CHINESE HERITAGE SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES:
USING A CASE STUDY TO EXPLORE HOW A CHINESE HERITAGE
SCHOOL DEVELOPS IN THE USA

A Thesis in
Educational Theory and Policy
by
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

May 2013
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This is a case study using qualitative research methods to explore how a Chinese heritage school develops in the United States. Through interviews with the present principal, previous principals, parents and teachers, I sought to understand what influences the school’s development, what motivates the school’s formation, and how parents interact with the school. This study can enrich the research resources in the field of Chinese heritage schools and give some practical suggestions to other Chinese heritage schools.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Professor Mindy Kornhaber, my research supervisor, for her patient guidance, encouragement and professional information support. I would also like to thank Dr. Liang Zhang and Dr. Gerald LeTendre, who will sacrifice their precious time to read my study and give useful suggestions.

My grateful thanks are also extended to all the interview participants, who gave me huge support and encourage me to move forward.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents for their support and encouragement throughout my study.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States is a diverse country, where different ethnicities and races abound. At the end of the 19th Century, groups of Chinese immigrants travelled to the U.S. as laborers. Chinese Americans are the oldest and largest ethnic group of Asian ancestry in the United States. In the late 1840s, Chinese immigrants began to settle in the U.S. (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Initially, Chinese immigrants had a hard time in the U.S., because they did not have the legal right to attend American public schools. In order to support the education of these Chinese immigrants (laborers), classes in Cantonese were held for the residents of Chinatown in a number of large U.S. cities (Chao & Hsu, 1997). The situation of the Chinese population in America attracted the attention of the Chinese government, so the government of China established Chinese heritage schools. In 1848, Chinese immigrants opened their first Chinese language schools in order to serve educational needs of Chinese laborers (Chao & Hsu, 1997). Furthermore, the Chinese Consulate and leaders of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association cooperated with each other to found several Chinese language schools in San Francisco. Others were subsequently established in New York and Chicago (Chao & Hsu, 1997). With support from the Chinese government, Chinese heritage schools spread quickly in the United States. Chinese heritage schools brought hope to the Chinese population; these schools are not only a symbol of education, but also a hub for supporting Chinese immigrants. New immigrants, with poor English language proficiency, few friends, and limited resources were connected to resources: finding housing, jobs and connections with co-ethnic people (Zhou & Li, 2003). Chinese heritage schools became part of the Chinese community in cities across the United States.
The situation changed for the Chinese population of the U.S in the wake of World War II. “The repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 marked a new era for Chinese American community development. For the first time in history, immigrant Chinese and their offspring were legally allowed and encouraged to participate in American society. As a result, the ethnic community began to reorient itself from sojourning to establishing roots and reinforcing its commitment to socioeconomic integration” (Zhou, Li 2003, p. 62). Because of the change of policy, Chinese children were able to attend previously inaccessible schools. Old style Chinese heritage schools began to decrease in prevalence as a result. Although old style Chinese heritage schools were declining, new style Chinese heritage schools began to appear. After World War II, there was an influx of well-educated Chinese immigrants into the U.S. These immigrants and their families became permanent residents or naturalized citizens of the United States. In order to maintain their next generation’s Chinese cultural identity, these new Chinese immigrants educated their offspring themselves (Chao & Hsu, 1997). The new style Chinese heritage schools were founded by parents and aimed at transmitting Chinese language and culture to the new Chinese generation in the U.S. Also the new style Chinese heritage schools were not only set in Chinatown, but also spread to American suburbs. With the growth of the Chinese population in the U.S., various associations have formed to help the Chinese community to build up the Chinese heritage school. One of the largest organizations is the Chinese School Association in the United States (CSAUS), which was founded primarily by Mainland Chinese immigrants in 1994. CSAUS has evolved into an umbrella organization of more than three hundred member schools, covering 41 states and all major cities and enrolling more than 60,000 students. Right now, most CSAUS member schools are located in suburban areas, and only operate on weekends (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Under the umbrella of CSAUS and other organizations, Chinese heritage schools are developing well in the U.S.

“Currently, there are estimated to be 13.5 million Asian Americans living in the U.S.,
which comprises 5% of the total population” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Among all Asian Americans, 11% are from China (Yeh et al., 2008). “According to the 2010 U.S Census, the Chinese population was the largest detailed Asian group. The Chinese alone-or-in-any-combination population, the largest detailed Asian group, was 4.0 million. There were 3.3 million people who reported Chinese alone with no additional detailed Asian group or race category” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Also, the Chinese population was among the top five largest detailed Asian populations for every metro area, which means Chinese have become an indispensable part of big cities and will influence the development of the cities in different aspects (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Since the Chinese population is increasing in the U.S. and because the Chinese population occupies a large proportion of minority representation in the U.S, understanding how Chinese immigrants transmit their language and culture and how these immigrants support their next generation’s education is important. This will help us to understand how the Chinese population has adapted to U.S. society.

However, there are few studies relating to Chinese heritage schools’ development, and there are few studies addressing how new immigrants learn their own culture. Also, as I will discuss below, prior studies on Chinese heritage school are very limited and only focus on how Chinese heritage schools survived during the historical period and why parents want to choose to be involved in these schools. They offer little specific information on how a Chinese heritage school develops in the modern time period. So for my study, I want to use a case study to elaborate how a Chinese heritage schools exist and develop in the U.S.. Through the study, I want to see what influences schools’ development, what motivates the schools’ formation, and how parents interact with the schools. I hope my study may give some suggestions or inspiration for other Chinese heritage schools in the USA.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

As noted above, there are few studies that address Chinese heritage schools’ development. Most of them focus on four aspects of Chinese heritage schools. First, is the purpose of creating Chinese heritage schools. The reasons for creating Chinese heritage schools are different now than they were in the past. Second, is the formation of Chinese heritage schools. Previous studies focus on revealing how Chinese heritage schools are founded in the U.S.: (a) Who funds the school? (Tuition fee); (b) Who attends the school?; (c) Time the schools is in operation; (d) Organizational status of the school (Non-profit or profit). Third, is the importance of parents. Parents play an important role in creating and supporting Chinese heritage schools; they want their children to learn their own country’s culture and language. Fourth, is the curriculum expansion in the Chinese heritage schools. Chinese heritage schools not only focus on Chinese culture and language heritage, they also help Chinese children with their regular schools’ courses in order to prepare Chinese children for the future.

The Purpose of Creating Chinese Heritage Schools in the U.S.

