



科博国际教育
HOPE International Education
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HOPE Updates 2024 No.10



31st October 2024
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When west meets east!

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Inside HOPE

School Link Forum Shanghai, 2024: Collaboration to create a better Future

After the pandemic, the competition in China market for overseas schools has become increasingly intense. Faced with these challenges, overseas schools will need to develop and implement a series of long-term strategies to attract Chinese students. Designing more summer/winter/immersion short programme, visiting the market regularly, attending more focused and innovative events, establishing links with Chinese schools are just some suggestion that can be practically implemented.

On 18th of October, 2024, supported by local education authority, Shanghai Education Association for International Exchange(SEAIE) and Pudong Education Development Research Institute(PEDRI), HOPE International Education, organized the School Link Forum 2024 in Shanghai to facilitate the in-depth understanding and collaboration between Chinese and overseas schools.



Group photo of School Link Forum, 2024

The Forum achieved remarkable success. It brought together 10 overseas schools from UK, Malaysia and Singapore and 35 Chinese schools across China, including state schools, private schools and international schools.

Highlight 1: Speeches sharing insights and experiences on international cooperation



Mr. Li Weiping (SEAIE) making an opening speech

The event kicked off with an opening speech by Mr. Li Weiping, Secretary-General of SEAIE, who provided a profound analysis of the current status of international exchanges in education and proposed strategies to address the challenges.



Daniel Zheng, Managing Director of HOPE International Education

Daniel Zheng, Managing Director of HOPE, delivered a keynote speech titled "How international collaboration enhances school development". He listed various aspects schools can benefit from international collaboration and emphasized that respecting cultural differences, enhancing mutual understanding, maintaining open communication and building

deep trust are crucial for achieving success in international cooperation and exchanges.



Mr. Shi Jionghua and Ms. Cai Bei

Mr. Shi Jionghua, Principal of Shanghai Beicai Middle School and Ms. Cai Bei, Assistant Principal of SUIS Pudong Campus shared their schools' experience of international exchanges and cooperation when facing cultural differences under the context of Chinese schools.



Mr. Paul Spanner (Left) and Mr. David Giles (Right)

Meanwhile, Mr. Paul Spanner, International Manager Brockenhurst College UK, and Mr. David Giles, Director of International Office, Strathallan School UK, shared in-depth insights on their experiences, significance, and far-reaching impacts of international exchanges and cooperation with their partner schools.

Highlight 2: Panel discussion of finding better ways for international exchanges in the new era

During the forum, a panel discussion with the theme of 'international collaboration for a better future' was hosted by Alice Zhang, HOPE's International Partnership Manager. The panelists included Mr. Chen Wenguo, principal of Shanghai Shanghai HONGRUN BOYUAN School, Ms. Shi Li, associate principal of Shanghai Jincai North Secondary School, Stelios Yalarakis, manager of international admission office from Cheshire College South & West and Olivia

Yin, Marketing Officer of Gower College Swansea. Audiences not only gained a clearer understanding of the current status of international education cooperation but also had deeper reflections and insights into the possibilities and directions of future cooperation.



Alice Zhang (first on the left), Mr. Chen Wenguo (second on the left), Ms. Shi Li (middle), Stelios Yalarakis (second on the right) and Olivia Yin (first on the right) joined the discussion

Highlight 3: MoU Signing Ceremony of sister school relationship between Cheshire College South & West and Nanhui No.2 Middle School

With the help of HOPE, Shanghai Nanhui No. 2 Middle School and Cheshire College South & West signed a MoU to formalize the sister schools relationship witnessed by all audience.



MoU signing by the principal of Nanhui No.2 School and International Manager, Cheshire College, South and West, UK

Highlight 4: One-to-one pre-booked appointments for collaboration

Furthermore, the one-to-one appointment session also embarked a heated interest in individual school's potential collaboration. Over 10 Chinese schools expressed their willingness to establish sister school links on the spot, thereby demonstrating the strong influence and far-reaching significance of this forum.



Heated discussion on collaboration at each booth

HOPE will certainly follow up after the events to facilitate more links being established. Such links will also endorse the overseas schools to recruit students in the market. HOPE will continue to organize this type of influential and strategic event in the near future.

110 families joined HOPE's school fair, but is the market getting bigger?

On 19th October, HOPE International Education held an overseas schools and summer/winter camp fair at Shanghai Children's Palace, local's famous extra-curriculum centre for children. 11 schools from the United Kingdom, Singapore and Malaysia were invited to attend this small and focused event which attracted more than 110 families. Some families from other cities came to Shanghai specially for the event.

