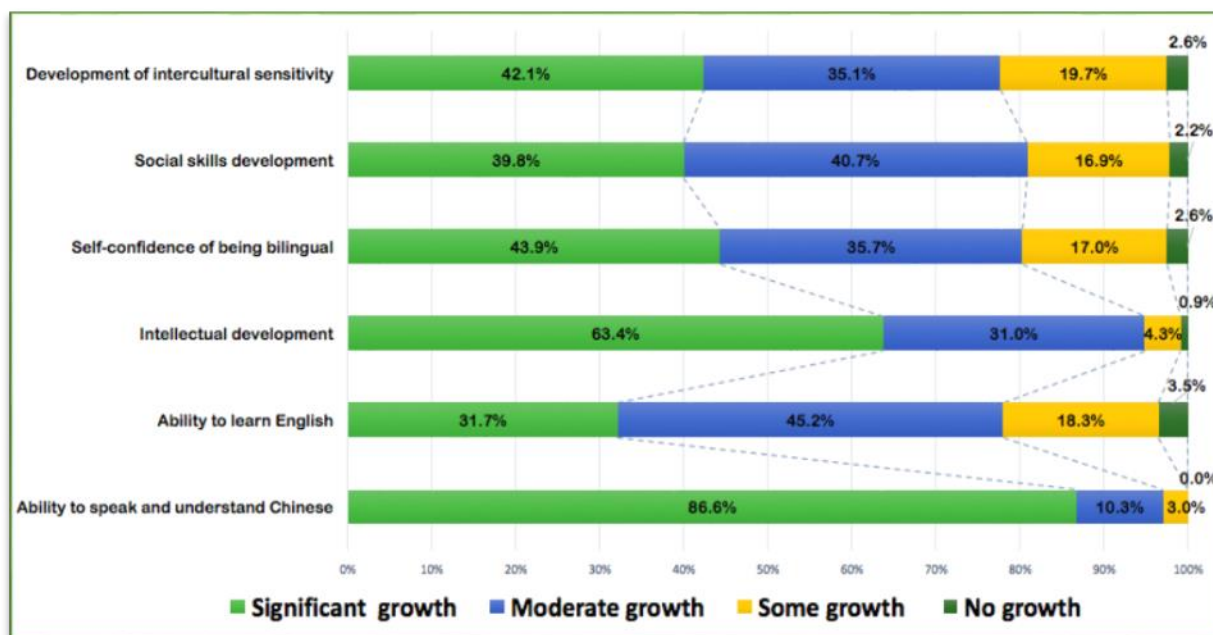


Figure 13. How much growth in the following areas have you observed in your child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?

Significant or moderate growth in *the ability of their child/children to speak and understand Chinese* was reported by 96.9% of respondents, while 94.4% of parents observed their child/children had achieved significant or moderate growth in *their intellectual development*, 80.5% of parents observed their child/children had achieved significant or moderate growth in *their social skills development*, 79.6% of parents observed their child/children had achieved significant or moderate growth in their *self-confidence of being bilingual*, 77.2% of parents observed their child/children had achieved significant or moderate growth in *their development of intercultural sensitivities*, and 76.9% of parents observed their child/children had achieved significant or moderate growth in *their ability to learn English*.



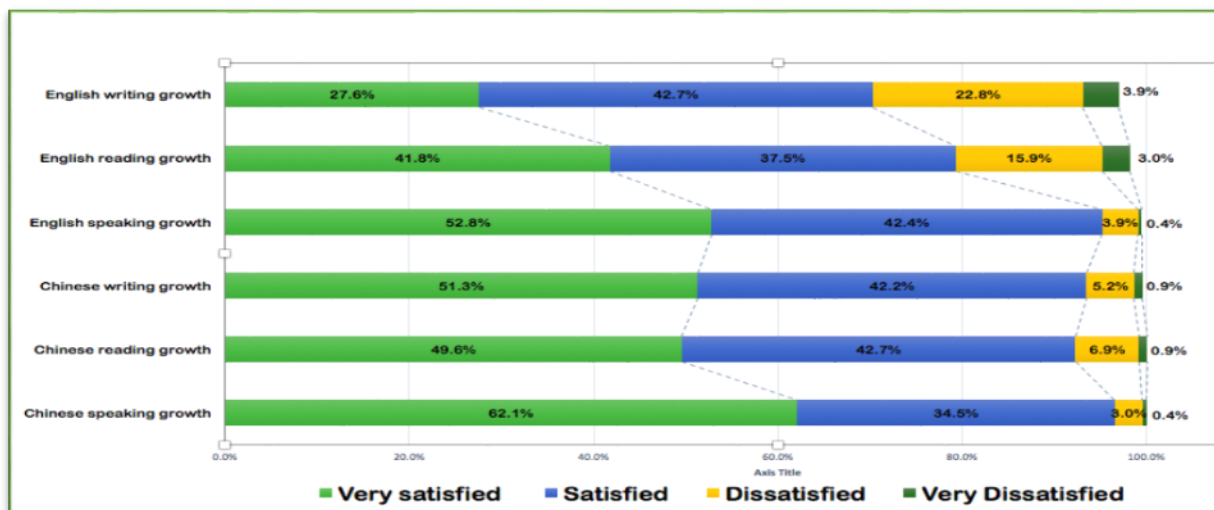


Figure 14. How satisfied are you with your child/children's growth in Chinese and English speaking, reading, and writing?

Responding parents expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their child/children's growth in Chinese and English speaking, reading, and writing in Chinese immersion programs. The percentage of parents who rated being satisfied and very satisfied were as follows: Chinese speaking growth 96.6%, Chinese reading growth 92.3%, Chinese writing growth 93.5%, English speaking growth 95.2%, English reading growth 79.3%, English writing growth 70.3%. Based on data gathered, English reading and writing growth were the parents' primary concerns.

