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December 28, 2002

Walter B. MacDonald, Executive Director
School and College Services
Educational Testing Service
Rosedale Road
Princeton, NJ 08541

CC: Mr. Wade Curry
Director of Advanced Placement
The College Board
45 Columbus Avenue
New York, New York 10023

Dear Mr. MacDonald:

I am writing to strongly support the development of a Chinese Advanced Placement (AP) Program and Test that the College Board is considering. I am the President of the Chinese School Association of the United States (CSAUS), an umbrella organization for over 225 Chinese schools in the US. I, and those of us in Chinese education in the US, believe that establishing a Chinese AP program is a visionary move. In the Appendix, I address the College Board's Criteria for establishing a new AP course. Below are some general considerations.

1. Establishing a Chinese AP Program is in the national interest of the United States. China is the most populous nation in the world. China's economy is now the world's second largest (according to CIA's real purchasing power parity) and is rapidly growing. At the current rate of growth, China's GDP (in terms of purchasing power) will overtake that of the US in twenty years. US' largest trade deficit is with China. China's accession to the World Trade Organization in the near future will mean the opening up of a huge market and tremendous business opportunities for the US as well as other nations. Hence it is in the interest of the US for more Americans to learn the Chinese language and culture to better compete in China's market and to close the trade gap. In addition to the needs by US businesses, increased understanding between China and US will help the two nations to develop constructive and mature relationships. Therefore, programs to encourage and boost the learning of Chinese language and culture will benefit the United States. The SAT II program that the ETS set up in 1994 is a significant step in this direction. Establishment of a Chinese AP program would be another more significant step.

2. Recognizing the increased need by Americans to learn Chinese, some public schools are starting Chinese language programs, the number of students in community Chinese schools is rapidly growing, and universities are strengthening their programs in Chinese language and literature. To encourage moves in this direction, the US Department of Education has allocated millions of dollars funding each year for K-12 to develop Chinese education programs since 2001. The Chinese AP program is expected to encourage more schools to set up or strengthen the Chinese programs. With increasing number of students in Chinese programs, the Chinese AP Program and Test could be a good business opportunity for the ETS.

3. The benefit of a Chinese AP program to university Chinese programs has already been recognized , for example, by Chinese Language Teachers' Association. The AP program in Chinese would mean more students with training in Chinese and better prepared students, which would boost enrollment in university Chinese programs and elevate the level of university training.

4. As the President of CSAUS, I pledge my support for the Chinese AP program. We would encourage students in our schools to take the AP test. We would also be happy to help public schools to establish a Chinese language program, and will encourage our schools to accept students from the public school system for learning advanced Chinese.

On behalf of CSAUS, I would like to thank and commend the College Board for having the vision to take the initiative for a Chinese AP Program and Test. The time is ripe for establishing such a program. I urge you to develop such a program and wish you success in this endeavor.

I understand that to develop Chinese AP program requires tremendous financial investment and manpower efforts. Have been working in this field for many years, I and CSAUS have many connections with Chinese-American community organizations in the US, and governmental agencies of China. They may offer great help both financially and in manpower. I would like to have a meeting with you, at your convenience, to discuss cooperation needs and possibilities.

I can be reached by mail as shown above, by email at csaus@csaus.org, or by phone at 248-449-1690. Looking forward to hearing from you, and to meeting with you.

Sincerely yours

Lianggen Zheng
President, CSAUS

Norman Ho
President Elected, CSAUS

Appendix 1:

Answers to College Board Criteria

Advanced Placement Program Criteria for establishing a new course

Regarding: AP Chinese program

1. Is the course within the liberal arts and sciences?

Yes.

2. Is the course normally offered by universities both for majors and to meet graduation requirements for non-majors?

Yes, at hundreds of universities and/colleges in the US

3. Is there sufficient agreement among college faculty in the discipline on purpose, content, and standards?

Need investigation for a quantitative answer

Pre-obtained Chinese skills are well-accepted in colleges.

Many universities and colleges accept scores from SAT II Chinese test for credit hours

Many universities and colleges even accept scores from HSK (a test of China)

4. Do the national associations in the discipline support the development of this AP course?

Yes. The associations include: CSAUS, Chinese Language Teachers' Association (CLTA), National Foreign Language Center (NFLC), National Council of Chinese Language School Association (NCCLSA), Chinese Language Association of Secondary Schools (CLASS), are very well united to support the development of AP Chinese program. Refer to the petition letter from

Cornelius C. Kubler

Stansfield Professor of Asian Studies

Williams College

Tao-chung Yao

Professor of Chinese

University of Hawai'i at Manoa

on behalf of the National Chinese Language Commission, dated September/or October 2001.

5. Will colleges and universities grant credit and/or placement?

Yes. Need more investigation for a quantitative answer.

For example, the U. of Michigan currently grants placement based on various Chinese Proficiency Test.

6. Do high schools have or can they develop the teachers and resources to offer the course?

Yes, some high schools are already doing so. For example, currently, there are 10 schools in the Chicago Public School system that offers Chinese courses to over thousands of students.

The organization CLASS consists hundreds Chinese teachers in varied K-12 schools.

In addition to public high schools, there are about 1000 community Chinese Schools and the number of students in community Chinese schools (both simplified and traditional) increased from 83,000 in 1995 to 138,000 in 2001, an average annual growth rate of 8.5%.

7. Can the Collage Board break even on this course?

Yes, by estimate and reference to SAT II Chinese program.

Since the beginning of SAT II in Chinese in 1994, the number of participating students already reached near 5000 in recent years, the third greatest among all foreign languages.

Actually I personally know that there are many students did not take SAT II Chinese test because it is no a valid measurement for their Chinese language skills. They need much higher standard like AP.

Funding for development of AP Chinese should NOT be too difficult.

8. Are we relatively certain that the course:

a) will have sufficient rigor to enhance the reputation of AP?

I am certain that the AP course will have sufficient rigor.

By looking back 20 years at the history of Chinese Education in the United States, we have more than enough reasons to predict that Chinese language skills will receive more and more attention in the United States, both academically, and from the general public.

To develop AP program is to right meet the trend of the societal movement.

b) will not unduly harm other AP courses?

I am certain that a Chinese AP program will not harm any other AP courses.

c) will not draw students away from courses that would develop skills or knowledge that are more crucial to success in college?

I am certain that a new Chinese AP program will not draw students away from courses that would develop skills or knowledge that are more crucial to success in college.

d) is the best addition to the discipline?

Yes.

SAT II Chinese Test was a timely addition.

An AP Chinese program would be the best addition to the discipline.

Appendix 2:

Supports (shown by signatures) to our petition
at the CSAUS 4th National Conference,
held in Chicago December 6-8