The fair consisted of a short introduction session of each school, a panel discussion on 'how to cultivate and develop students' interest and international vision' followed by individual counselling and interviews at booth table. Parents at the site were very keen on knowing the curriculum of different schools, pastoral care offered to international students and cost of tuition and living. Parents were most interested in short-term programme such as winter and summer camps, short immersion programme, which can offer their children an experience and prepare them for long-term study abroad in the future.



School fair at Children's Palace attracted more than 110 local families



Panel discussion with representatives from four overseas institutions from UK, Singapore and Malaysia respectively hosted by Judith Zhu, Chief Counsellor, HOPE

The whole event was well received and highly commented by both exhibitors and parents. However, does the bustling fair mean a bigger potential market for overseas schools after pandemic? The answer is 'not that optimistic'! The market is becoming more diversified and parents are getting more cautious and price-sensitive. The schools from traditional destination countries such as UK, US, Canada and Australia are increasingly challenged by schools from South-East Asian countries, HK and international schools in China. It seems that parents now care more about safety, costs, services offered by school and top university enrollment than the destination country itself. That is also why short term programme is getting increasingly popular for students as pre-screening opportunity and a taste programme before they make the decision for their long term study overseas.



Lively discussion between parents and representatives

HOPE will continuously organize such small but focused event in the future. Schools from different countries and regions with different nature and curriculum will be invited. For example, for the event on 19th, we have state and private schools mainly from the UK but also branch campus of UK schools in Singapore and Malaysia. Even those schools in the UK, some are from England, but one is from Wales and one from Scotland; Some offer A level/BETC and GCSE, some IB, so that unnecessary competition is avoided.

INSIDE HOPE --- Photo news of October



Alexandra Wen, General Manager of HOPE Shanghai office, was invited to participate in a panel discussion ‘How should schools of different ranking groups overseas attract Chinese students?’ at ICEF Beijing from 14th of October. During the session, Alexandra provided numerous constructive recommendations on strategies to engage students and parents in mid-tier schools and universities.



On 17th of October, 2024, HOPE invited Merikarvian School from Finland to give a vivid demo class to Xiwai International School. Mr. Otto Aulis Hiekkala, Finnish all-subject teacher, engaged in enthusiastic interactions with students, teaching basics of Finnish education and Finnish culture. Merikarvian School has also discussed potential cooperation with Xiwai International School.



HOPE was awarded as the top performing agent by University of Southampton on 11th of October. David Winstanley, Executive Director of Student Life and Ties, China Representative, also visited HOPE Shanghai Office on 12th October to discuss further cooperation between the two sides.



On 22nd October, with the facilitation of Hope International Education, Kang Chiao School of Xinzhan Zone Hefei City has signed sister school agreement with Strathallan School, UK.



On 25th October, Loughborough University visited University of Electronic Science and Technology of China under the invitation of HOPE to discuss potential cooperation between the two universities regarding research projects and 2+2 exchange programmes.



On 28th October, Loughborough University visited the HOPE Shanghai office. Dr. Lu Li from Loughborough Business School presented to HOPE consultant with the latest information on the programs and admissions of Loughborough Business School.



On 28th October, HOPE management team was invited to visit Hua Rui Repton School in Xiamen, the sister school of the 467-year-old Repton School in the UK. Daniel Zheng, HOPE's Managing Director had a cordial conversation with the principal for future cooperation in the fields of university applications, teacher recruitment and development, summer and winter camp, and charity event.

News from local media

AI has potential to revolutionize education

<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202410/29/WS67203408a310f1265a1ca1b0.html>

By Mohamed Ally | China Daily Global | Updated: 2024-10-29 09:02



The world is in the midst of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" and may soon enter the "Fifth Industrial Revolution". At the same time, the rapid development of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence has been impacting education at all levels, from primary and secondary to higher education.

Countries around the world are trying to find ways to more flexibly use AI in education, so as to impart education to students in remote areas and teach people the skills needed to build successful careers in the 21st century. China has become a leader in the application of AI in education and training by developing smart learning systems and intensifying research on AI. China is also working with other countries to advance the use of AI in education globally.

The fourth United Nations Sustainable Development Goal is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". In this context, organizations such as UNESCO are exploring ways to use AI to realize the SDG4.