As The purpose of creating Chinese heritage schools varied between pre-World War II and the present day. Before World War II, unlike European ethnic groups, the Chinese were legally isolated from mainstream ethnic groups. Their children did not have equal educational opportunities compared with other ethnic groups. As a result, the Chinese had to establish their own schools to provide education and vocational training for their children (Leung, 1975; Wong, 1988). Additionally, Asian parents consider education a first priority for their children, based on
Confucianism cultural values (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Chinese heritage schools also develop as a place in which to inherit traditional culture and language. During this period, most Chinese heritage schools were established in the Chinatowns of big cities. But after the changing of immigrant policies in 1943, Chinese immigrants finally had the same opportunity to access public education. The perceived value of Chinese heritage seemed to begin shrinking. As a result, many Chinese heritage schools declined in the U.S. Meanwhile, many new Chinese immigrants moved to America. The educational level of new immigrants is different compared with previous labor exports. More and more highly educated Chinese immigrants move to the U.S., resulting in new Chinese heritage schools flourishing. Overall, older and smaller Chinese schools in inner-city Chinatowns have tended to shrink because of new immigrants spreading all over the U.S. At the same time, new Chinese heritage schools grew in size and number in the suburbs (He, 2004). As the newer suburban Chinese heritage schools are mushrooming in the U.S., the purposes of creating new style of Chinese heritage schools have changed compared with the old ones. “Today’s Chinese language schools have grown into an ethnic system of supplementary education that is complementary to rather than competitive with formal education” (Zhou & Li, 2003, p. 71). For the contemporary Chinese heritage school, maintaining Chinese culture and language is not the sole target, serving extra educational needs for Chinese children are also important for Chinese heritage schools currently.

Helping the Chinese community to shape a particular ethnic environment while also mediating the formation of social bonds is another function of Chinese heritage schools, besides supporting education (Zhou & Li, 2003). As a result, Chinese heritage schools are given a new function—as a hub of Chinese community—created by the Chinese community. Among members of the Chinese community, many have had little contact with each other (Wang, 1999). Chinese heritage schools offer a place for Chinese immigrants (mostly parents) to communicate, build relationships and share information with each other. Also Chinese immigrants can feel cohesion
and gain social capital within the Chinese heritage school. Many researchers agree that social identities are created in part through language. (See Bucholtz and Hall 2004, for a thorough discussion). When parents and teachers get together in Chinese heritage schools, speaking Chinese with each other, they can feel a shared social identity and comfort, freeing them from the intense life in the U.S. In some scholars’ view, parental racial backgrounds and socioeconomic characteristics are not the sole factors that determine a child’s development. The social environment in which the child grows up is also important for a child’s development (Zhou & Li, 2003). “For many immigrants, the process of migration entails loss of a familiar support network from family and friends” (Sluzki, 1998; Yeh et al., 2008, p. 778). Immigrant students often lose close friendships and have to create new relationships in foreign environments (Hernandez & McGolrick, 1999). Chinese heritage school can serve these Chinese children with a good ethnic environment. Children can meet with their peers in the same ethnic background and may feel more comfortable sharing their problems with friends due to their shared cultural experiences. (Inman & Yeh, 2006; Yeh, Ching, Okubo, & Luthar, 2007). All these will create a good environment for Chinese immigrant children’s development.

**Formation of Chinese Heritage School**

“In 1994, The National Council of Associations of Chinese Language Schools counted a total of 643 registered Chinese language schools in the United States serving 82,675 K–12 students” (Zhou & Li, 2003, p. 64). Since there are so many Chinese heritage schools in the U.S., funding of these schools has becomes a pressing question for researchers. According to the literature, there exist both for-profit and nonprofit Chinese language schools. For-profit schools include mostly kindergartens, childcare centers, and tutorial programs for secondary school students. Nonprofit Chinese language schools are mostly operated and run by volunteers who
play the role of administrators and teachers. Because nonprofit Chinese language schools do not have funding resources, they are usually affiliated with nonprofits organizations such as Chinese-American associations or religious organizations. (Chao & Hsu, 1997). For those who are non-profit schools, parents become the backbone for the school. They will pay the tuition fee, and also may volunteer in the school as a teacher, a supervisor or donator. Also non-profit schools will seek other opportunities to raise funding. “School boards seek donations from local businesses, institutions, and individuals. Schools also raise funds by sponsoring dinners, dance parties, picnics, and exhibits, and by selling gift certificates” (Zhou & Li, 2003, p. 66). Compared with current financial situation, Chinese heritage schools in old days had more funding resources. According to prior studies of Chinese-language schools in San Francisco’s Chinatown, early schools were financed primarily by tuition ($4 to $5 a month) or donations from family associations, co-ethnic businesses, churches, and temples (Fong, 2003; Lai, 2000, 2001; Tom, 1941; Wang, 1996). Also some of the big Chinese heritage schools will gain financial support from Chinese government.

The “human resources” in Chinese heritage schools mostly consists of parents and community leaders. Parents are really important for Chinese heritage schools, because they donate their time and pool their skills to run the schools without financial compensation (Chao & Hsu, 1997). Schools need parents’ support; if they can devote their time to help the Chinese heritage school, their children may have better opportunities to receive a quality education. Since parents devote a lot to the schools, usually parents will automatically become members of the school's administrative body, which formulates and elects the board of directors, the principal and administrative officials (Chao & Hsu, 1997). This yields a teacher-parent association in Chinese heritage schools. There are also some organizations that assist Chinese heritage schools’ development and work to help manage the schools. The school may be governed by a board consisting of mostly elite members from ethnic organizations and businesses in Chinatown. For
example, nowadays in New York, Chinatown Consolidated Benevolent Association runs the largest Chinese school (child-and-youth-oriented organization) in inner city Chinatown (Zhou & Li, 2003). Some Chinese heritage schools also recruit high school and university students as volunteers. In recognition, these students are awarded community service certificates (Chao & Hsu, 1997). With the help from different groups, Chinese heritage schools will develop well in the future.

As additional education institutions, Chinese heritage schools usually will not open for the whole week. Currently, suburban Chinese schools usually operate on weekends, offering a few hours of classes for both Chinese language and other enrichment electives, such as art, ping-pong, dance, and so on (Zhou & Kim, 2006). In China, we call such schools “Xingqu ban”, which means a complementary school for increasing children’s achievement. I think Chinese heritage schools in America have the same purpose as “Xingqu ban”, but allow students more fun. In China, “Xingqu ban” focus on improving academic achievement for children. However, in Chinese heritage schools in the U.S., schools are more focused on inheriting culture and language.

The Importance of Parents

Parents play a very important role in supporting and creating Chinese heritage schools. “Chinese heritage schools are from the parents and for the parents” (Zhou & Li, 2003, p. 67). Most Chinese heritage schools are based in the Chinese community. They meet the various needs of the local Chinese community (Li, 2005). Parents are the main members of the Chinese community; so Chinese heritage schools have the support of the parents from Chinese communities (Chao, 1996). Why do these Chinese parents want to create Chinese heritage schools? In the old days, we know that Chinese population did not have the right to get equal
education, so parents explored Chinese heritage schools as an alternative for educating their children. But after policies changed, the purpose of parents creating Chinese heritage schools changed too. “Many [parents] wanted their children to learn English and excel in the American public school, but they also feared that they would lose their children if their children became too Americanized” (Zhou & Li, 2003, p. 63). Chinese people adhere rigidly to the Confusion theory, which emphasizes traditional culture. Parents who are interested in maintaining their home language and traditional culture (a majority of them) respond by volunteering to operate the Chinese heritage school. Besides inheriting traditional culture, parents also believe that a strong Chinese identity and ethnic pride instilled in the next generation are necessary to help the children cope with difficulties related to racism and discrimination (Zhou & Li, 2003).

