



The "*Hot Topics in US-China Education*" is a free, monthly email service that watches for "what is hot" in K-12 US and Chinese education. This service targets educators, administrators, researchers, and parents interested in issues of excellence in education in the US and China. The articles presented in this listserv are organized according to the following five dimensions of education: 1) Teachers and Teaching, 2) Learners and Learning, 3) Leaders and Leadership, 4) Curriculum, and 5) Family and Community. Under each category, you can access the full story by clicking on the story title.

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August, 2006

I. Teachers and Teaching

1. [Michigan plan for qualified teachers falls short](#)

Monday, August 14, 2006 from Kalamazoo Gazette

The Education Trust, a Washington, D.C. group that works to close the achievement gap between poor and minority students and others, found Michigan's plan to ensure its teachers are highly qualified fails to address how it will help minority kids. The Education Trust analyzed plans the states filed last month with the U.S. Department of Education to meet highly qualified teacher requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Michigan was among 40 states that plans were criticized.

2. [Chinese teachers to help Mandarin language teaching in Indonesia](#)

Monday, August 28, 2006, from Xinhua Net

Indonesian Education Minister Bambang Sudibyo received 40 teachers from China who will help Mandarin language teaching at Indonesian senior high schools. Mandarin has been taught at 20 senior high schools in the country including three public schools. They will be stationed in 34 schools in 10 provinces in the country namely Jakarta, West Java, Banten, Central Java, East Java, North Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, Riau, North Sumatra and South Sulawesi. Arifin Zain said teachers from China would fully use Mandarin during teaching assistance.

II. Learners and Learning

1. [Suburban schools also home to test gap](#)

Monday, August 21, 2006 from Columbus Dispatch

Affluent districts now face disparities that some urban districts have overcome. White students are doing OK: About 78 percent passed the third-grade reading test last school year last school year. But black students are not doing well: Only 25 percent passed the same exam. Urban educators, for years, have worked to get poor, black and Latino students on par with their white and more-affluent peers. According to Daria Hall, a senior policy analyst at the Washington-based Education Trust, the disparity in achievement in suburban schools was hidden until recent years, when the federal No Child Left Behind law began making all schools report how their minority, special-education and immigrant students were faring.

[2. China to double foreign student intake by 2020](#)

Monday, August 7, 2006, from Xinhua Net

China will enroll 300,000 foreigners in universities by 2020, an increase from 140,000 in 2005. The current 20 percent annual growth rate in student enrollments is expected to drop to eight percent from 2020, Cao Guoxing, director-general with the International Cooperation and Exchanges Department of the Ministry of Education, stated at a conference. China has recruited more than 140,000 foreign college students from over 190 countries in 2005, the official said. A total of 568 universities in China are qualified to enroll foreign students, and the majority of the foreigners studying in China major in Chinese language and traditional Chinese medicine. Statistics from the National Statistics Bureau show that more than 30 million people outside China are studying Chinese, including 5 million who study Chinese at school.

III. Leaders and Leadership

[1. With a Changing World Comes An Urgency to Learn Chinese](#)

Saturday, August 26, 2006 from The Washington Post

More than 1.3 billion people worldwide speak Chinese, and about 885 million of those people speak Mandarin, China's official language and dominant dialect. In the United States, only about 24,000 students in grades seven through 12 study the language... Educators say those students reflect a steady growth in the number of Americans wanting to learn Chinese. "People are finally beginning to pay attention to Mandarin as a major cultural and economic prospect for students," said Michael Levine, executive director of education for the Asia Society. "The push is coming from the defense [community] and government and grass-roots interest from parents."

[2. China bans schools from exam-based enrollments](#)

Monday, August 28, 2006, from Xinhua Net

China's educational authority has banned primary and junior middle schools from making public students' marks or ranking them accordingly. Primary and junior high schools are also prohibited from using exams, assessments or tests to enroll students, or scores in other competitive evaluations, according to a circular issued by the Ministry of Education. As part of the central government's push to provide nine years of free compulsory education, the ministry instructed local authorities to ensure school-age are admitted to nearby schools during their nine-year-old compulsory education.

IV. Curriculum

[1. Calif. schools adopt digital history program](#)

Friday, August 18, 2006 from eSchool News

Digital materials replace the need for textbooks in California history classes. Looking to improve the quality of history and social-studies courses, teachers in several California elementary schools are trading in traditional textbooks for a custom-built digital curriculum. The program, from educational publisher Pearson Scott Foresman, combines online learning, multimedia, audio, text, and traditional classroom activities designed to meet the varied needs of individual students.

2. Proposal Revives Bilingual Education Debate

August 11, 2006 from Los Angeles Times

A state Senate bill would add special reading and writing lessons for English learners. Foes say measure would lead to unequal standards. Several politicians and educators called on the governor Thursday to support legislation that would allow school districts to include extra reading and writing lessons for elementary students struggling to learn English, in a debate that has rekindled California's dormant language wars. The bill, SB 1769, sponsored by state Sen. Martha Escutia (D-Whittier), additionally would restore about \$1.6 million in funding for the state Board of Education that was eliminated in the 2006-07 budget, when a compromise could not be reached on textbook criteria.

V. Family and Community

1. Nonwhite parents' high hopes

Friday, August 25, 2006 from San Francisco Chronicle

California parents who are black, Latino and Asian American voiced big aspirations for their children and support for early childhood education in a new poll commissioned by New America Media, a national media association based in San Francisco.

2. Child's education takes up 1/3 of family income

Tuesday, August 22, 2006, from Xinhua Net

A survey result on Monday revealed the educational cost of a child accounts for nearly one-third of the total income of a middle-class Chinese family, China News Service reports. The survey by one of China's well known polling institutions, Horizonkey, found a family with a child in school or kindergarten spent an average of 3,500 yuan on the child's education from October 2004 to October 2005, accounting for almost one-third of a family's annual revenue. In rural areas in China, a family usually spends less than half the cost of a child's education for urban families each year. But educational spending still accounts for the biggest proportion of the entire annual household revenue, with its increasing rate exceeding 20 % for past two consecutive years.

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