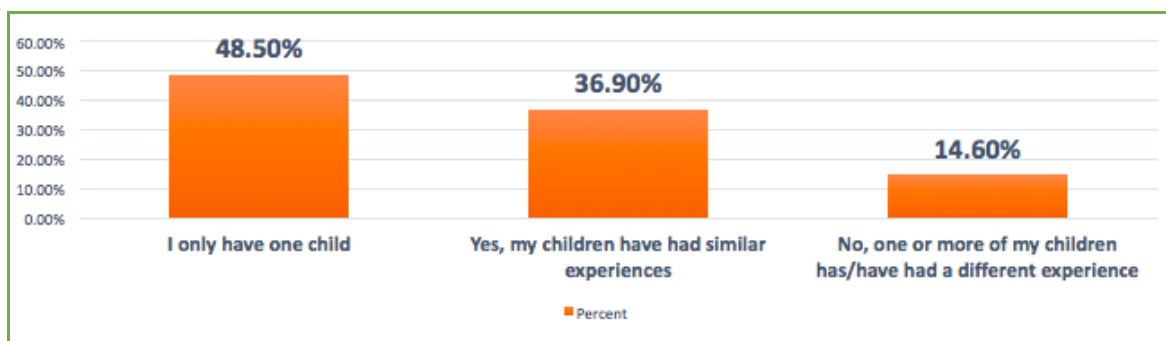
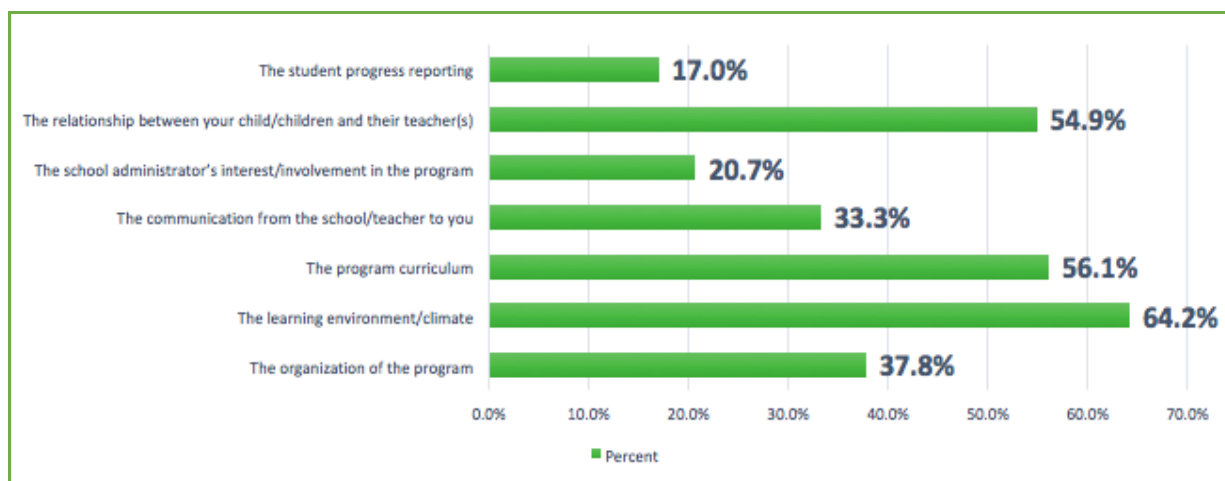


Figure 15. If you have multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, have your children had similar experiences?

In surveying parents to determine whether or not they had multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, the data revealed that 51.5% had two or more children enrolled in the program. Of these parents, 36.90% stated their children had similar experience and 14.6% reported that one or more of their children had different experiences. Children had different experience “depending on the individual”. Parents “need to really assess their capabilities before they enter immersion”. “Children are different”. Another parent reported that “Mostly the difference is because of parental engagement. We were much better at helping my oldest hold with his Chinese in the early years than to date we have been with our second child. This is our fault which we are now trying to rectify.” “The cultural and language differences with the teachers is a part of the challenge.” was reported by one parent. Another parent shared that “the experience is largely based on the teacher my child has each year; like any teacher some engage the kids and inspire to learn and others do not. When the teacher is not engaging, it impacts my child’s performance.” Overall, “Children have different experiences but same family spirit.”

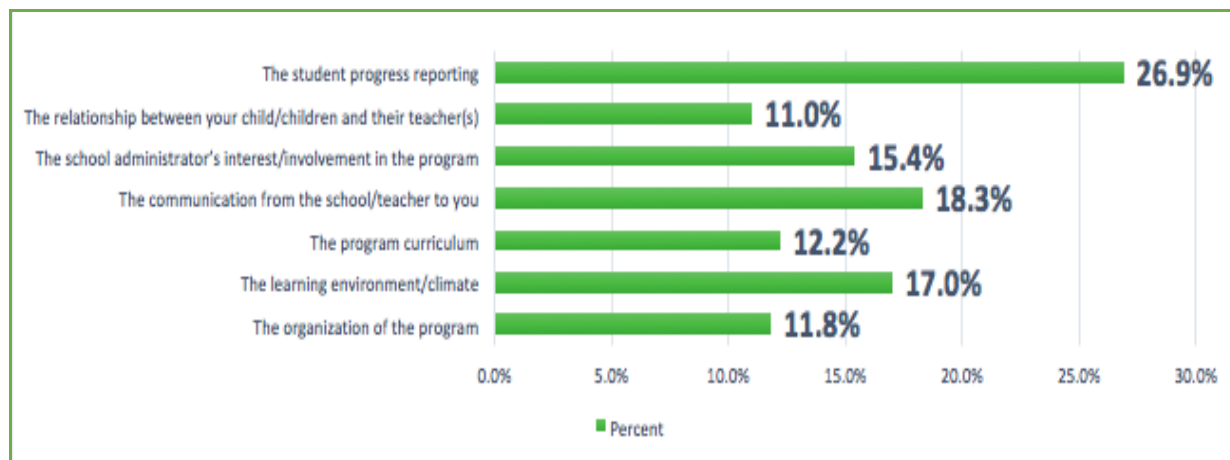
**Research question four.** What were the program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?

The following conclusions were drawn for research question four.



*Figure 16.* Please select the three most important strengths of the Chinese Immersion Program (Select only 3).

As identified by parents, the 3 most important strengths of the Chinese immersion program were as follows: the learning environment/climate (N = 158, 64.2%); program curriculum (N = 138, 56.1%); relationship between your child/children and their teacher(s) (N = 135, 54.9%).