Since parents have a huge desire to create Chinese heritage schools, they devote a lot to support the schools. Tuition and fund raising are the main financial resources for a Chinese heritage school (Li, 2005). Of course, parents will pay tuition fees for their children. Another way to get financial support is to seek individual donations (Li, 2005). Who will donate to Chinese heritage schools? The Chinese parents in the local community will. For example, For School 2 (A Chinese heritage school) in the Motorola corporation community, individual donations amounted to $1,450, representing 13% of the total donations of the year 2003. All of these individual donators are local Chinese parents (Li, 2005). Parents are also highly involved in the Chinese heritage school, serving as board members and teachers or administrators. Parents want to help Chinese heritage school develop well, which will benefit their children. They are expected to assist in the school in multiple ways. Parents will assist schools by adopting different roles, such as positions on the school’s administrative staff or teachers (Li, 2005). Because parents are the people who want to create and support the Chinese heritage school, schools also tend to recruit parents as staff in the school. Chinese heritage schools believe that parents are reliable, easily accessible and, more importantly, very affordable. So there is a big overlap
between parents and school employees (Li, 2005).

Although the parents of students play a crucial role in keeping Chinese heritage schools running successfully, sometimes the schools fail to reach Chinese people other than parents in the community (Li, 2005). How much Chinese heritage schools connect with the community is dependent on where parents are. There will be few connections between Chinese schools and Chinese people who are not involved in the Chinese heritage school. Since modern Chinese heritage schools are not limited to Chinatowns and are spread across America, not all of the Chinese heritage schools can get support from various Chinese organizations (like the schools operated in the Chinatown). All of the support those Chinese heritage schools operating outside of a Chinatown get is from parents and community-based organizations. Because the schools rely heavily on parents, they may ignore potential resources (or people), which may also help improve the quality of the schools. What is more, even though parents want to help Chinese heritage schools, sometimes they may not have enough professional knowledge to teach for or manage the schools. Chinese heritage schools still need help beyond the parent population, such as professional help from universities and educators; even help from the wider U.S. community.

The Expansion of the Chinese Heritage School

Over the years, Chinese heritage schools have always played the role of supporting traditional culture and language training. In the old days, Chinese heritage schools were the center of the Chinese community; they not only served as an educational institution, but also as a social center for Chinese immigrants to communicate with each other. With the development of educational diversity, Chinese children have options besides Chinese heritage schools in which to receive their education. Under such circumstances, Chinese heritage language education in the United States is no longer purely a heritage sector issue (Brinton, Kagan, Bauckus, 2008).
“Unlike traditional schools where the teaching of Chinese language and culture was at the core of the curriculum, today’s Chinese language schools have shifted to a more comprehensive, well-rounded curriculum that complements the requirements of public education by grade level and college preparation” (Zhou & Li, 2003, p. 66). In China, there are many cram schools that assist students in attaining high academic achievement. Competition in China is very intense, and parents want their children get high scores in order to gain a bright future. Under such circumstances, parents require extra assistance with the academic development of their children. As a result, cram schools began to mushroom, in order to satisfy parents’ needs. The Chinese heritage schools in the U.S. noticed the trend of cram schools in China and adjusted the course offerings of Chinese heritage schools, shifting their focus toward students’ academic development. Nowadays, some Chinese heritage schools help Chinese children with their regular schools’ courses in order to prepare Chinese children for a better future career/education. But still, Chinese heritage schools provide a means of sustaining, expanding, and enhancing the understanding of Chinese language and culture. The change of the Chinese heritage schools indicates that ethnic groups use their resources and experiences to enhance the next generation’s academic achievement.

With the spread of Chinese heritage schools throughout America, some university-level Chinese language programs (McGinnis, 1996) were proposed in the mid-1990s. “Penless Chinese Language Learning” is a university-level program, aimed at developing literacy skills among heritage learners at the City University of New York-Baruch College. (“Penless Chinese”, 2004) These new institutions’ development reveals the importance of the heritage education. These new styles of heritage schools support different choices for the children. The increase of these new style Chinese heritage schools indicates that the American society is starting to understand and accept this kind of school existing in the country.
Chapter 3

METHOD

According to the previous research, I find some gaps that previous researchers are not addressing in this field. 

1. Overall, there is little research in this area. When I searched the database, I only found around 10 studies related to Chinese heritage schools. 

2. Previous literature focuses on the history of Chinese heritage schools and how Chinese schools changed over the years, but little research focuses on how Chinese schools develop in the U.S. 

3. Much of the research focuses on parents’ participation in Chinese schools, but rarely mentions how communities establish and develop Chinese schools. What challenges have Chinese heritage schools met and how did they overcome these difficulties? For my study, I will focus on some of the gaps, such as, how Chinese heritage schools develop themselves and what factors influence their development. I think my study can enrich the information about Chinese heritage schools and will help others become educated about this particular educational format. The gap I found from previous literature will enable my study to offer a valuable contribution to the understanding of Chinese heritage schooling in the modern era.

“Case study research involves the study of a case within a real-life contemporary context or setting” (Yin, 2009). In order to fill the gap, I choose to use a case study to analyze what happened in a particular Chinese heritage school, which explores a school’s different aspects. Previous research has focused on Chinese heritage schools’ historical development in general. For my study, however, I choose a Chinese heritage school “H Chinese School”, which is located in a mostly white dominated community. Many parents in this Chinese heritage school are university students or faculty, and other parents are working in the community. Most of the
students in the schools are “American Chinese”, but there are also hybrid students those with one parent from China. Their ages range from 4 to 15, and they are assigned to different level classes. H Chinese School is operated inside a university right now, and offers a Sunday course to the whole community. There are varieties of classes operated in the H Chinese School, such dance class, Chinese language class, kung-fu, and so on. Some parents are the administrators of the school, and they have also formed a school board for discussing the school’s major issues. The reason why I choose this Chinese heritage school for the purposes of my research is because: 1. For me it is a convenient sample, because I volunteered in the H Chinese School as an assistant teacher, so I’m familiar with the principal and teachers in the school. During my volunteer semester, I forged a positive relationship with the schools’ teachers and board members, which helped me gain observation and interview privileges. 2. I also got support from the principal. I talked to the principal regarding my thoughts about this research before I decided to do it. The principal suggested that she really wanted perform the study, in order to help the staff generate a historical review of the school. 3. H Chinese School is a typical case for new Chinese heritage schools, in that Chinese locals who are highly educated founded it. Also, the parents are highly involved in the school. Although one case cannot generalize to all the Chinese heritage schools’ situation, I think it is a useful starting point for illuminating the situation of Chinese heritage schools and may also offer subsequent studies a detailed example.

I collected data by using participant observation, document review and interview techniques. The goal of using multiple data collecting methods is to triangulate each mode of data collection and let them support or supplement each other (Fielding & Fielding, 1986). I conducted interviews with the school board members, including previous principals, the present principal, previous teachers, present teachers, and I also interviewed some teachers and parents who do not belong to the board. I think these interviewees offer a comprehensive history of H School. For the principals, I focused on asking some questions about the school’s creation, development and
challenges. (Please see Appendix A for specific questions). For teachers and parents, I focused on asking their opinion about the school’s development and their interaction with the school. Each lasted for about 60 minutes.

