



PRC Embassy Reception to Mark CLF's First Anniversary 17 May 2005

Excerpts from Speech by Rt Hon Trevor Mallard, Education Minister

- The Government recognises the teaching of other languages as an important part of the internationalisation of education. Learning languages not only gives our students language skills, but it also gives them important and valuable insights into other cultures and peoples and their histories.
- Trends analysis undertaken in 2004 reveals that Chinese language learning is increasing in schools, and the retention rate of students in Chinese language programmes, particularly in secondary schools, is the highest of all languages studied.
- For the teachers of Chinese language support is offered in a number of ways. The National Adviser for Chinese position has been operational since 1995.
- New Zealand and Chinese officials will conduct further discussions with a view to identifying high schools in four cities that could be part of a pilot project to support and strengthen the teaching of Chinese language in New Zealand.

The adviser's work is managed on behalf of the Ministry by the Association of Colleges of Education in New Zealand (ACENZ) so that the best use is made of the adviser's time and expertise in New Zealand's policy environment. The adviser works with teachers and schools in all sectors, including tertiary.

This position is highly valued in New Zealand. The adviser acts as a key adviser to initiatives that directly support the teaching and learning of Chinese undertaken by the Ministry.

From 2005 the Ministry is targeting the language fluency development of language teachers, supporting them to gain international proficiency qualifications. It is intended that Chinese language will be supported in this way.

Under the 1994 protocol between the two countries, the PRC supports two New Zealand teachers, every second year, to spend four weeks training in Beijing, and a further two weeks on a cultural tour. New Zealand covers relief costs, travel and some expenses. This continues to operate.

Encouraging and Enabling New Zealanders to Learn Chinese

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