Hello, my name is Qi Yang Yang. I’ve been at Chinese school since first grade, and I remember always watching the older kids graduate and give their speeches at this very spot. In fact, I never knew that I would end up here in 8 years, giving my own graduation speech.

There are many people that helped me get to this point in Chinese school. First, I would like to thank all of the teachers who have taught my classmates and I every year. You all have made learning Chinese much more enjoyable than I thought it could be. Even when I thought that a class was useless, I didn’t realize that it would be extremely beneficial for me in the future. Almost all of my Chinese knowledge in reading and writing comes from this school, and more specifically, from you. Thank you very much for teaching me and helping me get here.

The next people I would like to thank are my classmates. They have been a constant presence in all of my years at Chinese school and make learning far better than it would have been if I was by myself. Thank you for all the kindness and laughter in all of our classes. I could not have asked for better classmates during this journey through Chinese school. Thank you, Andrew and Iris!

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my parents. I know it doesn’t seem like it, but I deeply appreciate how much effort and time you put into getting Iris and I to Chinese school and providing us with an opportunity to learn Chinese. Without this school, we would not have learned the skills we would have today. Thank you both for bringing us to Chinese school (almost) every Saturday no matter what and sacrificing for us to have a good Chinese education. I love you!

Chinese school has helped me in so many ways. Learning Chinese here has helped me drastically when I go back to China and visit my family there. With things that I’ve learned in Chinese school, I can communicate with my family in Chinese and read signs and words there. I couldn’t be more grateful, because without Chinese school, I couldn’t have improved and be able to communicate with my family in China.

While I’m sad that I’m leaving Chinese school, I will forever hold onto all of the amazing memories that I made here with so many different people. It seems hard to believe that I will spend my Saturdays without Chinese school after this year, but I know that this place will hold a special place in my heart and will always be a part of the story of my life.

Thank you, everyone.