

**Status Report**  
**on**  
**Chinese Language Instruction in Connecticut Public Schools**  
**2012**

**Prepared By:**

**Erin Bailey, Sixth Year, EDL**  
**Danuta Thibodeau, Ph.D.**

## INTRODUCTION

The Connecticut State Department of Education requested that EDUCATION CONNECTION's Center for World Languages and Cultures collect and analyze data on the study of world languages in Connecticut public, charter and magnet schools.

The Center for World Languages and Cultures at EDUCATION CONNECTION advocates for the acquisition of world languages and expanded study of associated cultures by K-12 student learners in Connecticut's public schools. The Center's mission is to advocate, support, and promote this cause through the following goals:

- Promote world languages and cultural literacy as fundamental 21st Century Skills.
- Enhance the vitality and viability of existing world language programs in the State.
- Develop pathways for students to gain proficiency in, and ultimately earn credit for, the study of world languages outside the traditional public school classroom setting.
- Expand the base of teachers who are certified to teach world languages, particularly in less commonly taught languages.

EDUCATION CONNECTION, through its Center for World Languages and Cultures, designed and disseminated a 15 question World Language Survey to provide a status report on World Language instruction in the State of Connecticut for the school year 2012. The purpose of survey was to determine which world languages are currently being taught in Connecticut schools, at which grade level instruction is provided, and changes that districts have made in world language offerings over the past three years and planned changes in offerings for the next three years. The survey was developed using Survey Monkey. This survey was emailed to all Connecticut public school superintendents and identified charter and magnet school contacts. Follow-up emails and personal phone calls were made to non-respondents. Data was collected and analyzed, with a focus on world language instruction in public school districts. The survey was conducted between August and September, 2011. This report contains the results of the survey specific to Chinese language instruction and is a part of the larger study.

## FINDINGS

The inclusion of Chinese as a World Language offering was found to be present in 30 districts of the 147 respondents (which included districts, Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs), and charter and magnet schools). Chinese is also offered at an alternative education school program provided by EDUCATION CONNECTION and, although very unlikely, may be offered in districts that did not respond to this survey.

Data gathered through the survey suggests that:

- 20% (30 districts) of respondents include Chinese among their world language offerings
- 40% (12 districts) of respondents offering Chinese have added it in within the last three years
  - Of these, 25% (3 districts) dropped another world language within the last three years
- 3% (1 district) of respondents dropped Chinese within the last three years
- 12% (18 districts) of all respondents plan to add Chinese/ Mandarin within the next two years
- The terms Chinese and Mandarin Chinese are used interchangeably by districts

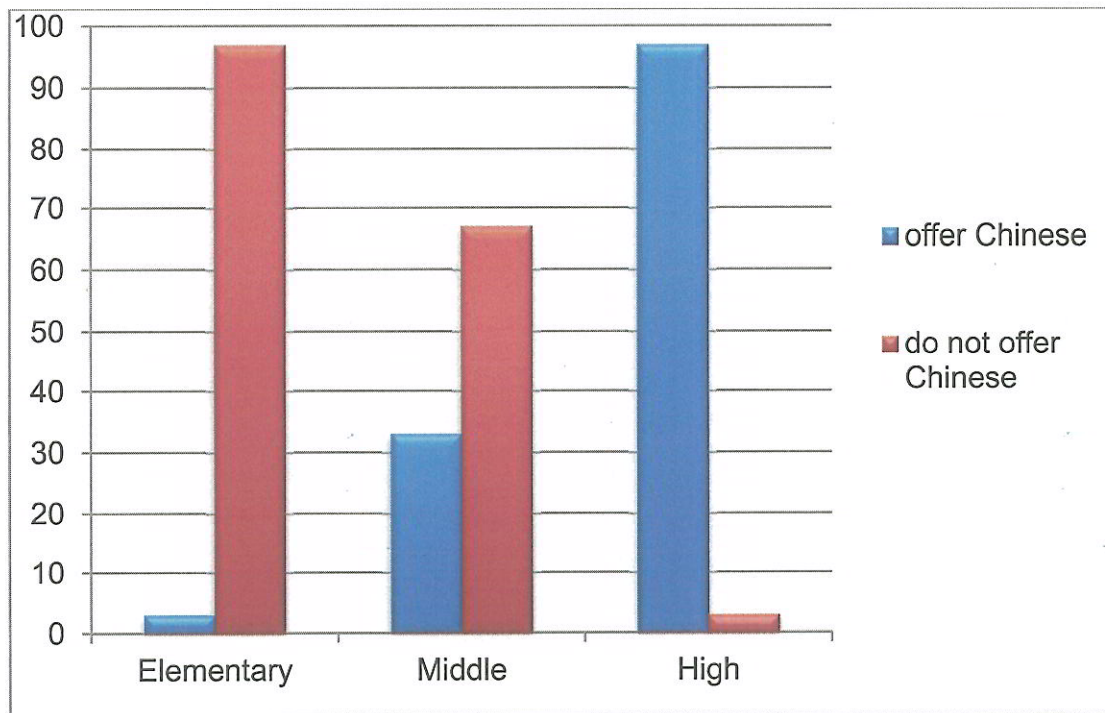
### Districts offering Chinese Language Instruction at different grade levels