*Figure 17.* Please select the areas that are in need of improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program

Parents identified the following characteristics as needing improvement: the student progress reporting (N = 67, 26.9%); communication from the school/teacher to you (N = 45, 18.3%); learning environment/climate (N = 42, 17.0%); the school administrator's interest/involvement in the program (N = 38, 15.4%); program curriculum (N = 30, 12.2%); and the organization of the program (N = 29, 11.8%).

**Research question five.** What were the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?

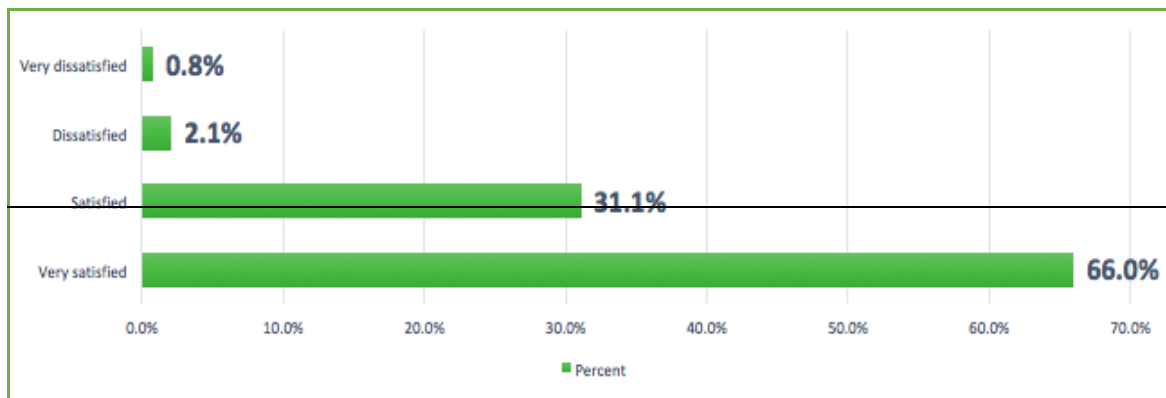
*Conclusions to research question five were as follows:*

1. The level of parental satisfaction with the Chinese immersion program was not significantly different based on number of children. However, the level of parental satisfaction with the program was significantly different based on years of participants in the program. Tukey post-hoc tests were computed to compare each group individually. Analysis showed that the longer parents enrolled their children in the program, the less satisfied they were with their program. The greatest difference was between "seven or more years in the program" and "first year in the program".

2. Overall, parental satisfaction with their child/children's growth was not significantly different based on the number of children they had in the program and their years in the program.

## Discussion

### Highlights of parental positive feedbacks.



*Figure 18.* Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program in which you have enrolled your child/children?

Based on the results of the study of parental perceptions of Chinese immersion program in Minnesota, 97.1% of parents reported that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the Chinese immersion programs in which their children were enrolled. They believed that language immersion education was appropriate for their child/children to learn an alternative language. They were very impressed to observe their children learning and growing in their second language. These parents encouraged other parents to enroll their children into the Chinese immersion program.

For a total Chinese immersion program in Minnesota, children must be enrolled in the program starting from the kindergarten to learn Chinese. It is a choice made by parents rather than by their children. These parents believed it was a gift for their children to enroll them in an immersion program. The Chinese immersion programs had given their children an amazing opportunity of being fluent in Chinese and learning Chinese culture. The Chinese immersion programs were far beyond their expectation. These parents believed they were fortunate to have

high-quality immersion programs available in their local school districts, and the benefits that it brought to their child/children. They hoped it continued.

**Main concerns from parental perceptions.**

1. *Culture shock and culture training.* Based on parental perceptions of Chinese immersion programs, some negative feedback from parents was caused by the difference in cultures between China and America, especially, the cultural difference between Chinese schools and Americans schools. Cross-culture training for teachers and other staff involved in the Chinese immersion programs would address some of the negative feedback comments.

Entering a language immersion program could involve some level of “culture shock”, but also ‘language shock’. The Chinese culture in schools is very different from the American culture in schools. American administrators, parents and students should not assume that prospective Chinese program teachers are knowledgeable about the value of American education and the cultural differences. Chinese immersion program teachers should also not assume American administrators, parents and students are knowledgeable about the value of Chinese education and cultural differences between American and Chinese cultures.

Chinese immersion programs offer an opportunity for American students to learn Chinese language and culture in an American school setting. Most Chinese immersion teachers are native speakers. Each Chinese immersion teacher has unique backgrounds and experiences. Their individual experience influences their teaching style. In addition, the relationships between teachers and students, parents and teachers in schools in China are very different from those relationships in American schools. One parent reported that his/her child said “one Chinese teacher is mean and put kids down”, and this comment could reflect difference or cultural

experience of the teacher and student. In China, classroom discipline is handed in a strict manner. The conversations between students and teachers in China are different from the methods of communications in American schools. Administrators, teachers, parents, and students in American schools in Chinese immersion programs, should learn about Chinese school culture to further understand Chinese immersion teachers.

It is also important for Chinese immersion teachers to understand the difference of teaching styles and classroom culture in American schools. Chinese immersion teachers cannot teach American students as same as they would teach Chinese students in China or in the manner in which they were taught in China. Chinese immersion teachers should have proficient English skills to understand the benchmarks of the Chinese immersion curriculum in American schools. In addition to their English skills, Chinese immersion teachers should have some American school culture training. They should learn American teaching styles because one parent reported that “Chinese teachers teach like they are in China”. It takes time for Chinese teachers to learn how to teach in an American school. One parent reported that new Chinese teachers needed more time and education in managing American classrooms. One parent mentioned that “Chinese teachers are uncomfortable with discipline of disruptive children”. American classroom management is different from China. Chinese immersion teachers should learn some strategies from American administrators and other teachers. They should be comfortable sending problematic students to the office. Lastly, Chinese immersion teachers should learn how to communicate with American parents appropriately, and how to build positive relationships with American parents and students in American schools.

Based on parent responses, several suggestions were made regarding the adjustment of a Chinese teacher to American schools. It is important for Chinese teachers to understand the difference of teaching styles and classroom culture in American schools. In addition to their English skills, Chinese immersion teachers should have some American school culture training such as classroom management strategies from American administrators and other teachers. Lastly, Chinese immersion teachers should learn how to communicate with American parents and how to build positive relationships with American parents and students in American schools.