I conducted and transcribed interviews in Chinese, because using Chinese to interview can make interviewees feel comfortable and offer more detailed and specific information. Also it is easy for me to transcribe interviews in my mother tongue. Then coded my transcription. As for my coding, I combined deductive and inductive approaches. According to the previous literature, I know that scholars are focusing on certain topics pertaining to Chinese heritage schools, such as who funds the school, why they want to operate the school, parents’ role in the school, and the future of the school. I think these aspects are important for me to do this case study, so interview questions related to these aspects in order to get useful information. After I transcribes, I codes the transcription according to these aspects. Also, there must be some information that previous literature has yet to surface. In my transcribing and coding, I note these and classify them as new aspects. After all the transcription, I put coded information together and translated the part that I will use in English. As for the accuracy of information, I asked the same questions to different person in order to confirm the information.

According to this case study, I want to learn how this specific Chinese heritage school operates and develops and what facts influence or impede this school’s movement forward. I hope I can improve my qualitative research abilities and improve my interview skills, which may benefit my future career. I believe my study can enrich the studies in this field with information pertaining to Chinese heritage schools’ development. I hope my study can also give some suggestions to the people who want to operate similar institutions. I will also complete a Chinese version for H School, which the principal is prepared to upload to the school website in order to let visitors know more about their schools’ history. So all in all, I think my study can benefit not only my career, but also the H School itself and the research field.
Chapter 4

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF H SCHOOL

H School is a Chinese heritage school, founded in 1995. The development of this school varies from other Chinese heritage schools, which were founded or operated in Chinatown or places that have many Chinese immigrants. The location of H School was inside an American public university town, which did not have very many Chinese people in the beginning of the 90s. This small town did not have much connection with the big cities outside of it. H School was operated by its parents’ group and depended on parents. The main financial support for H School is from parents’ tuition fee and most of the school’s staffs are parents. I'm doing a case study in order to understand how H School developed in this small university town with few Chinese immigrants and students. My interviews with H School's principals, teachers and parents, reveal how the school operated and changed from 1995 till now. In almost 20 years, H School experienced many different stages and also tried to adapt to the changing times. Each historical period has unique characteristics, which forced H School to adapt. In the following chapters, I want to use a narrative format to look at the story of H School since 1995 and try to find what kind of efforts H School made in order to adapt to its changing environment.

Beginning Era

Organizational Nature

H School was founded in the summer of 1995. At that time, there were few Chinese people studying or living in this small university town. People did not have much connection with
each other; everybody lived and studied by him or herself. There were 10 parents who were
friends with each other. All of them were students or teachers at the university. During summer
vacation, they wanted to find a place to teach their children Chinese, because their children did
not have other things to do. After some discussion, these 10 parents decided to create a parents
group, aiming at improving their children's Chinese. In the very beginning, H School was a
summer school led by a spontaneous parents group. Luckily, I have had the opportunity to
interview the first principal of H School (Q), who was one of those 10 parents.

There was only one class that summer. We had 10 to 12 children. I cannot
remember that clearly. All these children are my friends' children. In that
summer, we really did not have much to do. Then one day, when we (these
parents) got together, we thought maybe we could open a summer class for our
children to learn Chinese. Most parents supported this idea. Then we made it.

H School started to operate in summer 1995 in a small student activity center. Principal Q
told me that it was really convenient for them to borrow a place to operate this summer class from
the university.

There was a student center could be borrowed by university students for free. We
actually got a lot of advantages as university students. And there was a
playground outside the center, where at break time, children can have fun
outside. Our children's age varies differently, but we only had one teacher at that
time. So when teacher is working with older children, the younger children could
have a place to play.

The University really offered H School an opportunity to develop. The classroom is an essential
element for a schools' development. Normally schools need to pay a lot for facilities, but
depending on a university really gives these volunteer parents a reason to continue their Chinese
heritage school.

Based on the good effects from the first summer of school, parents decided to continue
this form of holiday school for their children. This situation lasted two years, with classes
meeting over summer and winter breaks. The situation changed in 1997.

There was a parent of the Department of Comparative Literature. He thought we
should operate a formal school in order to maintain the continuity of learning for
our children. We parents all thought that would be a good idea, because we all thought our children would benefit from Chinese class. So we started to plan to operate our own Chinese heritage school.

Encouraged by that parent, H School formed in 1997, but at that time, they didn't name the school. They continued to borrow classroom space from the university, but this time, they borrowed bigger classrooms in a normal class building. With support from the university, parents were all excited to prepare for the school to flourish. But things didn't go smoothly as expected. In the spring 2001, H School officially shut down. I was surprised to hear this from principal Q, because I thought with the support from the university and parents, H School would have operated smoothly. Why didn't it continue to develop? Principal Q answered my question.

You know, at the very beginning we only had one teacher, and we only paid her one dollar per hour, so it was kind of volunteer based. When we broadened our summer or winter class to a weekend class, we needed teachers to devote more time and energy, but we couldn't pay much to teachers. Few people wanted to be a teacher here, and also there are few Chinese children here, so we could not continue with few students and teachers.

Parents start to lose confidence in H School because of the quality of the Chinese class couldn't improve. More and more parents quit H School and taught their children at home. Finally, H School shut down. Based on principal Q's description, I think the lack of money is the key reason for school's closure. Parents didn't want to invest much money for their child's Chinese learning, resulting in no teacher wanting to volunteer there and subsequently lowering teaching quality. Principal Q agreed:

All our financial resources come from parents' tuition fee. But we have a dilemma here; parents want high quality teachers but don't want to invest first. Without money, we cannot hire good quality teachers to increase the quality and attract more parents. So we cannot handle this dilemma at that point, which resulted the closing of the school. Actually I think it is mainly because parents didn't see the bright future of H School.
Parents’ Support

Although parents' disappointment with the school is the main reason for its closure, parents still played the most important role that guaranteed the school's development in its first 5 years. Without parents' support, the school would not have even opened. So why do parents want their children to learn Chinese? Why did they create the H School to guarantee their children a place to learn Chinese culture? According to interviewees’, there are four reasons why parents were willing to put forth such an effort.

First, H School offered parents a safe place to take care of their children, which allowed them the use of free time with which to do whatever they wanted. Classrooms are inside the university, which supports a safe and familiar environment for the children and also reassures parents.

Second, not only Principal Q, but also all of the interviewees indicated that they want their children to learn Chinese because they are Chinese. They want their children to remember their ancestors and where they came from. Chinese people always believe that their splendid culture is part of their life, no matter which country they born in. H School offered a place for their children to inherit Chinese culture and language. Also, parents thought it would be a good idea to gather all Chinese children together and teach them Chinese culture, because children can also learn from each other and have fun with their peers in a Chinese school.