| DRG | District                           | Elementary | Middle | High |
|-----|------------------------------------|------------|--------|------|
| C   | Bolton                             |            |        | X    |
| I   | Bridgeport                         |            |        | X    |
|     | Cooperative Educational Services** |            | X      |      |
| D   | Clinton                            |            |        | X    |
|     | Capitol Region Education Council** |            | X      | X    |
| H   | Danbury                            |            |        | X    |
| H   | East Hartford                      | X          | X      | X    |
| B   | Fairfield                          |            |        | X    |
| B   | Glastonbury                        |            | X      | X    |
| B   | Granby                             |            |        | X    |
| B   | Greenwich                          |            |        | X    |
| G   | Hamden                             |            | X      | X    |
| B   | Madison                            |            |        | X    |
| A   | New Canaan                         |            |        | X    |
| I   | New Haven                          |            | X      | X    |
| B   | Newtown                            |            |        | X    |
| H   | Norwalk                            |            |        | X    |
| G   | Norwich Free Academy               |            |        | X    |
| C   | Region 7                           |            |        | X    |
| C   | Region 10                          |            |        | X    |
| F   | Region 11                          |            | X      | X    |
| C   | Region 18                          |            |        | X    |
| A   | Ridgefield                         |            |        | X    |
| B   | Simsbury                           |            | X      | X    |
| H   | Stamford*                          |            | X      | X    |
| B   | West Hartford                      |            |        | X    |
| A   | Weston                             |            |        | X    |
| A   | Westport                           |            | X      | X    |
| F   | Wolcott                            |            |        | X    |
| E   | Woodstock Academy                  |            |        | X    |

