



## District 25 students to learn Chinese

By Deborah Donovan | Daily Herald Staff

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Studying Mandarin Chinese is becoming a national trend, and Arlington Heights School District 25 is increasing its participation.

Next year all fourth-graders in the district will receive one hour of Mandarin instruction a week, thanks to a grant providing two teachers through the Confucius Institute at Michigan State University. The institute is supported by the government of China. District 25 is in its second year of offering Chinese in middle school grades six through eight.

Yong Zhao, executive director of the institute, is also supporting an application from District 25, High School District 214 and Harper College for a grant sponsored by the U.S. Government of \$1.5 million over five years. This would support teaching Mandarin at all these levels. The outcome of the application will be known at the end of July, said Dale Truding, District 25's assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction and assessment.

"It's a powerful nation that we need to do business with," said Truding. "We need to understand their culture and make connections with them."

Parents have indicated they want to start teaching world languages in elementary school, said Sarah Jerome, District 25 superintendent.