2. ***Parent education.*** Data showed that only 47.0% (N = 111) of parents had learned enough details to help them make a decision to enroll their child in the immersion before they enrolled their first child in the program. Data illustrated that 71.4% (N = 167) of parents reported that they had learned enough about the program to help them make a decision to keep their child in the immersion program since they had enrolled their first child in the program.

Based on the data analysis about the level of information about the program before and after enrollment of their children in the selected Chinese immersion programs, parents indicated that they needed more education about the Chinese immersion program. Program administrators should engage parents and guide them through the decisions before enrolling in the Chinese immersion and while their child is enrolled in a Chinese immersion program.

Most parents reported that most information about the program had been received through other parents. Program administrators should offer more information sessions and other kinds of engagement activities for parents to help them make a decision to enroll their child in the program and to maintain enrollment. Administrators can expand offerings such as open houses, school tours, and options for guiding parents through the decisions for Chinese



immersion. Parents' support and involvement are the key factors in making a school program effective and successful (Heining-Boynton, 1990). Parents want to have a better understanding of what are general curriculum and expectations for each year, so they can determine if it was a "good fit" for their child and family.

3. *Students' English skills*. Based on the data and parental perceptions about their children's English learning, both English reading and writing growth were the primary concerns for Chinese immersion parents. These parents (N = 90, 44.1%) reported that they were worried about their children's English skills. The level of concern (or worry) regarding their children's ability to learn English was much higher than other areas. One parent shared "I'm hearing that the program highly understated the likelihood and severity of being behind the child's English-schooled counterparts." However, most parents worried about "The students have a lot to catch up on and learn come third grade when it comes to English but I am not sure I have recommendations on how to do it differently."

The Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota are total immersion programs. "**Total Immersion** Programs in which all or almost all subjects taught in the lower grades (K-2) are taught in the foreign language; instruction in English usually increases in the upper grades (3-6) to 20%-50%, depending on the program" (CAL, 2011).

In a one-way total Chinese immersion program, students are not provided English instruction until third grade. This was the primary reason why parents reported they had a significant concern about their children's English skills, especially the parents of students under third grade. One parent shared that "Most parents don't really get that and are constantly pressuring the school to do more around English early on, which dilutes the immersion

experience (at least according to the research I was reading).”

Parents need more education about how immersion really works. Parents should understand that it is normal to see English skills of Chinese immersion students lag behind the English-schooled counterparts in elementary school. Tara Fortune wrote in “What the Research Says About Immersion” (2012),

It is important to acknowledge that early studies carried out in one-way total immersion programs, where English may not be introduced until grades 2-5, show evidence of a temporary lag in specific English language skills such as spelling, capitalization, punctuation, word knowledge, and word discrimination. That said, these studies also find that within a year or two after instruction in English language arts begins, the lag disappears. There were no long-term negative repercussions to English language or literacy development.

Language immersion program students’ English skills will “catch up” after they start learning English in third grade. Some parents shared that they trusted the program and therefore were satisfied with their child/children’s starting English reading in third grade. Some parents reported a large improvement their child/children’s English reading and writing in third grade. Another parent shared that his/her child’s English skills were entirely “caught up” and exceeded their expectations by fifth and sixth grade. Another parent shared that parents of younger children should not worry if their children were a little slower to learn English reading and writing in the early grades.

Researchers assert that parents’ support is important for the success of foreign language education programs (Heining-Boynton, 1990). There was an expectation of the parental involvement for English learning during the early grades. Parents should make commitments to read to their children in English every day. One parent shared “We worked very hard on English literacy at home. We made the commitment right away to read to and have our child read to us in

English every day.” Language immersion programs are very demanding of parent interactions with their child/children’s education (Heining-Boynton, 1990). One parent shared that “the program was very demanding of parent interactions and education. My understanding of the program was in the home we focus on the development of native language skill.” Another parent shared that “The students catch up to their peers but I will say that reading to your children in English has a significant impact on their ability to learn English. I know we are told that all the time by the teachers and it is so true. This is pertinent regardless if your children are in immersion or not.”

4. ***Curriculum development.*** “The academic immersion curriculum parallels to the local L1 (first language) curriculum. The local education system determines the learning content” (Johnson & Swain, 1997, pp. 6-8). Most parents reported that they were more comfortable with Chinese curriculum at the elementary level than at the middle school level. At the middle school level, Chinese immersion programs offer two classes in Mandarin, Chinese Language Arts and Social Studies. Based on parental perceptions reported in the study, some parents said they wished there were more Chinese classes offered at the middle school level, such as Mathematics or Physical Education or Arts. Another parental concern reported in the study was about English curriculum for Chinese immersion students when they start English instruction in third grade. One parent shared that there was an inconsistency in the quality of the English curriculum between the grade school and middle school levels.

5. ***English and Chinese testing.*** Some parents reported that “Too focused on testing”, and “The testing of the kids is not helpful as it does not match their curriculum or drive to fluency”. They hoped “Less testing” and “Fewer tests and less reliance on test results.”

For Chinese immersion programs located in public school districts, Chinese immersion students must practice and participate in many state and district required assessments or tests in English. For example, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) and alternate assessment, Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS), are the statewide tests that help districts measure student progress toward Minnesota's academic standards and meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/test/mn/>). English assessments and tests at an immersion school should be reconsidered carefully, because the Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota are one-way total immersion programs. “In which all or almost all subjects taught in the lower grades (K-2) are taught in the foreign language; instruction in English usually increases in the upper grades (3-6) to 20%-50%, depending on the program.” (CAL, 2011). Students do not study English until third grade. One parent shared that “There are all sorts of tests in English, so the pressure to read and write in English is inappropriately strong.”

It is not appropriate for Chinese immersion students who have not had instruction in English or just started learning English in third grade, to take the same tests as other students who are in the regular English programs. The pressure to read and write in administrated tests in English is disproportionately higher for Chinese immersion students. Both state and district administrators should think about using other ways that are more effective to conduct assessments for Chinese immersion students.

