



Chinese Language Comes to Schools

For the last three years, Montgomery's only Chinese School, located at the Learning Express Center in the Mulberry Street district, has been offering lessons in Mandarin Chinese language and culture to anyone interested in learning.

"Using creative methods such as dancing, drama, role-playing and lots of conversations with peers, students can obtain basic knowledge of Chinese language and culture, its history and people, no matter what age they are," says Program Director **Dr. Huey-Ling Lin**. An area university professor and published author in the field of early childhood development, Lin says mostly younger children between the ages of two and 12 have been enrolled in the "Mandarin Chinese Language Program." Yet that's changing, she notes, as the school expands its services to include After-School Programs for the students of participating Montgomery schools.

"We began by offering a 'Mandarin After-School Program' to students of Baldwin Academic Magnet, an opportunity made available through grant-funding by the United States Department of Education," Lin says. She was inspired to offer a similar program opportunity to other Montgomery schools when some parents, whose children are enrolled in Chinese lessons at the Learning Express Center, mentioned it would be convenient if the lessons were available at their kids' school campus. "The schools we approached were very receptive to our proposal," Lin says excitedly. In fact, Montgomery Academy will begin offering the program this winter semester. An additional school will soon announce its plans to offer the program.

Her ideas to create opportunities for the community to learn Mandarin don't stop there, Lin says. Currently, she is even working on plans for a Chinese Language & Culture Summer Program. "I want to share Mandarin Chinese language and culture with anyone interested in learning it," says Dr. Lin, "and in our global marketplace, learning a foreign language like Chinese is becoming a valuable skill." To learn more about its Chinese programs, call the Learning Express Center at 262-8840 or visit www.learningexpresscenter.com/.

Shown, children enjoy learning Chinese through fun activities like song and dance with their teacher, Jia Shi Ping, at the Learning Express Center in the Mulberry District.