



Feb. 6, 2012

Dear Parents of Chinese Immersion Students:

Increasingly, many of you are aware the federal government has unfortunately eliminated the \$1.5 million Foreign Language Assistance Program grant awarded to Barrington 220 to support your child's Chinese Immersion experience. Despite our persistent efforts to urge legislators and U.S. Department of Education officials for continuation of the promised funding, we learned recently the five-year grant will cease following this current fiscal year due to federal budget cuts.

The reason I have not informed you of this development sooner is because information regarding our grant was incomplete and unconfirmed up to last week. In fact, there are still specific questions to be answered. Until we know more, any speculation or concerns on our part or yours regarding the future of Chinese Immersion in Barrington 220 would be premature.

The Board of Education will discuss this development at its regular meeting tomorrow evening – Tuesday, Feb. 7 – at 7:30 p.m. in the Guidance Resource Center at Barrington High School. You are welcome to attend or to address the Board during the public comments portion of the agenda.

While we cannot yet commit to the future of the program in our schools, I can assure you the Board of Education will prudently consider the ramifications of this news, including a thoughtful discussion about feasibly sustaining the curriculum while honoring our responsibility to parents, students, staff and taxpayers. Regardless, the current cohort will definitely continue through the end of this school year.

We appreciate your support and we understand the uncertainty this news may cause. As we have learned to do with any budget matter in recent years, we hope you will remain calm and allow the resourcefulness and experience of our Board of Education to examine all options with due diligence.

Knowing the investment you and your children have in the Chinese Immersion program, we promise to communicate with you as soon as we have greater clarity about the next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Leonard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Dr. Tom Leonard
Superintendent of Schools