



Our World Neighborhood Charter School
Elementary School
Kindergarten to Grade 5
36-12 35th Avenue
Astoria, NY 11106

Middle School
Grade 6 to Grade 8
31-20 37th Street
Astoria, NY 11103

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MEDIA ALERT
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Charter School Students Celebrate the Chinese New Year

Mandarin Chinese class commemorates the Chinese New Year with presentations and a performance by Columbia University

Astoria, Queens- Our World Neighborhood Charter School (OWNCS) is holding a Chinese New Year celebration on Friday, February 11th, 2011. The school's Mandarin Chinese class organized the celebration as a school-wide assembly in collaboration with the Columbia University Lion Dance. Students of the Mandarin Chinese Class are giving presentations about the cultural significance of the Chinese New Year celebration and adorning the Middle School with traditional Chinese decorations. The Columbia University Lion Dance is performing a traditional folkloric lion dance for everyone. The festivities are to take place at 2:25 pm in the OWNCS Middle School Gymnasium.

The Chinese lion dance has a history that spans more than 2,000 years. The dance requires great skill to perform and is one of the most well respected folkloric dances of China. The Columbia University Lion Dance is a student-run organization at Columbia University that performs the lion dance all over the metropolitan area. The Lion Dance members comment, "We are very excited to perform at Our World Neighborhood Charter School. It is always a pleasure to perform at schools...because we take great joy in bringing such a long-standing traditional art form into people's lives."

OWNCS is committed to celebrating diversity through cultural education. The school offers Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language class option in their Middle School beginning in sixth grade. The Mandarin teacher, Haiwen Lu, says "The 6th grade helped fundraise for the celebration and the students are very excited to take part in the festival." The Assistant Principal at the OWNCS Middle School, Lisa Edmiston, has shown great support for celebrating Chinese history and culture. Ms. Edmiston states, "I'm excited to be able to merge Eastern and Western cultures as we continue to make it a priority celebrate each others cultures at OWNCS."

OWNCS invites parents and friends of the school in Astoria to support this event.

Our World Neighborhood Charter School was founded in 2002 and is located in Astoria, Queens. It is the mission of Our World Neighborhood Charter School to educate its students to become independent thinkers and lifelong learners. The school is committed to an educational philosophy based on inquiry, active and experiential learning, and social justice. OWN Charter School is located in the most ethnically diverse neighborhood in the United States. We celebrate this by integrating the cultural richness of our community with the lessons of the classroom.