**President’s Report 2020-2021**

As the President of the Soong Ching Ling Children’s Foundation of Canada, I would like to take this opportunity to report on the Foundation’s activities during 2020-21.

The outbreak of the global pandemic of COVID-19 in early March 2020 affected everyone’s lives, including our children and schools. Like many other schools, **Britannia Community School** switched to on-line classes, with students asked to stay at home. In order to adapt to this change, our Foundation quickly initiated the **Tech Campaign,** assisting the school to purchase 120 Chromebook laptop computers to ensure no children would be left behind due to this pandemic.

Our Foundation continued to support the **Brite 8 Project** at Britannia, as we have for several years now. This program focuses on providing 8th grade boys and girls with a strong sense of responsibility, belonging, and leadership skills through participation in various activities and through a mentorship program by older students who thereby develop leadership skills. This program has been shown to improve students’ high school experiences, resulting in fewer disciplinary problems and improved attendance. Because this year it was not possible to run the usual large group activities, including the overnight camp, the program was adjusted to be incorporated into class-time and to include small group in-person activities. The hope is that next year it will be possible to run the camp program for both the current and the future Grade 8 students.

Our foundation also continues to support programs at the **Tupper Community Hub**. As was true at Britannia, the usual after-school programs could not be run during the pandemic, so alternative ways were found to reach out to vulnerable students. A new **Summer Outreach Project**, run in association with the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, engaged Tupper students in a combination of one-on-one meetings (often in association with weekly food deliveries), small-group activities at a local park, and social media contacts. The organizers of this program reported that: “Thanks to the funding provided by the Soong Ching Ling Children’s Foundation, the Tupper Community Schools Team was able to provide the only summer program in the Vancouver School Board District. Without this opportunity, dozens of families in the Tupper community would have struggled to have access to nutritious food, recreation activities, and supportive mentors for their children.”

With our ongoing support, the **Outreach Program** continued into the 2020-21 school year, focusing on improving students’ mental health and reaching out to the most at-risk students. When students returned to school for shortened days, in-class meetings were held with especially vulnerable students. When permitted by Public Health orders and the School Board, some after-school activities--an **Art Program, Cooking Program, and a Sports Program**—resumed. Although great flexibility was required in how the programs would be delivered given the changing health situation, throughout the school year program organizers found ways, with our support, to continue reaching out to students and meeting their needs.

It is now our fourth year supporting the **Sunrise iRead Program** in China. This program focuses its operations in poor rural areas building libraries and training teachers to use books to improve children’s critical thinking and love of reading. The Foundation’s support has allowed an expansion of the program to both the Dajing and Luzhuang Elementary Schools in Henan, China. Although adjustments had to be made to the program due to travel restrictions and school shutdowns during the pandemic, with the opening of schools, the program resumed. Over 300 students have benefited from this reading program, and the program has been so successful that Dajing Elementary hopes to expand it to younger grades during the coming year.   
  
2020 was the seventh year that the Foundation has provided support to the **Ciwei Migrant Children’s Choir project** in Shenzhen, Guangdong. This program targets disadvantaged children of migrant workers, using music and group activities to build social skills and self-esteem, and improve behaviours. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of the pandemic, for much of 2020 activities such as the choir project were suspended, and only a few sessions were later held. While it has been a great project that has delivered countless joyful experiences to children over the years, the future of this project is currently uncertain.

Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, our Foundation has followed the Provincial Health Authority’s guidelines. Instead of hosting our annual fundraising event during 2020, we launched a fundraising campaign based on personal appeals. As a result, we successfully raised $27,513 by the end of 2020, leaving us with a healthy year-end balance of approximately $160,000 in our General Fund and allocated to various project funds. We commit that all these donations will be used to improve the education and welfare of children. On behalf of the Board, I express my thanks to the donors. Your care and love are what encourages us to do a better job on behalf of the children with each passing year.

During this year of remote work and operations, we took the opportunity to propose amendments to the current membership system and bylaws. These changes will allow for better organization of the membership and volunteers, permitting additional efficiencies in our operations, and allowing us to better focus our efforts on helping the children.

Even with the difficulties imposed upon us by the pandemic, the Foundation was still able over the past year to continue working toward our goal of improving the lives of children. I would like to thank our Board of Directors and volunteers for their continued hard work during this stressful period. I would also like to thank our generous donors and supporters. Without you, we would not have been able to make these many positive impacts on the lives of these children. The Foundation greatly appreciates your contributions, especially during these trying times.

Thanks for all you have done and continue to do!

For the children,



Lynda Liu

President