AI can be used to meet individual learners' needs and provide one-to-one tutoring for students, as well as to facilitate lifelong learning. To achieve the SDG4, online classes using AI can be organized to teach students in different parts of the world, translate the course content into students' preferred language, and

allow the students to interact with the tutor. This is important for students who live in remote areas, scores of kilometers away from the nearest school.

Also, teachers can use AI to prepare study materials for students and help them complete a certain course. AI can help teachers, too, to customize resources for learners so they can perform better. Researchers at the Beijing Advanced Innovation Center for Future Education and Beijing Foreign Studies University developed and implemented an automatic resource generation mechanism called Learning Cell Model to customize study materials and other resources for learners.

Studies show the Learning Cell Model can generate resources according to individual learners' needs and improve students' performance without increasing their cognitive burden.

An important area of research is the possible use of AI to facilitate language learning. Researchers from the Advanced Innovation Center for Future Education and the Beijing Normal University explored how an "automatic resource generation system" can help in teaching Chinese as a second language in schools.

The researchers developed a model to use AI to ensure the resources meet learners' needs, with studies showing the use of the teaching-learning model improved students' performance and their perception faculty. Students who were taught lessons using the model more actively participated in the course.

In addition to teaching languages, AI can also be used to help students of all ages and from different countries to learn about different cultures. Researchers from Beijing Foreign Studies University, Athabasca University (Canada) and some Saudi Arabian universities have been exploring ways to use AI to help students from different countries learn from each other and know about each other's cultures while sitting in the comfort of their homes.

AI applications should be designed in a way that they benefit learners and educators, for which policies for learners, teachers and other staff in educational institutions should be in place. For example, there should be policies on factors such as data privacy and security, copyright, academic integrity, transparency and environmental concerns. A recent report by experts from Athabasca University and the Commonwealth of Learning identified 14 AI policies that staff at different levels of higher education institutions need to follow.

However, some educational institutions are reluctant to allow students to use AI because they think AI will not benefit them or it is not ethical to allow students to use AI. But AI is here to stay, and educational institutions must accept AI as another beneficiary tool.

As we move toward the "Fifth Industrial Revolution", AI may develop the ability to think independently and become as creative as humans, and GenAI may become even more intelligent and capable of completing intellectual tasks like humans.

With the advancement of machine learning, AI systems may start developing original ideas that can be applied in complicated situations and contexts. AI has the potential to revolutionize education if designed and applied properly. The challenge for higher educational institutions is how to keep up with the rapid development of AI, particularly when it comes to devising suitable policies to impart education to the future generations.

The author is a professor at Athabasca University, Canada.

Scholarship quota for undergrads doubled

By Cheng Si | China Daily | Updated: 2024-10-30 09:29



SHI YU/CHINA DAILY

China has recently optimized scholarships and bursary granting systems to senior high school and college students with an aim of providing financial aid to youth pursuing higher education.

The initiative jointly launched by the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security will double the number of undergraduate students receiving the State-level scholarships, while financial aid will also be significantly increased, starting this year.

As per the policy, 120,000 undergraduate students from universities and junior colleges can receive the scholarship, and each will be awarded 10,000 yuan (\$1,400) annually. Previously, the quota of students was 60,000, and they could receive no more than 8,000 yuan a year.

The State-level scholarship provides major assistance for higher education students, rewarding them for achieving outstanding academic performance, diligence and good moral qualities.

The new policy will also double the number of such scholarships to postgraduate students from 45,000 to 90,000 from this year, among whom 70,000 will be master's degree candidates and 20,000 doctoral students.

Meanwhile, China will also channel more funds to assist students with financial difficulties. They will receive 3,700 yuan of State-level financial aid on average from this semester, with some receiving as much as 5,000 yuan. Previously, the financial aid offered was 3,300 yuan per year.

Beginning in the spring semester next year, aid will also be extended to students from regular senior high schools facing financial difficulties. On average, they will receive 2,300 yuan, while the neediest can receive up to 3,500 yuan per year in accordance with local practices. Previously, senior high students received 2,000 yuan in such aid annually.

The nation will expand the coverage of its financial aid to more vocational high school students and raise the amount from 2,000 yuan per year to 2,300 yuan starting next spring. Vocational high school students who are in their third year and having financial difficulties are included in the new policy.

Guo Tingting, vice-minister of finance, said at a recent news conference that China has established an all-around financial support system for students to give them security and make it easier for them to access higher education.

According to the finance ministry, the nation channeled 93.2 billion yuan in scholarships and aid to students last year, with over 31 million higher education students benefitting.

