



## ***The Center in Action*** **January 2005**



### **Early Learning Curriculum Project is Initiated**

The George Lucas Education Foundation and the Exploratorium of San Francisco, CA will collaborate with the US-China Center on the development of an early learning curriculum project. Representatives from the Center will travel to California for a curriculum conference to be held at the Skywalker Ranch, January 30 through February 2. At the conference, members from the Center will begin developing a framework for implementing a dual-language preschool curriculum that emphasizes the three “E’s”: explore, experiment, and express. Plans are underway to found a dual-language preschool in the United States. Curriculum specialists from around the world will be in attendance to discuss their ideas and experiences.



### **Center Staff**

We would like to take time this month to formally recognize the Center’s members. These people are in charge of the daily operations and activities for the Center. Learn more about the Center staff members on the Center’s homepage under the “People” section of About Us. In future newsletters, we will feature an in-depth Q & A session so our readers can learn more about the experiences of our staff.

David Lustick, Associate Director  
Wenzhong (Eric) Yang, Research Associate  
Baohui Zhang, Research Associate  
Lisa Payne, Administrative Assistant  
JJ Chandler, Web Developer  
Ken Dirkin, Multimedia Specialist

### **Graduate Research Assistants:**

My Lien (Center newsletter, Hot Topics, website content)  
Jiang Heng (Hot Topics, Center newsletter)  
Rui Min (X-Pacific)  
Xue Han (Translation projects, culturally sensitive tests)  
Liling Jiang (X-Pacific)  
Chien Se (Center and X-Pacific website design)  
Steven Wojcikiewicz (International research development)



### **X-Pacific Website**

By Ling Jiang & Rui Min, Graduate Assistants

At the US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence, we are honored to be working with two exceptional learning communities. Each schools' contributions to this site promises to make the endeavor between our two countries productive and memorable.

The X-Pacific website project allows visitors to gaze into the life of two schools; one in the United States and one in China. The idea is that visitors to the site would be able to compare the two institutions side by side with respect to a whole array of possible characteristics. The different participants from each school will answer the same types of questions regarding their interests, activities, and issues that were important in the preceding week.

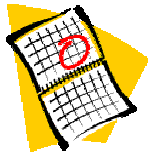
The long term goal is to provide an interactive virtual space where these two school communities can get to know about each other and build a lasting relationship. X-Pacific also can open a window between communities and answer a wide variety of questions. How alike are the two schools? How do teaching and learning compare in the two schools? How are the students' experiences alike? How do expectations differ? How do teachers spend their time? How do curriculums compare? How do tests compare? Each week will address a different theme (e.g., extra curricular activities, professional development, science learning, sports, art, and language).

We created questions on six themes last semester. Most of the data collected from the responses of the participants of both schools has been uploaded on the website. This semester, we have sent out the questions on the topic of Parent-Teacher Conferences. We are now developing questions for the next four weeks: (1) final term exam, (2) life during winter vacation, (3) evaluation of teachers and students, and (4) out-of-school activities.



### **Hot Topics in Education**

It is not too late to subscribe to the Hot Topics in Education service. Hot Topics is a free, bi-weekly email service designed to relay current information and resources on topics of education in the United States and China. This service is targeted at educators, administrators, researchers, and parents interested in issues of excellence in k-12 education. Click on the "Hot Topics" link on the US-China Homepage to register for the service.



### **Up-Coming Events**

- ✓ An **Advisory Board Meeting** is scheduled for February 9 -11, 2005 at the Kellogg Center on MSU's campus. Theme leaders from MSU and distinguished guests from around the world will be invited to attend this meeting to discuss issues of education reform and Center activities.
- ✓ In July 2005, the Center will co-host a **education reform conference** at the Kellogg Center on MSU's campus. The purpose of the leadership conference is to discuss issues of educational reform.

*The Center in Action* is the monthly newsletter of the **US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence**. The newsletter is designed to document and disseminate information on the Center's activities.