



# 美康中文学校

**Chinese Language School of Connecticut**

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## Why learn Chinese?

Over one billion people speak Chinese—one-fifth of the world's population. Mandarin Chinese is the first language of over 873 million people. Chinese is not only spoken in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, but it is used in many Chinese communities throughout Asia and the rest of the world.

China has the second largest economy in the world and is one of the largest trading partners of the U.S. Connecticut's exports to China have grown 162% between 2005 and 2014 compared to 62% growth to all other parts of the world combined. China is now Connecticut's 5<sup>th</sup> largest export market.

## Why start learning at a young age?

Learning a second language is a window into another culture and teaches flexibility of thought. In our increasingly global-oriented world, it's more important than ever to be able to view personal, educational and business interactions from various perspectives.

Learning a second language, at any age, creates more brain network connectivity, which allows a person to remember and perceive new information more effectively. Learning a second language at a young age has additional benefits, mainly that it reinforces and strengthens core academic subject areas such as reading, social studies and math.

Learning Chinese at a young age is especially important because it takes a significantly larger number of hours for English speakers to become proficient in Mandarin (2200 hours) compared to other languages (Greek-1100 hours, Swahili-900 hours, German-750 hours, Italian-600 hours). Learning the Chinese tonal system is also much easier to acquire as a child as a child is more capable of noting differences in language and tone. This ability starts to deteriorate after age 12.

## Why CLSC?

As of 2012, only about 20% of all Connecticut's school districts offer Chinese within their world language programs, mostly at the high school level.

CLSC has classes for ages 3 and older. CLSC teachers are trained specifically to teach Chinese as a Second Language; it is assumed that Chinese is not spoken in the home. The goal of our program is to create enjoyable and engaging lessons for our learners so that they develop a love of learning Chinese, an appreciation of Chinese culture, and the motivation to continue. Students can continue to learn at CLSC through high school or if they are fortunate enough to have a Chinese program in their area, they can use their studies at CLSC to advance or support their studies in middle and high school Chinese programs.

*The Chinese Language School of Connecticut is accredited by AdvancED.*

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