Third, parents felt that learning Chinese would be useful for their children's future. Speaking two languages will be an advantage for their children's future and career development. Also if they came back to China to continue their life, children wouldn’t be left behind (academically and culturally) by their Chinese peers.
Fourth, Principal Q mentioned that at the very beginning there were few Chinese immigrants in this small town, so for the parents, Chinese class can also influence their children's identity and can help their children take pride in being Chinese.

We all think that the Chinese school is not only a place to inherit Chinese culture and language, but a place that gives children a feeling that there is a Chinese group existing in this small town and let them feel as though they are not alone. For example, at that time, my daughter was the only Chinese girl in her school, so she always thought she didn't belong to this country and felt uncomfortable. Chinese school gives these lonely children a sense that they are not alone. They also have some Chinese peers living in this town. After they learn a lot about Chinese culture, we hope they can be proud of their culture and be proud to be Chinese.

Teacher and Book Resources

Although H School got parents' support in the beginning, a lack of money and teacher resources led the school to close. I asked Principal Q that why the very first teacher had been willing to volunteer. She told me that the first teacher's husband was a visiting scholar, and that she was a superb teacher in China, so she knows how to teach children properly.

Her daughter was also in that children's group, so she was kind of teaching children for free. At the very beginning, we didn't have books, but luckily she brought a lot primary books from China, so we used these resources to teach our children.

H Schools' creation not only resulted from the parents' support, but also thanks to good teacher resources and book resources they had at that time. The first teacher left after a short amount of time, so parents faced the lack of good teacher resources and books. In 1997, H School received their book resources from the Chinese Embassy. There were/are many Chinese heritage schools operated in America, which attracted the attention of the Chinese government. In order to inherit the Chinese language and spread Chinese culture around the world, the Chinese government entrusts the Chinese Embassy to distribute these specified books at a really low price.
to the schools that need books. Since 1997, H School has bought books from the Chinese Embassy.

If I didn't interview the first principal, I think I would never have known that the H School shut down for one semester. Even some of the later principals didn't know H School had been closed. But the year 2001 does not mark the end of this school. H School was reorganized in the fall 2001 and was opened as a more comprehensive organization, which attracted many parents. It has since grown rapidly.

**Reorganized Era**

**Reorganization and Leadership**

In the spring of 2001, H School shut down due to a lack of students and teachers. However, this Chinese school reopened magically in the fall 2001, as a result of the efforts of one experienced leader—Principal X. When I did the interviews, lots of teachers and principals thought that Principal X was the first principal of H School. The first principal (Q) said that Principal X definitely led the Chinese school into the next stage. After talking with Principal Q, I'm curious about this "legendary Principal X" and want to know why and how she reorganized this closed Chinese school.

I came to this small town in the summer 2001, and I heard that here used to have a Chinese school, but that it already closed at that time. I felt pity for that, but I really wanted to send my children to some Chinese school to continue learning Chinese. (She used to send her children to a Chinese school in Indiana State, and she also used to teach in that school), so I asked my husband (a professor in the university) that is there anyway to reopen this school. I got positive responses from many Chinese faculty and staff in this university— that they all want to reopen this school. However, the thing is that everybody has their day job and do not have time to contribute to reorganize this school.
After understanding the situation of the H School, Principal X decided to reorganize the school by herself and make a contribution to the Chinese community. Based on the experience she had in the previous Chinese school in Indiana and support she received from parents, Principal X started to reorganize this school in the summer of 2001. Attracting parents was hard for her in the beginning. Aside from the parents who supported her, she needed to let more parents know this reopened school. She said:

I got lots of parents' information from Principal Q and tried to contact these parents one by one, letting them know H School would create a Chinese learning environment for every child interested in Chinese culture, with the aim of increasing children's learning interest and improving the understanding of Chinese culture.

Many parents were influenced by principal X's enthusiasm and ambitions, so more and more parents sent their children to H School, which reactivated it.

In this development era, Principal X realized that depending only on parents was not enough to guarantee the schools healthy development. So she found another way to support this school, namely cooperating with the Chinese Students Association (CSSA) from the university. In the year 2001, this small university town already had a considerable number of Chinese people who studied or worked here. Especially with the development of the Chinese economy, more and more people chose to study abroad in order to get higher education. This small town attracted many Chinese students because of its high quality university. With the increase in Chinese students, the Chinese Student Association formed. Choosing to cooperate with CSSA is a strategy that Principal X used in order to strengthen the H School and gain more support and resources.

Because at that time we were just an unofficial organization and we lacked resources, I thought it would be nice to cooperate with the university's formal organization—CSSA. Also many of our children's parents belonged to CSSA, so the relationship between our school and CSSA was tight. I found that CSSA had many branches below the big title, like some clubs. So I told the chief of CSSA that our school could be one branch of them and belong to CSSA, because our goal is the same; spreading Chinese culture and letting more people understand Chinese culture. Of course we got permission from the chief and from then on, we were part of CSSA, which helped us a lot.
The most important benefit H School got from CSSA was that they gained more ways to publicize their school. CSSA has their own website and almost every Chinese person in this small town knew about the website. After cooperating with CSSA, H School had their own space on the website, which attracted not only parents, but also potential teachers. Many young students learned of H School from CSSA's website. They were young and full of energy, so many of them wanted to teach in H School as volunteers, which definitely enriched H School's teaching resources and guaranteed the continued development of the school.

**Curriculum Extensions**

Another change that happened to the H School after its reorganization was the extension of the curriculum. Before H School shut down, they only offered 2 hours of Chinese classes per week. Principal Q intimated that many children thought the Chinese classes are boring and didn't want to continue to learn, which may be a reason why the former H School couldn't attract more students. Since Principal X reorganized the H School, she extended the curriculum. H School added many interesting classes like dancing class, kung-fu class, drawing class and singing class. All these new classes attracted many students, who not only wanted to learn Chinese, but also want to understand traditional Chinese culture. Since the new, interesting classes in H School attracted many students, student attendance was no longer a problem for the H School. Many Chinese parents from other towns even send their children to the H School. Principal X told me:

We extend our Sunday school time also due to new classes. Now we go from 1pm to 5pm, including two interest classes and two Chinese classes. Most parents would like their children attend at least one interest class and two Chinese classes. These interest classes are not only just for fun. They also can teach children Chinese culture. Like dancing class, we all teach children Chinese folk dance, which present Chinese national culture to children that might otherwise remain invisible.
Although these interest classes aim at inheriting Chinese culture, Principal Z (the 4th Principal of H School) thinks it is different from the "Xinqu ban" (interest class in China):

I think the goals of our interest classes and "Xinqu ban" are different. Our goal is to let children feel happy during their study here and make them really like to study at the H School. But the target of "Xinqu ban" back in China is to get certification in order to benefit children's academic career. So in China, children will feel more pressure to study in "Xinqu ban", whereas, H School will offer a happy space for our children. All in all, Chinese is these children's second language. We as parents just want them to love learning Chinese culture and have fun studying in H School. Our expectations are not that high for our children compared with the parents back in China.

