

Happy Chinese New Year!
**International School of Louisiana (ISL) hosting international MIT
fellows; scholars here to help fix up school's Cultural Heritage
Center**

*Asian fellows will participate in Mandarin Chinese classes; ISL first public school in New Orleans offering
requisite Mandarin language courses*

WHO: 22 Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Sloan Fellows from all over the world are visiting ISL this week as part of the Sloan Fellowship Program for Innovation and Global Leadership.

WHAT: As well as working all week renovating the school's old caretaker cottage into a Cultural Heritage Center, the fellows will participate in foreign language classes, particularly ISL's new requisite Mandarin Chinese classes.

WHEN: *The Mandarin Chinese class will take place on Friday, January 23 from 1:15-2:10pm with the Asian Fellows in attendance. The Fellows will be working on the Caretaker's cottage throughout this week, please call for times.*

WHY: ISL is the only school of its kind in the state, which embraces the culture of New Orleans through a language immersion program that values the ethnic diversity of this historically significant region. The partnership with MIT is a natural progression in its goal to create a culturally diverse program.

It's a sign of the times, and as much as New Orleanians like to embrace their past, this city is chartering a new course in its education system. Students need to be able to compete in the global workforce when they finish their education. In this vein, the International School of Louisiana (ISL) has begun offering requisite courses in Mandarin for all of its Middle School students.

ISL has recruited experienced native speaker Yang Ping, from Guangzhou, China, to teach its already bilingual (French and Spanish) students the Chinese language of Mandarin. "Hiring Ms. Ping is a natural and necessary step for ISL, as our mission is to provide our students with a challenging education emphasizing language immersion and international awareness," said Sean Wilson, ISL's Head of School. "In addition to our French and Spanish studies, Mandarin will give our students a much needed skill in preparing them for the future workforce. We also feel that this will give the state an edge in attracting international businesses that need skilled dual language employees."

Mandarin has been classified by the United States Government as a "critical foreign language" and Chinese-language programs in grade schools are popping up all over the country. ISL is the first public school in the New Orleans metro area to offer Mandarin as a required course. The rising popularity of Mandarin Chinese can be attributed to China's economic boom and the U.S. economy's increasing trade with China.