

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAIS Institute Announces Chinese Language Conference 2008

Globalization Drives U.S. Demand for Chinese Language Instruction

San Francisco, Calif. - February 7, 2008 - School administrators and educators across the country will head to San Francisco next month for the Chinese Language Conference 2008, the nation's largest conference exclusively dedicated to promoting the teaching and learning of Chinese language programs in America. Hosted by the CAIS Institute, a leading resource for integrating Chinese language and culture into American education programs, the national conference will be held at the Hilton Hotel in San Francisco from March 14-16, 2008. China Books and Periodicals, America's largest and oldest distributor of books and other cultural products from China, is the presenting sponsor.

Globalization continues to boost the growing economic and cultural influence of China - one of the world's largest economies. Over the next decade across America, the study of Chinese will dramatically rise along with the need for Americans who are fluent in Mandarin Chinese.

The number of American students learning Chinese is exploding. According to a 2004 survey from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, about 5,000 students were enrolled in K-12 Chinese-language classes in 2000. The council estimates that number to be as high as 30,000 to 50,000 today. In May of 2007, more than 3,000 students took the AP Chinese Language and Culture course exam; the College Board began offering the course for the first time in the fall of 2006.

While demand for Chinese language instruction is on the upswing, American educators continue to face resource issues, especially at the pre-collegiate level. Challenges include the lack of well-qualified teachers, curriculum materials and training programs. A 2007 study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, "*International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America's Future*" highlighted the need for additional support to improve foreign language skills and cultural expertise at all levels of the U.S. education system beginning in the primary levels.

Chinese Language Conference 2008

Focused on advancing Chinese language education resources, this year's Chinese Language Conference will feature nationally-renowned speakers, field experts and academic leaders along with hands-on teaching and curriculum workshops. The conference will offer professional

development resources for current and future Chinese language educators at K-12 levels and administrators interested in starting and/or maintaining a Chinese language program at their schools.

Program highlights:

- Guest Teacher Workshop for Administrators
- Chinese Language Program Visits (including public and private school Chinese program tours)
- AP Workshop
- OPI Familiarization and Implications for Instruction Workshop
- Essential Curriculum and Supplementary Material for K-12 Classrooms and Libraries Workshop (hosted by China Books & Periodicals)
- Onsite Career Center
- Exhibit Hall

Key speakers:

- Dr. Yvonne Chan - Principal, Vaughn Next Century Learning Center; Board Member, California State Board of Education
- Dr. Myriam Met - National Foreign Language Center, University of Maryland
- Madeline K. Spring, Co-Director, Confucius Institute at Arizona State University
- Robert A. Davis, Jr., Director, Confucius Institute in Chicago
- Andrew Corcoran - Head of School, Chinese American International School; Executive Director, CAIS Institute
- T. Richard Chi - Professor of Chinese Language and Linguistics, University of Utah; College Board Advisor for AP Chinese and has served on the AP Chinese Development Committee since 2006

"We still have much to do to meet the rapidly rising demand for Chinese language instruction, especially at the pre-collegiate level," said Andrew Corcoran, Executive Director, CAIS Institute and Head of School, Chinese American International School. "Foreign language fluency, especially Chinese, has become a necessity in today's globalized world. We hope our national Chinese Language Conference will equip American teachers and administrators with the necessary tools and resources to kick start their own Chinese language programs."

About Chinese Language Conference 2008:

The Chinese Language Conference is the largest national conference exclusively dedicated to promoting the teaching and learning of Chinese in the United States. Slated for March 14-16, 2008 at The Hilton Hotel in San Francisco, the conference features prominent speakers, field experts and academic leaders in Chinese language education along with hands-on teaching and curriculum workshops. This is a must-attend event for educators and program administrators looking to develop and expand Chinese language programs across the United States.

The presenting sponsor is China Books and Periodicals. Conference supporters include Asia Society, China Institute, Cal/West Educator Placement Services, Committee of 100, University of Berkeley, Department of East Asian Studies and Berkeley China Initiative. For more information, please visit www.caisinstitute.org/en/conference2008.

About CAIS Institute:

The CAIS Institute, a nonprofit organization, represents the epicenter for integrating Chinese language and culture into American education. Founded in 1989 in San Francisco, the Institute is a leading resource for developing and sustaining Chinese language programs in American schools and collaborates with a broad range of organizations in the U.S. and China. Drawing on the Mandarin-English immersion educational model developed over the past 25 years at Chinese American International School (CAIS), the Institute continues to promote professional development, community outreach and educational programs. For more information, please visit www.cais.org/institute.