In addition to the multitude of state and district required English tests, Chinese immersion students are required to take the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK) or Youth Chinese Test (YCT) to assess their Chinese language proficiency. Some parents worried about teaching for the tests

(HSK, YCT) because they reported that there were too much teaching time and homework time devoted to studying for the assessment tests. One parent also mentioned that the vocabulary of HSK often does not reflect typical language for an elementary student in the United States.

Below is the basic introduction about HSK and YCT:

***Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK)***

The new HSK is an international standardized exam that tests and rates Chinese language proficiency. It assesses non-native Chinese speakers' abilities in using the Chinese language in their daily, academic and professional lives. ([http://english.hanban.org/node\\_8002.htm](http://english.hanban.org/node_8002.htm))

***Youth Chinese Test (YCT)***

The new YCT is an international standardized test of Chinese language proficiency. It assesses young foreign students' abilities to use Chinese in their daily and academic lives. ([http://english.hanban.org/node\\_8001.htm](http://english.hanban.org/node_8001.htm))

**Limitations**

Limitations of the study were conditions beyond the control of the researcher that “may place restrictions on the conclusion of the study and their application to other situations” (Best & Kahn, 1998, p. 37). The following limitations were identified for the study.

1. The study only focused on three selected Chinese immersion programs distributed in different school districts. The parents' perceptions of the selected programs are certain to provide insights into each specific situation, but may not be true for other programs. The limited scope cannot presume to represent all individuals.
2. Socioeconomic status of the community and other factors may affect parents' opinions and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs.
3. A limitation in any study is how to determine, examine, and analyze the most representative data. It was impossible for the researcher to hear from only the parents

who could give the most accurate perception of Chinese immersion programs. Some parents with positive perceptions of Chinese immersion program may have not participated, and conversely, some parents with negative perceptions of Chinese immersion programs may have participated.

4. Another limitation in the study was the accuracy of parent responses. The researcher trusted that parents' responses were honest and forthright. However, some parents may not have been willing to share some truthful perceptions with the researcher. The researcher assumed that parents felt comfortable to share their children's experience while responding to the online survey questions.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, further research is recommended to study the following:

1. A similar study should be conducted on a larger scale with participants from all Chinese immersion programs in schools throughout Minnesota. A larger sample pool would more accurately determine the parental perceptions of Chinese immersion programs.
2. A follow up quantitative and qualitative study should be conducted with districts' administrators, building principals, Chinese program coordinators, Chinese classroom teachers, and other English program teachers. A broader study would assist to further obtain perceptions from different perspectives about the development of the Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.

3. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative studies should be conducted to evaluate students' performance in English academics while enrolled in Chinese immersion programs.
4. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative studies should be conducted with K-12 Chinese immersion students to further investigate their perceptions of learning experiences in Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.
5. A follow up longitudinal study should be conducted with students when they graduate from the Chinese immersion programs. This study would help to gauge how their K-12 Chinese immersion learning experiences related to their college majors and future career opportunities.
6. A study focused on parents who decided to withdraw their children from their immersion programs should be conducted. The study focused on gathering data from families who had their child/children enrolled in a Chinese immersion program and believed immersion was appropriate for their children. However, reasons why families left the Chinese immersion program are worthy of more investigation. Chinese immersion schools could utilize this information to improve upon student and parent satisfaction.
7. A study should be conducted which focuses on comparing parental perceptions of Chinese immersion programs with other popular target languages including Spanish, French and German. Such a study would identify some common perceptions of language immersion education regardless which target language is chosen.

## **Recommendations for Practice**

Based on the research findings in the study, the following are recommendations for professional practice. These suggestions might be helpful for district and school administrators, parents, and teachers who are currently involved in a Chinese immersion program or plan to participate in a Chinese immersion program.

### **Recommendations for administrators.**

1. It would be valuable to have a well- planned long-term curriculum in advance regarding:
  - Chinese curriculum at elementary school, middle school and high school for Chinese immersion students.
  - English curriculum at elementary school and middle school and high school for Chinese immersion students.
  - Co-curricular or extra-curricular activities and events that incorporate the students' use of the target language.
2. Provide more parental education about the Chinese immersion program to answer the following questions:
  - What is a Chinese immersion program?
  - How the do the Chinese immersion programs work for their children?
  - What are the benefits and challenges of the Chinese immersion program?
  - What are general curriculum and expectations in each grade during elementary school?



- What are the general curriculum and options for the Chinese immersion students in middle school and high school?
  - What parental involvement and commitment are needed to support their children learning at home?
  - How can the visibility of the Chinese immersion program be made available to incoming families?
  - How can district and school provide more information sessions, school tours, open houses and other options for incoming families and current families?
3. Offer more Cultural training
- Offer more training about Chinese culture of school for American administrators, teachers, parents and their children who are currently participating in a Chinese immersion program or will be a part of the program. In many ways, entering a language immersion program will involve some level of culture shock. American administrators, teachers, parents, and students need to learn about Chinese culture of school in relation to their own experience in the Chinese immersion programs.
  - Offer more cultural training about American school culture for Chinese immersion teachers and teacher assistants. Before new Chinese teachers start teaching Chinese immersion classes in an American school, they need to understand how American school culture is different from their school experience in China. They need to understand what they can and cannot do in an American school.

#### 4. Reform testing requirements

- Eliminate many state and district required English tests for Chinese immersion students.
- Carefully frame English assessments with the Chinese immersion programs.
- Develop alternative methods for conducting assessments that are more useful.
- Be aware of excessive time devoted to studying for the assessment tests of Chinese proficiency (HSK, YCT).

**Recommendations for parents.** It would be beneficial for parents who have had their children enrolled in a Chinese immersion program if they:

1. Have a deep understanding of immersion education and how it affects their children.
2. Have a deep understanding of the cultural difference between American schools and Chinese schools.
3. Have a deep understanding of the different teaching styles and classroom management strategies that Chinese immersion teachers might use in teaching Chinese.
4. Support their children with English learning as much as they can at home before 3rd grade.
5. Become a part of a strong parent community. They can learn much about the program from other parents and support the Chinese immersion program development.