In addition, when H School started to attract more Chinese parents’ attention, Americans who are interested in Chinese culture were also fascinated by H School. In order to draw more Americans’ attention, H School started to open CSL (Chinese as the second language) class at this period.

**Limited Teacher Resources**

With H School's fast development, problems started to appear. Interest classes brought the H School more students and an improved reputation. But this also caused the H School a big problem because of its limited teacher resources. Teaching dancing or drawing is not that easy, because the school needs to find teachers who have specialties in these fields. Teacher resources were already very limited, not to mention that the interest classes require teachers of an even higher quality, because they needed to create lessons by themselves—without textual guidance.

The H School employed many strategies to find suitable teachers. Principal X indicated that:

Some of our parents are teachers here, because they have a passion and responsibility to train our next generation. But only depending on parents is not enough. We also get help from CSSA to find teachers because many Chinese college students are enrolled in CSSA. When we need teachers, we will advertise on CSSA's website as well as on our own website. Many young students will learn information from CSSA, and they always have a strong willingness to help us. Besides help from CSSA, parents will also assist in the search for teachers.
Most parents are working in the university, so they have their human resources. Usually, parents will introduce really good teachers to our school. All the efforts are for the good of our children and are good for our school's future.

Almost every principal I interviewed mentioned how hard it is to find a good teacher. Although the H School can hire good teachers in the form of college students, they are also somewhat unstable. Most of them are volunteering in the H School, so if they are busy or graduate and leave this town, the school will face a teacher shortage again. "We always need good teachers, always!" Principal C (Current Principal of H School) told me.

How to teach these American-born Chinese students (ABC) is another tough question for the H School and its teachers. As one teacher M told me:

I really don't know how to teach these children. I don't think you can teach children only because you know how to speak Chinese. You need more than this; you need to know how to organize an activity that can attract students' attention. And how to make these ABC children interested in these Chinese characters. I really think the school needs to train us how to do these things.

Many teachers reflected that they couldn't teach these ABC children in the same manner as Chinese children. Their backgrounds are so different compared with those Chinese children. Principal Z thought:

As teachers, there has been a conflict in teaching methods. There’s an American way and a Chinese way. We want these ABC children to be taught in the American way, but due to the particularity of Chinese, we cannot teach them entirely in the American style. If we use the Chinese teaching style, most ABC children cannot accept that and will feel bored. How to balance these two teaching styles is still very hard to tell.

How to teach these overseas children is a big problem for all the heritage schools. There should be some particular teaching methods that can solve this problem. For the H School, the lack of professional people's leadership means that teachers must find a suitable teaching style by themselves. This problem still exists in H School, but all my interviewees expressed that with more and more experienced and high quality teachers' appearing, they believe the H School will finally find a good way to teach these overseas children Chinese culture.
Parents' Support

"Without parents' support, we could not develop our new H School smoothly," said by Principal X. After reorganizing H School, more and more parents started to support the H School, because they felt that learning Chinese culture and language will be of great benefit to their children. When they grow up, they will never regret having learned the Chinese and explored the roots of Chinese culture. A parent told me:

Even though they (children) may tire of learning the Chinese when they step into high school, I still believe that when they start college or work, they will grateful that they learned how to speak Chinese. They will pick it up faster when they want to learn Chinese again.

As I mentioned before, interest classes attracted many students. They regard interest classes as an opportunity to show their personalities. The American public school offers many opportunities for their students to show up on the stage. But Chinese children tend to be shy and are often afraid to show up among many American students, especially in the early years. The H School gives these Chinese children a perfect stage to show themselves. For example, every year, the H School will hold different parties, which let all the children appear on the stage with the knowledge and skills they’ve learned from the H School. Parents reflected that this kind of display could build their children's confidence. Also, peer pressure in the H School is not very high, because everybody is at the same level. I asked many interviewees, why don't you teach your children at home? Most of them highlighted that the environment is very important. There are many Chinese peers in the H School, which make parents believe that their children can learn from other peers and have fun together. One parent told me that her children would not listen to her at home, even though she was a Chinese teacher in China. But in the H School, her children learn from teachers. Also, being accompanied by many ethnic peers made them less isolated. As a result, they have more motivation to learn Chinese at school.
Principal X told me that H School is not only a place offering Chinese education for children, but also a place offering opportunities to all Chinese people in the community. With the development of the H School, there are also some Americans learning Chinese culture.

I don't think Chinese people will have a good opportunity to meet with each other without the H School. Our school plays an important role to link Chinese people in the community together. It makes us feel we have one warm big family outside our home county.

National cohesion starts to build up with the growth of the H School. The H School has begun to influence the American community as well. Every year, the H School gets invitations to the community's international festival and children’s festival, representing the Chinese population in this small town.

Starting from the year 2002 (After reorganization), everything seems go smoothly for the H School. With the good reputation gained by the school from the local community, the H School developed and grew rapidly. There are some problems that the school has to face at this point; a new change is waiting for the school.

**Non-Profit Organization Era**

**Organizational Nature**

As the H School grows bigger, it faces new problems. “When our school gets bigger, we think it is time to make this school normalized and systematized,” said Principal C. The H school has maintained its organizational nature as an unofficial parents group or school for almost 16 years and the H School never registered in any American states before. At the very beginning, the status of H School didn't influence the school's operation, but with more and more American
parents sending their children to the H School in order to learn Chinese culture, some issues came about that beckoned the school to change. Finally, in the 2011 summer, the H School officially registered to become a non-profit organization, which gives this school many additional legal rights.

Many interviewees indicated that they actually didn’t prefer applying for non-profit status. They felt comfortable about their situation. However, after three big issues happened, problems seemed to become more and more serious, which forced school officers to reconsider about applying to become a non-profit organization.

The first issue is about the H School's income. Because the H School was not an official company or school, parents couldn’t pay their tuition fee directly to the school, but to the accountant of the H School. Principal C told me,

> When there were a few students, it was not a problem for our accountant to deposit checks. However, since students increased a lot, there were some troubles for our accountant to deposit checks. The bank questioned our accountant more than one time, asking her why she has so many checks with the same amount of money. Also she will risk her own credit to help keep our school running.

This situation lasted a long time, resulting that no one wants to be an accountant.

Second, since many Americans were willing to send their children to the H School, most of them needed the school to present legal documents to prove the school’s nature. "It is really hard to explain to American parents about our unofficial status, so we lose many potential students", said Principal H (The 5th Principal of the H School). In addition, every semester, if the school has extra money, they will hold a party to reward all the teachers and students. But because the H School does not have any legal documents to prove the school is a legal one, they cannot borrow any public space outside the university to hold a party. This really disappointed all the members of the H School.

Third, there used to be some organizations who wanted to donate money to the H School, after seeing their dancing performances, but the H School could not receive these donations.
without legal documentation. Since the H School always lacks of money, accepting donations legally would be good for their future development.

Based on all these reasons, the H School started to apply 501c policy in the year 2010 and got approved in the year 2011. Now, the H School is an official non-profit organization with all the legal documentation necessary. "Right now, we have rights to compete for many resources, like government grants, from the Chinese government or the American government. Also we are more convincing for American parents, and that attracts more American students," Principal J (The 3rd Principal of the H School) proudly said.

