



"*Hot Topics in US-China Education*" is a free, bi-weekly 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 topics covered in this service include 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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**December 13, 2004**

## **I. Teachers and Teaching**

### 1. [Teachers in Rural and Ethnic Minority Group Areas Trained to Implement New Curriculum](#)

A new nation-wide project is initiated by the Ministry of Education in China to train teachers in rural areas and ethnic minority group areas to implement a new curriculum. The training aims at improving teaching quality and promoting teacher professionalization with the support of education technology.

### 2. [New Regulation in Teacher Licensure is Claimed in Sichuan Province](#)

Beginning November 23, 2004, Sichuan Province enacted the new "Regulation in the Teacher Certification in Sichuan." Well-educated people, even those who have not gone through a program of "teacher education" can teach now.

### 3. [President Bush Signs New IDEA into Law](#)

The new Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) recently signed by President Bush will ensure accountability for students with disabilities. Further measures are included to protect the rights of students to a free, appropriate public education.

### 4. [Elementary Teachers' Use of Technology](#)

Educators have long sought to use technology in classrooms, both to improve the delivery of curriculum content and provide training in the skills students need to enter the modern workforce. Technology also plays a critical role in non-instructional activities, including data management, lesson preparation, and communication.

## **II. Learners and Learning**

### **1. [China Support Education Development in the West Regions](#)**

In the past five years of the “Western Exploration Project,” China has invested 17 billion Yuan to support education in western regions, especially compulsory education in the rural areas. The college student ratio in the western regions of China increased from 0.87% to 2.35%.

### **2. [The Key High School will be Replaced by Experimental Model Schools in Shanghai](#)**

Key schools in Shanghai will be gradually replaced by experimental model schools. These experimental model schools will be publicly evaluated online by the citizens. Forty-nine schools have applied to become experimental model schools and twenty-eight have been approved.

### **3. [Study Reveals Need for High School Reform](#)**

America’s 15-year-olds performed below the international average in mathematics literacy and problem-solving, according to the latest results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA).

### **4. [Bill Clinton helps Launch Search Engine](#)**

Former President Bill Clinton helped launch China-backed Accoona, a search engine, which claims its search technology produces better results than Google.

## **III. Leaders and Leadership**

### **1. [Administrators of Teacher Education asked to Attend the National Continued Training Program](#)**

In order to promote reform in teacher education and curriculum, the Ministry of Education coordinated the National Continued Training Program for administrators in November and December, 2004. The program aims at professionalizing teacher education administration.

### **2. [Chinese Ministry of Education Strengthens K-12 School Administration](#)**

The Ministry of Education announced its efforts to strengthen school administration. It is claimed that the government at all the levels should supervise and finance K-12 education.

### **3. [Secretary Paige Speaks at the Second National High School Leadership Summit](#)**

Secretary Paige challenges leaders to step up and create change. He shares the story of Rosa Parks’ struggles and attitude in staying firm in her beliefs, and Paige believes we need this kind of attitude in our efforts for school reform.

### **4. [Milk Vending Machines Installed in Schools](#)**

In a large effort to push kids toward healthier food and drink options, milk vending machines have been installed in schools. Currently 7,000 to 7,500 machines exist in schools nationwide and have appeared in the last three to four years.

## **IV. Curriculum**

### **1. [Chinese Government will Buy Textbooks for Students in Rural Areas](#)**

The Chinese government will provide 87 million Chinese dollars to buy textbooks for students in rural areas starting in Fall of 2005.

### **2. [Mission to Mandate Teaching of Constitution](#)**

Senator Robert Byrd has inserted into a massive federal spending bill a requirement that schools devote at least part of a day each year to teach a lesson on the constitution. The provision would apply to all schools, elementary through college, that receive federal aid. Education groups worry that the provision could be the opening wedge in a campaign by Washington to influence what schools teach.

## V. Family and Community

### 1. [How Parents Invest in the Children's Education: a Comparative Survey](#)

Parents in different regions in Asia have different attitudes toward investing in children's education. On average, they set aside 25 to 50 dollars for children's education per month. About two thirds of Chinese parents in urban areas and 79% in Japan save money for their children.

### 2. [Out-of-School Learning Programs](#)

In the ongoing debate about the purpose of out-of-school programs, the voices of parents and students have frequently been absent. A survey commissioned by The Wallace Foundation offers a revealing portrait of what both are seeking. Among young people, 9 of 10 say they are "better off" in organized activities but "need a push" to get involved. Some parents are looking primarily for academic help for their kids while others seek enrichment. Many want activities that teach the value of hard work and commitment.

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