\*includes one K-8 inter-district magnet school

\*\*indicates magnet school operated by a RESC



**Percent of Respondents Offering Chinese Language Instruction by Level**

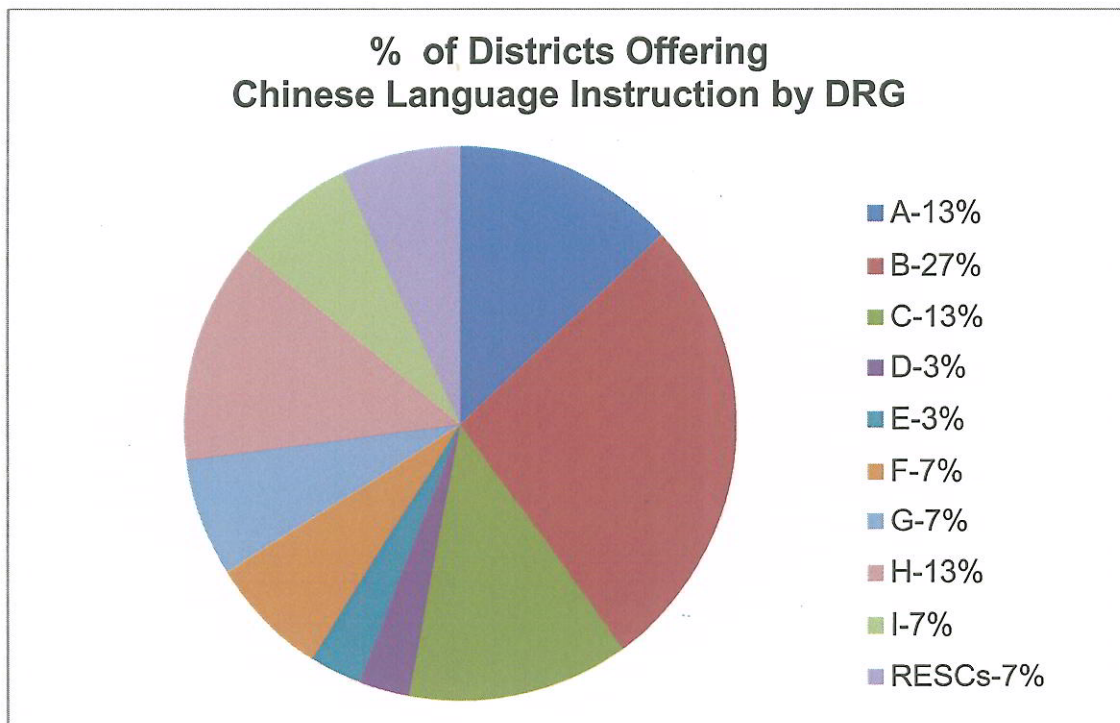
This chart represents a comparison of grade levels at which Chinese instruction is offered among districts that currently offer the Chinese language instruction. While only one elementary school offers the Chinese language instruction, Chinese language instruction increases to 10 districts by Middle School and 29 districts by High School. Although all districts did not report on enrollment of students in Chinese language instruction, approximately 1,650 students were reported as enrolled in Chinese language instruction (in comparison to well exceeding 26,500 students were reported as enrolled in Spanish).