Although the title "non-profit organization" brings many advantages to the H School, it also brings some disadvantages. The most terrible disadvantage is the reduction in the available pool of teachers. Before the H School became a non-profit organization, the school was able to source teachers from everywhere. Teachers could be college students, university staff, F2 visa status people and so on. If you had the practical skills, you were eligible to be a teacher in the H School and got paid to do so. However, since becoming a non-profit organization, the H School can only hire people who have legal working rights in the U.S., which means many previous teachers who do not have legal working rights can no longer work in the H School. Many good teachers left the school, which worried the remaining faculty. Without the help of teachers, school cannot develop well.

“Our solution for the shrinking teaching staff is to hire volunteers, but we cannot pay for volunteers. Luckily, many young college students are passionate about education and okay with not pay being paid," Principal C indicated. Although there are many volunteers in the H Schools, the school’s administrators feel that they shouldn't ask too much from these young volunteer teachers; after all they do not get any money from the school. School Officer G told me that she feels uncomfortable to ask more from volunteer teachers, because she thinks these teachers have already sacrificed a lot for the school without the promise of reward. Currently, the H School's
No. 1 problem is the struggle to find good, qualified teachers. All the principals and teachers of interviewees complained to me that they worried about the teacher resources and couldn’t figure out an effective solution. The H School needs to continue to work on this problem in order to develop well in the future.

Money Issues

Still, the only financial resource for H School is the parents' tuition fee. But compared with the previous tuition fee, today's rate has increased a lot.

"If your children only study 1 hour per week, we only charge 50 dollars per semester. If they study 2 hours, then 100 dollars per semester, 3 hours, 140 dollars with a discount, 4 hours, 165 per semester," current principal C explained to me. I think the tuition fee is too low for this school, but the principal told me that low tuition fee could attract many parents working outside the university. Not all the parents have a high paying job in this community. The H School needs to consider all of the possibilities and set the lowest tuition fee. "All in all, we are an organization that supports service to all the community members. So we don't want to see that somebody can't come to our school because of the high tuition fee. We are open to everybody," said Principal H.

After becoming a non-profit organization, the H School began to work on its "tax exempt" application. They wanted to find other financial support, such as donations. "We hope our school can attract more financial support and use this money to build a better future for our school," School Officer G said.

In another financial step forward for the H School, Principal C increased the salary for teachers. Increasing salary is an inevitable way to keep good teachers. Principal C expressed:

The first thing I did when I became a principal was to increase teachers' salary. Teachers mean everything to our school, especially after we passed 501c policy, which leads to us lose many good teachers. Right now I need to do everything I
can to keep teachers. For those volunteers from college, I will offer them a reference letter, which may help their future career.

Teachers devote a lot to the H School. They need to use their spare time to prepare lessons and prepare for classes. But most of them are happy to help teach children and have a passion for the educational field. "I think all teachers deserve a high salary. They may only work 2 hours per weekend, but they also work the whole week to prepare for this 2 hours' class," principal Z said.

Despite the money paid for teachers and the money paid for books, the H School has a bit of extra money for their semester's party and dancing clothes. I'm really surprised that the H School can save money due to their limited resources. But Principal Z told me that they run the H School just like they run their family. You would never be extravagant or waste your family's money, and they all regard H School as their second home, so they spend every penny seriously. That is also why they feel really warmly about staying in the H School, because the H School has already become their home.

The Relationship between Teachers, Parents and Students

With the increase of students, conflicts between teachers, students and parents cannot be avoided. Every school has their unique problem-solving system to deal with every conflict. Balancing the triple (teachers, students and parents) relationship is really important, and it relates to the school's stable development. The H School has created three ways to connect students, parents and teachers.

The first way is to hold parent-teacher meetings every semester. During the meeting, teachers can report their student's status. Parents can also use this opportunity to learn more about their children's situation and teachers' efforts. One teacher told me that parents would actually offer some good ideas to manage the class in the parent-teacher meeting. "One of the parents
suggested that I buy some small gifts to reward the children and order to encourage them to study hard. And to my surprise, she had even already brought many gifts for me," Teacher M said. Most teachers and parents like the way they connect with each other. Parents need certain opportunity to talk to the teacher directly, which allows them to offer some good suggestions to the teacher. This kind of face-to-face, open minded meeting way makes teachers feel comfortable. Teachers also want to know how children perform at home, in order to design proper activities in class.

The second way is that school officers play the role of coordinator when teachers and parents have some conflicts.

The school will do its best to coordinate the relationship between teachers and parents. We hope parents will talk to school officers first when they face conflict with teachers. We don't want to see parents fight with teachers, so it is important for parents and teachers to discuss problems with school first, then we will try our best to solve the conflict between them.

In the H school, it is normal to see some children cannot adapt to Chinese-style education, so teachers may utilize more Americanized teaching methods. Parents may not accept this kind of education style, however, and they might have complaints with teachers as a result. Under such circumstance, the H School will play the role of coordinator and make sure to appease both the teacher’s wishes and parent's anger. "It is really hard to appease both teachers and parents, but we will do our best to deal with emergency issues, and we really hope we can handle every conflict properly," said principal C.

In order to strengthen the ties between teachers and parents, H School has started recently to try their third way to connect teachers, students and parents. The H School has begun implementing a new system—the parents-on-duty system. In this system, parents are required to attend class in turns, and every class will has two parents participate. The aims of this system are to guarantee the students' safety and build a better connection between parents and teachers.

Regarding this new system, different people have different opinions. Teacher B told me that she loves this system, although it is really nervous for her at the very beginning with parents
sitting back in the classroom. "Parents will give me suggestions right after the class, which is
good for my next week's preparation. Also some parents will help me manage the class when
children start to yell. I really think this system should continue." However, School Officer G has a
different opinion about this system. "I think it is not good to let parents sit in the classroom. They
will not only influence the teachers' performance, but also that of nervous children in the
classroom. I'm afraid it may influence the quality of the lesson." Due to totally different responses
on this system, the H School doesn't know what to do next. Maybe they need to conduct a survey
among the parents and teachers in order to answer this question.

The H School has transformed from a small parents' group to an official non-profit
organization. During the time of the H School’s development, it faced many difficulties and
crises. Some of them were solved perfectly, but some of them still remain and need to be solved
in the future. All the interviewees are optimistic for the H School's future and hope the H School
can continue to contribute to the spread of Chinese culture and language in the U.S.

**H School’s Future**

When talking about the further development of the H School, everybody has their own
thoughts, but basically there are two paths to develop the H School in the future. First is to
develop a summer camp and after-school program for the H School. Some interviewees reflect
that they think H School shouldn't only operate on a weekends. There is spare time everyday after
children finish their regular school and H School can use this time to operate Chinese programs
after school, just as many school clubs do. Learning Chinese requires consistent class time,
otherwise it is easy for children to forget what they learned in Sunday class. Also this kind of
after school will release parents' pressure for reviewing the Chinese for their children at home.
Summer camp is another way to extend H School’s business. Some principals think that summer
camp may attract many American children's attention, in order to absorb more students and spread Chinese culture to American society. Based on some parents' request for opening summer camp, H School has already planned to start their very first summer camp this summer. People who support extending H School's business also hope the school can earn more money by opening after school and summer camp, in order to increase its budget for training teachers and improving the quality of the school.

