

THE CHINESE THREAD AT KEYSTONE ACADEMY

In the third paragraph of the Keystone Academy Mission, the three keystones of the School are summarized. This is the third of those keystones:

promoting Chinese culture and identity in a world context.

These nine words define the Chinese Thread at Keystone, and the Chinese Thread is a defining feature of our School.

More explicitly, the Chinese Thread at Keystone focuses on Chinese culture, identity, language, history, and many other aspects of being Chinese, but always immersed within the broader surroundings of our world, forging connections between China and its global context.

It is this focus that makes us a world school. We are of course a Chinese school, but we are not a national school only. We have international programs and we encourage global outlooks. Yet we are not an International School, because we are deeply rooted in our country, culture, and context. As a world school we strive for a balance between the majestic national heritage of China and the rich cultural diversity around our world – a world that benefits from the global exchange of people, ideas, and things.

Our Chinese Thread covers a continuum of past, present and, at times, future. It does not refer to the past only. In the Chinese Thread entry on our website, we refer to ‘the powerful past and promising future of China’. As the Chinese Thread is a cultural phenomenon, it lives and changes, and is not confined to a particular period.

Our Chinese Thread does not involve only a few: it involves everyone – students and their families, teachers, and all the others who work here within our community. It is not a matter of national origin or citizenship, or access to knowledge: rather, it is an attitude of heart and mind. This attitude is one that recognizes the educational value of orienting our curriculum around what is local, while at the same time embedding this perspective in a more global approach and context.

Our Chinese Thread is not located only in certain classrooms or courses. While it is certainly addressed explicitly in courses such as Chinese Arts, Wushu, Chinese Language Arts, Chinese Language and Literature, and Chinese Civilization, it occurs in different ways, and to different degrees, in all our classrooms and courses. It is to be found in our five Confucian values, in our activities’ program, in residential life, in experiential and service learning, in interior design, and in other realms of our school. It is omnipresent, as concept, as culture, and as curriculum.

The name, the Chinese Thread, functions metaphorically. At Keystone, we think of learning as a cloth of many colors, woven together. It is the Chinese Thread that is the major strand in this weave, the strand that holds it together and gives it strength and vitality.