SINGAPORE AMERICAN SCHOOL

Office of Learning
40 Woodlands Street 41,
Singapore 738547

www.sas.edu.sg

Dear Parents,

First of all, I want to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Lantern Festival and wish your Year of the Tiger to be filled with peace and happiness.

I also wanted to briefly introduce myself. In my 24 years of experience working in international schools in the Asia Pacific region, I have focused on the development of high-quality bilingual and Chinese immersion programs, and native and Chinese near native programs within the American curriculum framework. Most recently, I served as the Director of Chinese Studies and World Languages at the Hong Kong International School for nine years, where I led efforts to improve and grow the Chinese near native program. Since beginning my role as the Director of World Languages at SAS in August 2021, I have been very glad to see our students' progress in our Chinese near native classes (those designed for native speakers of Chinese), the teachers' extraordinary care for every student, and the parents' great support for our Chinese program.

At SAS, we believe deeply in developing the bilingual abilities of our students. To be bilingual in today's world is an incredible strength and asset. We want to do all we can to nurture and develop those abilities in our students, and that is one reason we award the Seal of Biliteracy every year to our graduating seniors who can demonstrate bilingualism in Chinese, Spanish and French. It is also why we continue to invest so much in our immersion Chinese program, given its success in developing bilingual skills in our students.

Our Chinese near native/native speaker classes play a critical role in helping students who speak mother-tongue Chinese develop their bilingualism, and we are grateful for the hard work of our teachers that makes this possible. We know how important the program is to our parents, students, and teachers. We are excited to begin our periodic review of the near native program and invite you to participate. You may have read on eNews about our school's strategic plan and the series of program reviews conducted last year or underway this year, including mathematics, learning support, social studies, and counseling.

These reviews are a great opportunity for us to take the time, reflect, and hear from the voices of teachers, students, and parents about our programs. They allow us to ensure we continue what we are doing well and to focus our energies on areas of

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growth. The Chinese near native program review will also collect and evaluate data, compare the curriculum of other schools, and refer to the latest academic research in the field. All parents, students, and teachers will have the chance to participate in the reviews and we look forward to hearing your thoughts and working together on our next steps going forward.

There will be a parent survey and three parent focus group meetings for the Chinese near native program review. We here invite you to participate in parent focus group meetings so we can hear your voice in person. The parent focus group meetings will be conducted in Mandarin with simultaneous translation into English upon prior request. The meeting times are:

- February 23, 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., ES Parent Focus Group. Location: M301
- February 24, 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., MS/HS Parent Focus Group. Location: 301
- March 15, 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., K-12 Parent Focus Group. Zoom link to be shared closer to the date.

We hope to receive your survey responses and your participation at the parent focus group meetings.

Sincerely,

Zhao-Hui Xu