



The Center in Action **May 2005**



Open House for new US-China Center and Office of K12 Outreach Partnership

The US-China Center held an open house on May 17th to announce its partnership with the Office of K-12 Outreach and to celebrate the completion of office renovations. Friends from Michigan State University, Michigan Department of Education, and guests from around the world were in attendance. Dr. Barbara Markle, Director of the Office of K12 Outreach, acted as the master of ceremony and introduced Dr. Yong Zhao, Director of the Center. Dr. Zhao discussed our mission and work. Dr. William Schmidt, co-Director of the US-China Center, spoke about the incredible potential of the Center to make a real difference in the lives of schools both in the United States and in China. Finally, Carol Ames, Dean of the College of Education, used the opportunity to speak about the Center as an example of what individuals can do when they believe in their visionary ideas. To her, the Center represents some of the very best qualities of the College. More than 100 people joined in on the celebration.



The 3E International Academy

The curriculum project for Beijing's early learning school has officially been named the "3E International Academy". The school will open September 1, 2005. The curriculum team (comprised of American and Chinese teachers and academic experts) is busy constructing the final version of the school's schedule, calendar, framework, standards, and performance indicators. In these efforts, Nicole Ellefson and Nancy Romig have been extremely helpful with their expertise and experience as schoolteachers.

The team visited two Reggio schools in Michigan to gather ideas. Reggio Emilia inspired schools approach teaching and learning from social constructivist point of view where children's ideas about the world and how they express those ideas are deeply honored by the community. The Child Discovery Center in Grand Rapids proved to be a wonderful and inspiring public K-5 school with a Reggio Emilia philosophy to teaching and learning. The second school, the Galileo School in Holt, MI, was a beautiful example of a small pre-school operating under the same philosophy. Though similar in many respects, each school provided insights regarding excellence with a Reggio inspired approach to learning.



X-Pacific Project on the Way

The X-Pacific Project plans to recruit two more middle schools to participate in the Project's cross-cultural comparisons. These two new schools will join the existing Beachwood and Nankai



schools in providing information to help us better understand schooling experiences in the US and in China. As X-Pacific completes its first academic year of operation, the Center will take the opportunity to reflect upon and revise the project for next year. Included in these plans is a redesign of the X-Pacific website to make the site more user-friendly and interactive.



Literature Review on “Assessment”

The US-China Center is now conducting a literature review on "assessment". Over fifteen research articles and books have been pulled together to explore the topic. The final report intends to understand international assessment from a US perspective. The relationship among assessment, accountability, and achievement will be explored.



Review of Chinese Educational Research

The Center is conducting a literature review on Chinese educational research patterns, paying particular attention to how educational researchers in China reflect upon educational phenomena and the types of research methodologies Chinese researchers use. We have identified the top academic educational research journal in China, “Educational Research,” and are identifying comparable US journals. A coding scheme will be developed to analyze the articles. We will provide you with updates on this project.



Upcoming Activities & Events

- ✓ The introduction sections of the Chinese Math (K-12) and Science (6-9 grade) Curriculum Standards have been translated. It will help more people understand curriculum reform in China.
- ✓ The Center is attempting to increase subscriptions to “Hot Topics” by increasing its quality. Specifically, efforts are currently underway to revamp its format and to create a set of criteria for article inclusion.
- ✓ The Center is continuing to compose a dictionary that aims at refining current Chinese translations of English educational terms. This project will facilitate a clearer understanding of American educational terms for Chinese readers who wish to study or better understand the US educational system.

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.