

## Lower School Chinese Classes

# 小學的中文課

xiǎo xué de zhōng wén kè



From the Desk of the 中文老師

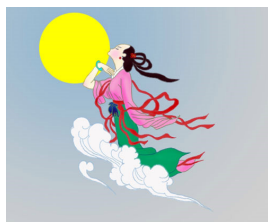
### (Chinese Teacher)

Can you believe it? We are already at the end of the first quarter of school! Where has the time gone?

For the language classes, this means that we are already halfway through the semester that your child is learning Chinese. Next semester, your child will be learning Spanish, while the students learning Spanish this semester will be learning Chinese. I've really enjoyed getting to know your children, and I hope they're enjoying learning a new language, whether it is Chinese or Spanish!

### Did You Know...

The Chinese Mid-Autumn (Moon) Festival is most similar to Thanksgiving? It is celebrated by getting together with family and eating traditional foods!



Peace Day was celebrated with performances by many students. The Third Grade students sang "It's a Small World" in Chinese!

The pre-Kindergarten students have learned some songs including one called "Two Tigers," which is sung by Chinese-speaking kindergarten students throughout Asia. They have also learned to respond in Chinese to the question "What is your name?" They are learning the numbers from 1-10 and the words for colors.



The Kindergarten and First Grade students are learning basics of Chinese pronunciation (the 4 tones), and are also learning songs, numbers, and how to respond to questions about their name and age. They have also learned about the special words that refer to family members.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are learning the system of pronouncing Chinese in a systematic way. They begin with the 4 tones, and have now learned Pinyin, which is the way our (English) alphabet is used to "spell" how Chinese words are pronounced. However, although the alphabet is the same, the pronunciation of the letters and the combinations are different from how we use them in English. It has been great to see that even young emergent readers learning to pronounce Chinese naturally.



While Halloween is celebrated here in the United States with costumes, parties, and trick-or-treating, it is not celebrated or recognized in China. There is, however, a festival in China that involves ghosts that I discuss with my students—the Hungry Ghost Festival, which is celebrated in the late summer. At this time is believed that the gates that separate the living and the dead are opened. Families place food at altars to feed the spirits of their ancestors, and for the "hungry ghosts," who don't have their own families to take care of them. People will put out food to feed the "hungry ghosts" because they are afraid that ghosts may become angry and cause mischief for their families. It does kind of sound a little like our "Trick or Treat" after all, doesn't it?