

**East Lyme Board of Education - East Lyme, Connecticut  
Chinese Program ad Hoc Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**MEETING DATE:** Wednesday, May 31, 2017, 4:00<sup>PM</sup>  
**LOCATION:** Superintendent's Office, ELPS Central Office  
**ATTENDEES:** Al Littlefield, Jill Carini, Candice Carlson, Jeff Newton  
(Superintendent), Deb Kelly (East Lyme High Assistant Principal)

**Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. Discussion of Program Progress for the ELPS Chinese Program for the 2016-2017 School Year**

- With only Freshmen in this year's Chinese student program, there was a rough beginning (which was anticipated).
- In China school is broken down like this:
  - 9<sup>th</sup> grade is part of middle school
  - 10<sup>th</sup> grade is first year of high school
  - 11<sup>th</sup> grade is the prep year for exams
  - 12<sup>th</sup> grade is the last year of high school
- Parents of Chinese students feel that the students are coming here to study so the "Social Piece" is not as important. The High School extra-curricular piece is limited or non-existent.
- Chinese students are adapting well but the "Assimilation Piece" is not there.
- Additionally, having the students living in host homes in pairs also contributed to their limited non-assimilation.
- For these incoming Freshmen, the English skills were not there like it had been when the students were Seniors.
- East Lyme teachers are spending more time with the Chinese students (especially in the areas of ELL teachers) that offer extra and after-class time for Chinese students.
  - High School has one (1) ELL teacher that devotes more than .5 to the Chinese Students
  - Additional ELL assistance is provided by a .5 teacher from the Middle School

**2. Discussion of Program Progress for the ELPS Chinese Program for the 2017-2018 School Year**

- So far only four (4) candidates for next year. (Interviews were handled via Skype.)
- Perhaps we need to make some of the social requirements (e.g., extra-curricular activities) mandatory for these incoming Freshmen.
- Need a more efficient/detailed host family selection process. Include an understanding what the ELHS expectations are for the students and what kind of support is available for the host families.

- Provide training for the host families.
- Perhaps having the students ‘living in pairs’ with the host family provides that built-in buffer for the students that facilitates the high school non-assimilation.
- Need to take a longer look at the Student Selection process. This year, Skype was used with limited success (not nearly as good as the fact-to-face interviewing).

**3. Discussion of Program – Going Forward**

- There are other schools in the United States now hosting Chinese students so we are not necessarily "the only game in town."
- Use former East Lyme Chinese alumni as a part of the marketing strategy going forward.
- Capitalize on the methodologies used by our Middle School’s work with the Chinese middle school in performing teamed projects.
- For future years, perhaps select a mixture of Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors as incoming students that would hopefully move students outside of the current comfort zone of sticking together almost exclusively.
- Perhaps we should include mentoring/pairing Chinese students with our own East Lyme Students.
- It was suggested that we develop a guidebook for the Chinese host families.
- One drawback is that the arrival of Chinese students is too close to the start of school to really get the students and the host families up-and-running smoothly in the shortened time.
- We should endeavor to provide the prospective Chinese students with information on the High School as soon as they are selected.

**4. Discussion of New Contract for the ELPS Chinese Program**

- Mr. Newton anticipates bringing the new ELPS-Spiral contract to the Board at the next meeting. This needs to be in place quickly.
- Spiral wants to reduce the funding for the ELL teacher to .25 because of the smaller Chinese student enrollment. Ms. Kelly will be having discussions with the current ELL teacher, the extra ELL teacher from the Middle School, and the ELHS English teachers to see historically, how much support is needed and provided.
  - The committee recommends that ELPS “pushes back” and uses the information provided by Ms. Kelly and the ELL teachers in support of maintaining the staffing levels as they currently are.

**5. Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Albert L. Littlefield, Candice Carlson, and Jill Carini*