

Arlington Public Schools

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Press Release

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Arlington High School will host a Mandarin teacher from China for the 2011-2012 school year. This exchange teacher was awarded by the Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP), a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, and implemented by American Councils for International Education. Arlington High School is honored to receive this teacher as only one out of three applicants was approved to host one of the 15 TCLP teachers from China for the coming school year.

In response to this award, Superintendent Kathleen Bodie said, "We are very pleased to receive this exchange teacher, who will provide a wonderful opportunity for our students to learn Mandarin and to become more familiar with China, a nation that continues to grow in importance in the global business and cultural arena."

Arlington's assigned teacher, Mr. Bo Yu, is from Beijing, China and holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Language from Capital Normal University of China. He has been teaching English at Beijing No. 4 High School (2,100 students and 150 teachers), one of the most prestigious high schools in China, since 2008. In addition to the English Language courses that he teaches, he conducts elective courses on Chinese Traditional Culture, as well as Beijing Tourism. He believes that family is very important, and in his spare time he enjoys singing, playing traditional instruments, badminton, and traveling. Mr. Yu's goal for the year is to bring traditional Chinese culture to his Arlington classroom. He is also looking to learn about American teaching methodologies, as well as U.S. customs and traditions, from his new colleagues.

"Mr. Yu will help us to fulfill our 21st century goal of increasing global understanding that our current Mandarin teacher, XiaQing Rotstein, has already begun with several students" said AHS Principal Charles Skidmore.

Mrs. Rotstein, Arlington High School's current part-time Mandarin teacher, is being funded for a second year through an anonymous gift by a local Arlington donor. Mr. Yu will teach Mandarin language classes in the High School, providing increased access to a language that has proven very much in demand during its first year of instruction. Mr. Yu will also work with Social Studies teachers at the Ottoson Middle School to provide depth and enrichment to the middle school curriculum where aspects of Chinese history, culture and geography are taught in all three years.

The Teachers of Critical Languages Program seeks to strengthen Mandarin Chinese language instruction at U.S. schools, while also providing selected exchange teachers the opportunity to learn about U.S. teaching methodologies, culture, and society. This is the sixth group of TCLP teachers to come to U.S. primary or secondary schools to teach Mandarin Chinese and to serve as a cultural resource in the host school and community for one academic year.

Veronique Lahey, AHS French teacher who will serve as mentor for Mr. Yu, echoes the sentiments of the faculty and staff in saying "we look forward to welcoming our exchange teacher to the High School and introducing him to the Arlington community upon his arrival later this summer."