#### **Recommendations for Chinese immersion teachers.**

1. Chinese immersion teachers benefit from having a deep understanding of the cultural difference between American schools and Chinese schools, including students'

- behavior expectations. Chinese immersion teachers benefit from learning some strategies about how to manage American classrooms. Chinese immersion teachers benefit from being comfortable sending students with behavioral issues to the disciplinary office in American schools. Chinese immersion teachers can utilize English with younger grade students when discipline is necessary. English will help younger students understand the consequences for bad behavior, understand the corrections and implications of their behavior.
2. Chinese immersion teachers benefit from having a deep understanding and genuine enthusiasm of the Chinese culture and history because a Chinese immersion program teacher is not just teaching a language.
  3. Chinese immersion teachers should emphasize creative thinking or problem solving while teaching Chinese subjects. Chinese immersion teachers should be comfortable interacting with the English program teachers and learning from them about American school culture and teaching styles.
  4. Chinese immersion teachers should provide parents a clear explanation on what is expected for homework in English at the beginning of the year. Chinese immersion teachers should require less Chinese homework for children. Chinese immersion teachers should frequently assess and report students' progress. Parents need frequent feedback on how their children are doing at school.

### **Summary**

The study explored parents' motivations and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs regarding the development of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota since 2006. By

exploring parents' perception, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements were identified. The findings of the study including summary of conclusions, discussion, limitation, recommendations for future study and practice could be shared with Chinese immersion programs' administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The findings of the study could be used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.

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### **Appendix A: Email to Superintendent**

Dear Mr./Ms. X:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study in X School District. I am a doctoral student in Educational Administration and Leadership at St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN. My dissertation focuses on the perceptions of parents who have chosen Chinese language immersion education for their child/children. The purpose of the study is to gain information from parents who have enrolled their child/children in a Chinese language immersion program in Minnesota about why they chose Chinese immersion, and what they perceive to be advantages and disadvantages for their child/children as a result of their enrollment in a Chinese language immersion program. Please see attached the Project Description.

I am requesting authorization and assistance for conducting an online survey with parents who have currently enrolled their child/children in your school district's Chinese immersion program. The copy of the survey is enclosed.

If approval is granted, parent participants would receive a link through their email to complete the online survey. Parents who volunteer to participate will be given consent forms to be e-signed before they complete the survey online. The survey results will remain confidential and anonymous. I will not use the name or location of the school. I also will not include any information that could be used to identify your school district or parents in my study. No costs will be incurred by either your school or the individual participants.

I plan to share the results of this study with you for your information. This information may be helpful to your school district in attracting and retaining future and current parents in the Chinese language immersion program. In addition, this information may be helpful to other schools or districts that are considering offering a Chinese language immersion program to their parents and students.

I would be grateful to receive your support in conducting this study. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have.

Sincerely,

Xinming Ren  
Educational Administration and Leadership, St. Cloud State University  
E-mail: rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu  
Phone: (320) 224-0842

**Appendix B: Email to Principal**

April 6, 2017

Mr./ Ms. X, Principal,  
X school  
Address

Dear Mr/Ms. X,

My name is Xinming Ren. I am a doctoral student in Educational Administration and Leadership at St. Cloud State University. My dissertation study focuses on the perceptions of parents who have chosen Chinese language immersion education for their child/children. For my dissertation study, I plan to survey parents who recently have enrolled their children in a Chinese immersion program in your school.

I am writing to you to request your support in conducting a survey of parents who have enrolled their child/children in your school's Chinese immersion program during 2016-2017 school year. I am hoping you would be willing to assist me in identifying families who would be willing to participate in taking the survey. I plan on distributing the survey in April/May 2017, or whenever is most convenient for you and the parents.

Parent participating in this study is entirely voluntary. To ensure your school's and parents' confidentiality, I will not use the name or location of the school. I also will not include the information that could be used to identify the school in any reports related to the study. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have regarding my study. I greatly appreciate your time and hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

Xinming Ren  
Ed.D. Candidate  
Educational Administration and Leadership, St. Cloud State University  
E-mail: [rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu)  
Phone: (320) 224-0842

### Appendix C: Email to Parent

Dear Parent:

You are invited to participate in a research study to gain an understanding of parents' perceptions of their child/children's enrollment in a Chinese language immersion program in Minnesota. You have been chosen to participate in this research because you have enrolled your child/children in our Chinese immersion program.

Please complete the online survey. This survey will take around 5-10 minutes to complete.  
**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B8X7GLR>**

Parents' Perceptions of Chinese Immersion Program in Minnesota Survey  
**[www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)**

Web survey powered by SurveyMonkey.com. Create your own online survey now with SurveyMonkey's expert certified FREE templates.

Participating in the study is completely voluntary. To ensure your confidentiality is protected, the name and location of your child/children's school will not be included in information that could be used to identify you in any reports related to this study.

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in this study. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact the researcher or her advisor.

Dr. John Eller,  
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN  
[jfeller@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:jfeller@stcloudstate.edu)  
320-308-4241

Sincerely,

Xinming Ren  
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN, [rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu), 320-224-0842

## **Appendix D: Project Description**

### **Project Abstract**

This study aims to explore parents' motivations and perceptions of Chinese immersion programs regarding the development of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota since 2006. By exploring parents' perception, the Chinese immersion programs' strengths and potential improvements will be identified. The findings of this study will be shared with Chinese immersion programs' administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. The findings of the study will be used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. In addition, the results of this study could be used by parents who plan to enroll their children in Chinese immersion programs to make their final decisions.

### **Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of the study is to identify and gain an understanding of parents' perceptions of enrolling their child/children in a Chinese language immersion program in Minnesota.

### **Research Questions**

The study addresses the following five research questions:

1. What do parents who enrolled their children in selected Chinese immersion programs identify as family and program characteristics including number of children, years in the program, languages spoken at home, level of information about the program before and after enrollment?
2. What do parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as the primary reasons for enrolling their children in the program?

3. What do parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs report as their children's experiences related to their academic achievement, the level of parental engagement, and enjoyment of the Chinese immersion classroom?
4. What are program strengths and concerns reported by parents of children in selected Chinese immersion programs?
5. What are the impacts of the number of children and the years of enrollment in the Chinese immersion program on parents' perceptions of their program satisfaction and their child/children's growth?

