

1st Day of Chinese School 2014

We've had lots of firsts around here.

Last Monday, Sianna started her first day of Chinese Kindergarten. She attends each day from 8am – 11:40am. So far, three hours of Chinese immersion is enough for her. (Actually, the class sleeps for 2 hours in the afternoon so I don't see any point in paying for her to sleep at school.)

So far, Sianna likes her class and her teachers. She especially likes the morning exercises which are set to Disney music.

Speaking of music...

News: Selah, age 3, would like to take a dance class. Her desire to twirl is intense.

Back to today...

Schäfer attended his first day of Chinese grade school.

Gone are the sweet days of kindergarten. Sniff sniff.

It took him a while to realize that he wasn't going to the same school as Sianna. Last year, he attended Xue Qian Ban (pre-1st), but since we had a work commitment in June he did not get to participate in the kindergarten graduation ceremony.

Last night, I laid in bed asking Hubs if we were doing the right thing. There are so many "what if's" involved when putting a foreign kid in a national school.

Today, dispelled any fear.

Schäfer walked into the class ready to make friends and learn

to read and write Chinese. Unfortunately, there was no class today.

Hubs spent over an hour filling out paperwork in Chinese and listening to the teacher's instructions.

Meanwhile, Schäfer played with new friends on the basketball court. The kids were all asking him the usual questions. One asked if he was American. Schäfer replied, "My mother is American and my father is American so I am American." This is a very accurate answer as to how he maintained his US citizenship!

Later Schäfer told me, "I don't mind their questions. Eventually, they will get to know me."

While Schäfer played chase, the Chinese Grandma's asked me how Selah was going to attend 1st grade when she didn't speak very much. I explained that even though Selah is just 2 inches shorter than their children, she's only 3. My seven-year-old would be attending 1st grade.

As far as attending Chinese grade school, it's different than kindergarten. We're taking it one week at a time.

We did have a talk with his teacher. She was shocked that Schäfer would only go for a half day. I'm not quite sure she understands that he still has to come home and tackle 2-3 hours worth of school in English.

When we explained that Schäfer can speak some Chinese, but he cannot read or write Chinese very well, she wasn't phased at all. She said that she starts all students at the very beginning to make sure the basics are covered.

A new adventure begins...