

SOUTHGATE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

6 WILLIAM BLATT AND EVERGREEN
SOUTHGATE, KENTUCKY 41071-3151
859-441-0743 Fax 859-441-6735

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Parents & Guardians,

Did you know that learning a new language benefits your brain development? Given the measurable impact of language learning on the brain, it's no surprise that the physical changes on the brain are also accompanied by the improvement of certain skills such as communication, creativity, recall, and concentration. The Southgate Independent School District has been fortunate enough to receive a grant over the next two years where students in grades preschool through 4th grade get to learn Mandarin. The Mandarin language is the second most widely spoken language in the world behind English.

Our school district believes that promoting brain development in our students is imperative to their overall growth. Learning a second language can be linked to better academic performance in the classroom boosting student literacy and giving learners an advantage in core school subjects like mathematics and science. There are also studies that support the fact that students who learn a second language have an increase in their alertness and focus. At the same time, studying a new language engages memorization skills such as learning new words and rules thus improving a student's ability to recall information.

We also believe that our students need to learn how to be more empathetic towards each other. Our goal as a school district is to provide opportunities where our students gain an understanding of the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of those around them. Early studies on language learning found evidence that it increased learners' empathy. Speaking a second language will not only boost brain development but help improve students' ability to see things from another perspective thus assisting with communication skills as well. Bilingual students can also exhibit more creativity in problem solving and flexibility compared to their monolingual peers.

The Southgate Independent School District takes great pride in our ability to grow all students. We are very excited about this new opportunity for the P-4th grade students to increase their brain development through learning the Mandarin language. The new foreign language teacher, Ms. Wong, will start meeting our students next week and begin working in the classrooms. The Mandarin language program will be implemented four days a week for fifteen minutes each day. The main focus of this respective program will be to boost the brain development in our Little Lions. We look forward to providing this unique opportunity to our students over the next two years. Feel free to contact me via email at greg.duty@southgate.kyschools.us with any questions regarding the Mandarin language program.

Small School Big Pride,

Greg Duty

Superintendent

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