### **Research Design**

This study will use a quantitative methodology. The large number of parents participating the online survey will allow the researcher to collect data and seek a comprehensive overview of parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs.

Describe in experiential fashion what activities/behaviors participants will be required to complete during the research project.

This study will use a set of parent survey questions to collect data and address research questions. Parent participants will be receiving an email with a survey link from the principal. Through the survey link, participants will have access to log their responses.

## **Appendix E: Parents' Perceptions of Chinese Immersion Programs in Minnesota**

### **Consent to Participate**

#### **Procedures**

You are invited to participate in a research study about parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to complete a short online survey regarding your perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota.

The purpose of this quantitative study is to examine parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in which their child/children attend. More specifically, the study focuses on the key factors parents use in making decisions to enroll their child/children in a Chinese immersion program, and their reported areas of strengths and concerns related to their child/children enrollment in a Chinese immersion program. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have enrolled your child/children in a Chinese immersion program during the 2016-2017 school year.

#### **Benefits of the Research**

The findings of this study will be shared with the immersion program administrators, teachers, and parents to improve their awareness about Chinese immersion program in Minnesota. Your responses will be used to supplement the gap in the literature related to parents' perceptions of Chinese immersion programs in Minnesota. In addition, this information may be used by parents who are interested in the Chinese immersion program to learn more about the program before they decide to enroll their children to the Chinese immersion program or not.

#### **Risks and Discomforts**

There are no serious risks associated with this research study. I will carefully maintain the confidentiality of your responses and will not release any information that would allow any individual to be identified.

#### **Confidentiality**

Data collected will remain confidential. Your personal identity will remain confidential. You will not be identified by your name in any published materials. All printed data will be kept in a locked room and/or computer secured with a password. Only the researcher has access to the data. This data will be destroyed within 3 years.



**Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal**

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with St. Cloud State University, or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

**Contact Information**

Research results and aggregate data from the survey responses will be available to you upon request either by phone or email. You may also contact me for the results of the study. We appreciate your willingness to share your views with us. Upon completion, the researcher's dissertation will be electronically available for you to review. Findings of the study can be requested from the researcher. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the survey or the nature of the research, please feel free to contact my advisor or myself:

Dr. John Eller  
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN  
Email: [jfeller@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:jfeller@stcloudstate.edu)  
Phone: 320-308-4241

Xinming Ren  
St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN  
Email: [rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu)  
Phone: 320-224-0842

**Acceptance of Participate in the Study**

Your completion of the online survey indicates that you are at least 18 years of age and your consent to participation in the study.

## Appendix F: Parents' Perceptions of Chinese Immersion Programs in Minnesota Survey

### \* 1. Acceptance of Participate in the Study

Your completion of the online survey indicates that you are at least 18 years of age and your consent to participation in the study.

Yes  No

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey about your experiences in your child's/children's Chinese Immersion Program. Please focus on your most recent experiences as you answer the questions.

Most of the questions will ask you about the program based on your experiences with your child/children. If any of your children had a different experience, you will be asked to identify this near the end of the survey.

I will be using this information you provide to look for general trends related to parental experiences in Chinese Immersion Programs. Thank you in advance for participating in this study.

1. How many children do you have enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?

1

3

5

2

4

6 or more

2. Please select all the grade levels in which you currently have children enrolled in.

K

4

8

1

5

9

2

6

10

3

7

4. How long has your child/children been enrolled in a Chinese immersion program?

(Please select the longest period if you have multiple children in the program.)

- First year in the program
- 1 -3 years in the program
- 4-6 years in the program
- 7 or more years in the immersion

5. Which languages are spoken in your home? (Check all that apply)

- Chinese
- English
- German
- Spanish
- French
- Other (please specify)

6. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Chinese immersion program?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

7. Please select the 3 most important strengths of the Chinese Immersion Program. (Select only 3)

- The organization of the program
- The learning environment/climate
- The program curriculum
- The communication from the school/teacher to you
- The school administrator's interest/involvement in the program
- The relationship between your child/children and their teacher(s)
- The student progress reporting

Please add any strengths not addressed above or share any comments you have in relation to this question.

8. Please select the areas that are in need of improvement in the Chinese Immersion Program (Select all that apply)

- The organization of the program
- The learning environment/climate
- The program curriculum
- The communication from the school/teacher to you
- The school administrator's interest/involvement in the program
- The relationship between your child/children and their teacher(s)
- The student progress reporting

Please add any areas needing improvement not addressed above or share any comments you have in relation to this question.

9. What was your understanding of the Chinese immersion program **before** you enrolled your first child in the program?

- I/we had limited information about the program
- I/we had only general information about the program
- I/we had learned enough details to help me understand how the program works
- I/we had learned enough details to help me make a decision to enroll my child in the immersion

program

Please share any additional thoughts you have in relation to this question.

10. What has been your level of understanding of the Chinese immersion program **since** you enrolled your first child in the program?

- I/we have received limited information about the program
- I/we have received only general information about the program
- I/we have learned enough details to help me understand how the program works
- I/we have learned enough details to help me make a decision to keep my child in the immersion

program

Please share any additional thoughts you have in relation to this question.

11. Please select the top 3 reasons you used for enrolling your child/children in the Chinese immersion program?

- The personal benefits for my child to be bilingual and bi-cultural
- The possibility for career opportunities for my child by being bilingual and bi-cultural
- Information about the benefits about the Chinese immersion program read online
- Desire to have our child/children to learn about another culture.
- The ability to speak Mandarin, the most widely spoken first language in the world
- My child/children was/were adopted from China
- One of parents or both parents are from China or other Asian countries
- One or more family members speak Chinese
- China has a close trade and economic relationship with the United States
- Family plans to travel to China in the near future
- Family plans to live in China in the near future

Please share any additional reasons not listed above or any other thoughts you have in relation to this question.

12. How much growth in the following areas have you observed in your child/children since they have been enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?

	Significant growth	Moderate growth	Some growth	No growth was observed	N/A
Ability to speak and understand Chinese	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to learn English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intellectual development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-confidence of being bilingual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social skills development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Development of intercultural sensitivity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please share any additional areas of growth.