**Districts offering Chinese Language Instruction by District Reference Group (DRG)**

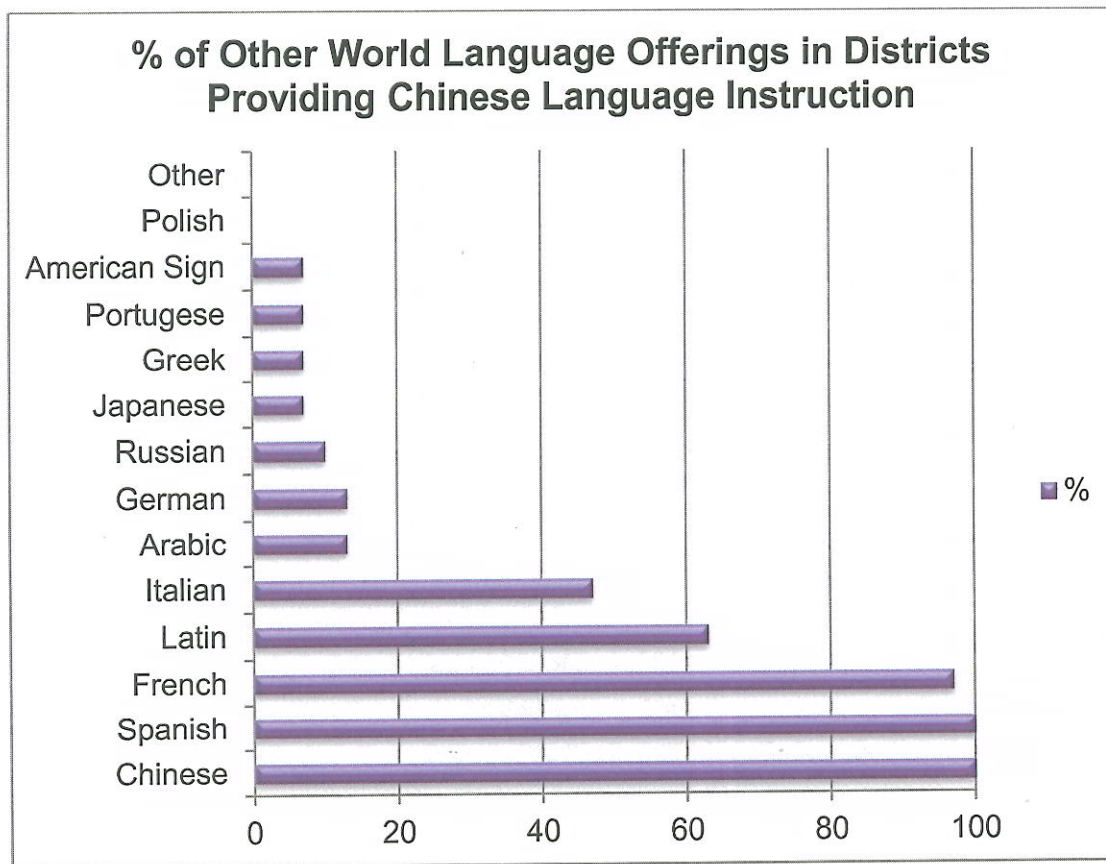
| DRG                        | Districts  | Percent of DRGs offering Chinese |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| A                          | New Canaan, Ridgefield, Weston, Westport   | 44%                              |
| B                          | Fairfield, Glastonbury, Granby, Greenwich, Madison, Newtown, Simsbury, West Hartford | 40%                              |
| C                          | Bolton, Region 7, Region 10, Region 18   | 13%                              |
| D                          | Clinton  | 4%                               |
| E                          | Woodstock Academy  | 3%                               |
| F                          | Wolcott, Region 11   | 12%                              |
| G                          | Hamden, Norwich Free Academy   | 12%                              |
| H                          | Danbury, East Hartford, Norwalk, Stamford  | 44%                              |
| I                          | Bridgeport, New Haven  | 29%                              |
| Total                      | 28 out of 168 districts offering Chinese Language Instruction                        | 16%                              |
| Additionally, CREC and CES |  |                                  |

In comparing Chinese language instruction offered by DRGs, DRGs A, B and H have the highest percentage of districts providing instruction in Chinese. DRGs D and E, have the lowest percentage of schools offering Chinese language instruction, with only one school district in each DRG offering Chinese language instruction.

**Percent of Districts Offering Chinese Language Instruction by DRG**



Combined, DRGs A, B, and C have 16 districts offering Chinese language instruction, which accounts for 53% of school districts offering Chinese language instruction. Combined, DRGs G, H, I have 8 districts offering Chinese language instruction, which accounts for 27% of school districts offering Chinese language instruction. Combined, DRGs D, E, F have 4 districts offering Chinese language instruction, which account for 20% of school districts offering Chinese language instruction.



While 100% (30) of the schools offering Chinese also offer Spanish, 73% (22) offer between two and five total languages, while 27% (8) offer six to nine languages.



### **Summary and Conclusions:**

- One fourth of districts adding Chinese language instruction in the last three years dropped another world language.
- Chinese language instruction is more prevalent at the high school level than any other level.
- Of the total number of districts offering Chinese language instruction (30), more than half are in DRGs A, B, and C.
- Nearly two-thirds of districts offering Chinese offer between two and five languages.
- Respondents from districts that offer Chinese language instruction noted that if resources were available, 43% (13) would want to expand Chinese language instruction via an earlier start or enhancement of current delivery model.
- Information provided by respondents indicates a great variance in the delivery model for instruction in Chinese language studies.
  - Of note, several districts cited programming is currently online, virtual, or reliant on grant funding.