

Houston, Dallas, Austin, Georgetown and San Antonio. Currently, CLTA-TX has more than 120 members in K-16 and weekend heritage schools throughout Texas. During 2007, the CLTA-TX Board sponsored a workshop and panel discussion, as well as held its first annual meeting.

WORKSHOP

CLTA-TX organized a workshop **Technology for Mandarin Teaching in K-12** on September 13, 2007, at the Language Resource Center, Rice University. The workshop, offered by Dr. Marshall McArthur, University of Houston and Dr. Meng Yeh, Rice University. The focus of the Workshop was on online tools and resources that are useful for teaching Mandarin in K-12 classrooms. The participants gained hands-on computer experience. The handout that contains the links where free software can be downloaded is posted on CLTA-TX website <http://www.clta-texas.org/events.asp>. The participants found the DimSum free software to be the most useful; it converts traditional/simplified characters and allows to type pinyin (phonetic spelling) with tone markers. Audacity, a download free recording software, is also popular with teachers as it provides unlimited recording time.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Since SBEC approved the use of the ACTFL OPI and WPT as the tests for teacher certification for LCTLs, including Chinese, many Chinese language teachers and K-12 schools are excited about the possibilities of teaching the language and establishing a Chinese program. To present a clear current status and plan for the further development, CLTA-TX organized a panel discussion on **Chinese Language Education: Present and Future**, October 25, 2007, at Rice University. The audience included K-16 Chinese language educators, Texas school district administrators and local community supporters. The purpose of the panel was to initiate a policy-oriented conversation among these three groups. We invited three panelists to participate in the discussion.

- Maria Trevino, Director of Language Other than English (LOTE), Texas Education Agency, reported on the current status of Texas foreign language curriculum K-12, Chinese teacher certificates and requirements, and proposals made to establish a K-12 Chinese program in Texas.
- Ms. Greta Lundgaard, PlanoISD LOTE Coordinator, presented the successes and challenges of the Chinese programs in PISD. Plano ISD was established in 2004 and awarded a FLAP grant

in October 2006 to develop the Chinese language program fully.

- Rebecca Sharp, Program Coordinator, Institute for Chinese Language Teaching, Rice University discussed the goals of the Institute for Chinese Language Teaching, funded by a grant from the Freeman Foundation, and the specifics of the Rice program that leads to certification.

Rice University produced a webcast of the discussion which is archived at <http://webcast.rice.edu/>. The panel has generated enthusiastic and continuing discussion among the members in schools and various communities. CLTA-TX is currently expanding the two-hour panel to a one-day symposium on **Learning and Teaching Chinese in Texas**. The goal for the symposium is to provide more concrete and feasible plans for K-12 schools that are interested in starting a Chinese language program.

ANNUAL MEETING

CLTA-TX held its first annual meeting on November 3, 2007, at the Chinese Community Center in Houston. The meeting theme was **Connecting Chinese Schools through K-16**. There are at least 20 weekend heritage Chinese schools in Texas. These schools have valuable resources and strong community support and educate a large number of students. We think it is crucial that the formal K-16 schools work together with the heritage schools in advancing the Chinese language education in Texas.

To outline the common goals, we invited Dr. Madeline Spring, academic director for the Oregon Chinese K-16 Flagship program, as the keynote speaker on the topic of **Shared Visions: Setting Goals for K-16 Chinese Language Programs in Diverse Learning Environments**. In addition to Madeline's talk, the one-day conference included four panels: "AP Chinese," "Finding Common Threads in Teaching Chinese at Universities, K-12 Schools, and Weekend Chinese Schools," "Communication-focused Language Activities," and "Strategies for Conversational Chinese." The twelve presenters were from universities, K-12 schools as well as heritage schools.

About seventy teachers attended the annual meeting. Six publishers displayed their textbooks in the Book Exhibit and provided numerous door prizes. The CLTA-TX fundraising committee raised enough funds to invite the keynote speaker and provide dinner for all participants. Many attendees found the panels and the keynote speaker's talk very effective and practical. They also commented that this is the first time in Texas that so