16. How often do you help your child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments?

	Never	Daily	Weekly	A few times per week	Monthly	A few times per month	N/A
First oldest, or only child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second oldest child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third oldest child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. How often do you help your child/children with English reading and writing in general?

	Never	Daily	Weekly	A few times per week	Monthly	A few times per month	N/A
First oldest, or only child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second oldest child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third oldest child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Another version for Q14-17:

14. How much does/do your child/children like learning Chinese?

- Extremely likes
- Likes
- Dislikes
- Extremely Dislikes

15. How often do you help your child/children with Chinese learning?

- Never
- Daily
- Weekly
- A few times per week
- Monthly
- A few times per month



16. How often do you help your child/children with Chinese schoolwork assignments?

- Never  
 Monthly  
 A few times per month  
 Weekly  
 A few times per week  
 Daily

17. How often do you help your child/children with English reading and writing in general?

- Never  
 Monthly  
 A few times per month  
 Weekly  
 A few times per week  
 Daily

18. For the following questions, please rate your level of satisfaction with your child/children's growth.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese speaking growth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese reading growth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with your child/children's Chinese writing growth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English speaking growth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English reading growth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with your child/children's English writing growth?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Please share any additional comments or feedback about your child/children's participation in the Chinese immersion program in the box below.

20. If you have multiple children in the Chinese immersion program, have your children had similar experiences?

- I only have one child
- Yes, my children have had similar experiences
- No, one or more of my children has/have had a different experience

If no, please explain the different experiences.

## Appendix G: St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board Letter



### Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South AS 210, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

**Name:** Xinming Ren

**Address**

USA

**Email:** rexi1101@stcloudstate.edu

**IRB PROTOCOL  
DETERMINATION:  
Exempt Review**

**Project Title:** Parents' perceptions of Chinese Immersion Programs in MN

**Advisor** John Eller

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).

- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.

- Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.

- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-3290 or email [ri@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ri@stcloudstate.edu) and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

**IRB Institutional Official:**

Dr. Latha Ramakrishnan  
Interim Associate Provost for Research  
Dean of Graduate Studies

#### OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSU IRB# 1708 - 2134	Type: Exempt Review	Today's Date: 3/31/2017
1st Year Approval Date: 3/30/2017	2nd Year Approval Date:	3rd Year Approval Date:
1st Year Expiration Date:	2nd Year Expiration Date:	3rd Year Expiration Date:



## Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South MC 204K, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

### Continuing Review / Final Report

Principal Investigator: **Xinming Ren**

Co-Investigator:

Project Title: **Parents' perceptions of Chinese Immersion Programs in MN**

If the project has been completed (no longer collecting data on human subjects) please indicate your projects status under Final Report and complete questions 1 through 5. If you have completed collecting data on human subjects but continue to analyze the data, as long as no new data is being obtained, your project would be considered completed.

If the project has not been completed (you are collecting data on human subjects) please indicate the status of your project under Continuing Review/Project Continuation and answer questions 1 through 5.

#### Final Report

- The Project has been completed.  
 Project has not and will not be conducted. Explain:

#### Continuing Review/Project Continuation

- Data collection continues with enrolled participants.  
 Participant recruitment continues following approved IRB protocol.

Have any changes been made to your research project (changes in subject recruitment, informed consent documents, design, methodology, procedures, etc.) since it was approved by the IRB?

- No  
 Yes, explain:

Final Report and Continuing Review/Project Continuation, please answer the following:

1. How many participants have participated in your study \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have any adverse events (complaints, unexpected reactions, discomfort, or problems) occurred during this research project  
 No  
 Yes, explain:
3. Have any participants withdrawn from the research, either voluntarily or at the researcher's request?  
 No  
 Yes, explain:
4. Has any new information been identified that may affect the willingness of subjects to participate in this research project?  
 No  
 Yes, explain:
5. Have any changes been made to your research project (changes in subject recruitment, informed consent documents, design, methodology, and procedures, etc.) since it was approved by the IRB?  
 No  
 Yes, explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Investigator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

SCSU IRB#: 1706 - 2134

## **Appendix H: Critical Features of Effective Immersion Programs**

(Genesee, 2005, page 21-22)

1. Use of the second language for communication in school
  - a. Teachers are native (or native-like) speakers of the second language
  - b. Teachers have professional development in second language teaching
  - c. Immersion teachers present themselves as monolingual models
  - d. Immersion students are expected to use second language
  - e. Different teachers teach during first and second language periods
  - f. Immersion programs are located in separate area of the school
2. Immersion programs aim for additive bilingualism
  - a. They aim for advanced levels of proficiency in all aspects of first and second language development
  - b. They view bilingualism is an asset for personal, social, professional reasons
3. The program promotes high level of academic achievement
  - a. Students are expected to attain the same high levels of achievement in all academic domains as students in regular programs
  - b. Language acquisition is incidental to academic instruction
  - c. There is both direct and indirect language instruction
4. Immersion programs are developmentally appropriate
  - a. Student-centered instruction builds on students' existing skills, knowledge and experiences
  - b. There is planned development of language to ensure grade-appropriate academic achievement
  - c. Long-term commitment
5. Immersion teachers and principals are strong leaders
  - a. Teachers and principals are knowledgeable about pedagogical principles
  - b. Teachers and principals are familiar with research findings on immersion
  - c. Teachers, principals, and researchers advocate for the program
6. Parental involvement is integral to program success
  - a. Parents participate in program development from the outset
  - b. Parents understand program structure and principles
  - c. Parents are informed of students' progress
  - d. Parents advocate for the program

### **Appendix I: Eight Core Features of an Effective Immersion Program**

(Johnson & Swain, 1997, pp. 6-8)

1. The L2 is a medium of instruction although students have little or no L2 proficiency on entry to immersion.
2. The academic immersion curriculum parallels to the local L1 curriculum. The local education system determines the learning content.
3. Overt support exists for the L1.
4. The program aims for additive bilingualism. The target bilingual proficiency of the students is “additive”, with normal L1 development a requirement, and a high level of L2 proficiency expected.
5. Exposure to L2 is largely confined to the classroom.
6. Students enter with similar (and limited) levels of L2 proficiency.
7. The teachers are bilingual in the students’ L1 and the target L2.
8. The classroom culture is that of the local L1 community.