However, not all people agree to extend H School's business. Some of the interviewees indicate that they know extending school's business can have many advantages for school, but problems may be more serious than they thought. If H School starts to open after school, they will need many people to take responsibility for running it. But all the H School's staffs are volunteers right now and they all have day jobs. Finding someone who can leave their real job to operate the after-school is impossible. Also opening after school requires a lot of amenities and services, such as, transportation from each public school to the H School, insurance, and so on. It is not easy to make sure everything is in place. So these people who are not supporting H School's expansion and prefer to improve H School's quality as it stands. Currently, H School still has many problems, such as lack of teacher training. They think only after solving all the current problems can the H School start to discuss bigger plans.

Which path H School will choose is still unknown right now, but I believe they will find the optimal development plan for the school. No matter which path the H School chooses, the ultimate goal of the school will never change imparting Chinese culture to the next Chinese generation in the U.S. and publicizing Chinese culture to American society.
Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

For my study, I used the case study method to focus on a particular Chinese heritage school, in order to understand its historical development. From the year 1995 until now, the H School has been faced with many changes and difficulties. During these almost 20 years, it is amazing to see that the H School has grown from a 10-student summer class to an almost 200-student non-profit organization. The H School slowly and perfectly adapted to each obstacle in order to survive in its changing American environment.

When I tried to put all different stories together to relay the history of the H School, I see that there are some overarching reasons why H school can develop well and still can exist today.

First, H school actually could follow the development trend and adjusted to the shifting environment by making a lot of changes to transition into its modern era. The most important change for H School is that the school changed its organizational nature under different circumstances. At first, it was just a tiny parents group, teaching their children during summer vacation. When student enrollment started to increase, H School enlarged its organization and created a real, unofficial weekend school. Although H School used to shut down because of lack of teachers and students, Chinese people in this small town never gave up on the school. Instead, they tried hard to use every resource they could get to reorganize the H School in order to spread Chinese culture to the U.S. and their next generation. When the enrollment number was increasing, parents’ attitude toward the school was positive and the reputation of the school was build, the H School has continued to develop itself and become an official non-profit organization, which will win many advantages for the school's development. All the changes the H School made are to improve the school itself and make the H School a better place to offer Chinese cultural education to the whole community.
The change of the curriculum is another remarkable action that the H School undertook in order to attract more parents and students. Due to the reality that parents and students were not really interested in 2-hour Chinese classes, after reorganizing, the H School began to extend their curriculum, adding many interest classes to attract students’ and parents' attention. And it worked; many parents sent their children to the H School, in order to study traditional Chinese culture classes, like kung-fu and folk dancing. The change of the curriculum is also a way that H School solved previous problems. As the number of American students increased in the H School, H School opened a CSL (Chinese as a second language) class for Americans who didn't have any Chinese language skills. I think H School made many wise choices, which led the school developing well.

Second, parents’ support has been the motivation for H school to move forward in almost 20 years. No matter how the H School changes, parents are likely to always be the most important link in supporting the school's operation. Without parents' passion and money, the H School would not even exist. Even though H School used to close because of parents' leaving, parents also are the essential element to guarantee school's continued existence. Everything the H School did is to please parents and to entice them to let them send their children to the school. Without parents, H School will not exist and even doesn't need to exist. After H School's reorganization, parents' attitude toward the H School became more and more positive. With the help and support from parents, H School developed well.

Although the H School has developed well and has earned a good reputation from the community, there are still some limits that impede H School’s development. Limited teacher resources are a continuous difficulty for H School. Operating inside a good university, there may be many good teachers, but how to attract these teachers and how to select those teachers still remains a problem for the H School. Especially when H School became a non-profit organization, mandatory identity requirements made it even harder to find a good teacher. With more and more
Chinese students studying at the university, H School needs to come up with an efficient way to attract volunteer college teachers. Also, recruiting policies of the H School needs to change with the changing times.

As a non-profit organization, money woes will always be a reality. I think these woes will get better, however. With the good reputation of the H School spreading around the whole town, the school has a guarantee of student resources. Also, parents will not begrudge investing more money on their children's education. The tuition fee may increase a little bit in order to keep good teachers. Also after getting approved for "tax exempt" status, H School may have a good chance to get donations from community members or community agencies. Everything is going well for H School. I'm eager to see how this school develops further.

During the period I conducted the interviews (winter 2012-2013) and developed my understanding the history of H School, I was really impressed by the passion that all the school staffs and parents expressed to me. Doing a case study not only can let me know details about one case, but also can let me feel real emotion behind the surface. When I interviewed these parents, principals and teachers, I could feel their enthusiasm toward the H School. They really want this school to succeed, and feel heartbreak to see the H School struggle in any predicament. Knowing these people's feelings is important for me to understand why they insist on operating this school even though they face many difficulties. This was one of the most valuable findings of my case study. Because of the previous literature, I understand how the normal Chinese heritage school has developed from the old days. But every school has its own story and its own unique challenges. Only after spending a long time observing these schools and talking to school's members, can we really understand how the school develops over the years. That is why I have undertaken this case study—in order to learn about this specific Chinese heritage school's development story.
As I have mentioned, the H School experienced many changes during its foundational years. The H School’s faculty and staff use their phenomenal abilities to adapt to changing times. In each era of the H School, change was necessary to keep the school afloat. I hope my study can clearly reveal how the H School has changed in different periods. Although I know different Chinese schools have their own problems and situations, I still believe the example of the H School's development can give other Chinese heritage schools or people who want to start a Chinese heritage school a clue about how to operate such an institution. Some solutions that H School utilized to adapt to a changing environment can be implemented in other Chinese heritage schools. I know one case cannot represent every Chinese heritage school, but still, I hope the story of this particular Chinese heritage school can enrich the reference resources in this field and offer an example of transition adaption to other Chinese heritage schools.
Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. For the principals. (Including previous and present principals)
   a. Why did you want to start this school? (For the first principal)
   b. What is the purpose of this Chinese school?
   c. How was the school able to attract financial support?
   d. What kinds of difficulties did the school face during its development? How did the problems get solved?
   e. How did you attract parents/families your school?
   f. Where you find the teachers? What standards do you have for teachers?
   g. How did the school find a space or building in which to operate?
   h. What relationship do you see between “Xingqu ban” and Chinese heritage school?

2. For the teachers
   a. How do you see the school's development to this point?
   b. In what ways do you think the school might develop further?
   c. How have teachers contributed to the development of the school?

3. For the parents
   a. Why you want to send your children to this Chinese school? (What do you want your children gain from the school?)
   b. In what ways do you think the school might develop further?
   c. How have parents contributed to the development of the school?
   d. What role do parents play in providing feedback about the school’s curriculum or teaching? How has parent feedback been used?
Bibliography


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