China to advance doctoral programs in science, engineering, agriculture, medicine

Source: Xinhua

October 21, 2024

http://en.moe.gov.cn/news/media_highlights/202410/t20241021_1158618.html

BEIJING, Oct. 20 -- China has announced plans to strengthen its development of doctoral programs in the science, engineering, agriculture and medical science disciplines.

The development of doctoral programs in basic and emerging disciplines and in interdisciplinary fields will also be boosted, according to a set of guidelines on deepening the comprehensive reform of doctoral education that were recently unveiled by the general offices of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council.

The proportion of professional doctoral programs should be increased, the guidelines also say.

They also pledge efforts to accelerate the construction of disciplines related to key fields, step up the integration of various disciplines, and explore new paths for international exchange and cooperation.

Last month, the Ministry of Education announced that top overseas universities -- especially those focused on science and engineering -- are encouraged to operate joint education programs with their counterparts in China.

The ministry said that the country plans to support top universities in expanding their education capacities, and to establish several advanced research universities.

Nation builds strength in education

http://en.moe.gov.cn/news/media_highlights/202410/t20241025_1159250.html

Source: chinadaily.com.cn

October 25, 2024

China issued a landmark document in late August signaling its intention to build a high-quality teaching workforce to further support the country's educational advancement.

The guideline on promoting the spirit of educators and strengthening the construction of a high-quality professional teaching force in the new era was issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, China's Cabinet.

Wang Jiayi, vice-minister of education, said the development of teachers in China is crucial as the country goes from being an educational powerhouse to becoming a global leader in education.

There are 18.92 million educators across various levels in China, supporting the largest education system in the world. "A strong nation must have a strong education system, which starts with strong teachers," Wang said.

Over the next three to five years, China aims for significant progress in establishing a professional teaching force, including improvements in teachers' moral standards, professionalism and dedication to education, the guideline said.

By 2035, the spirit of educators will become a conscious pursuit of the teaching community, and the governance system for teachers will be modernized, it added.

Digital tools will play a key role in empowering teacher development, and teaching will become one of the most respected and desirable professions in the country, Wang said.

The policy prioritizes ethical standards and encourages teachers to practice self-discipline, stressing a "zero tolerance" approach to violations of codes of ethics.

Efforts will be made to improve teachers' professional skills, academic capabilities, and overall ability to educate and inspire students. The policy also calls for better management and allocation of teacher resources to support the growth of educational leaders.

Comprehensive measures have been taken to protect teachers' legal rights, improve their working conditions and ensure that they are well rewarded for their contributions to society, Wang said.

Several initiatives are underway to attract top talent into the teaching profession such as tuition-free teacher education, targeted teacher training programs and partnerships with high-level universities.

Since 2007, China has offered free education for students in teacher-training programs at six major universities, including Beijing Normal University and East Normal University in Shanghai. These students are exempt from tuition and accommodation fees and receive living allowances.

In 2018, the initiative transitioned to publicly funded education, reducing the required service period after graduation from 10 years to six years, benefiting 167,000 students, Wang said.

The outstanding teacher training program, launched in 2021, focuses on preparing undergraduate teachers for less-developed areas, including former poverty-stricken counties and border regions. In the past four years, 45,000 students have been enrolled in this program, improving the overall quality of teaching in these regions, he added.

Last year, the national excellence program began to support 30 elite universities, including top institutions such as Peking University, Tsinghua University in Beijing and Fudan University in Shanghai, in training graduate-level teachers for primary and secondary schools.

All of the 1,600 teachers recruited from 6,300 applicants were master's or doctoral graduates, and most of them studied either science, technology, engineering or math subjects.

The program included 13 additional universities this year, including two in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Wang said.

"By continuing to expand these initiatives, China aims to cultivate more outstanding teachers who will contribute to the country's educational goals, fostering a well-rounded teaching force with strong educational backgrounds and deep professional commitment," he added.

Yu Weiyue, director of the ministry's department of teacher education, said strengthening training for teachers in basic education and enhancing their overall teaching abilities are key tasks in building China into a global leader in education.

There are 16.84 million primary and secondary school teachers in China, accounting for 89 percent of the country's total teaching staff.

Recently, the ministry has implemented several measures aimed at improving the professional development of teachers in basic education.

To meet the needs of teachers at different stages of their professional growth, China has established a national training system requiring all primary and secondary school teachers to complete 360 hours of training every five years.

The system is supported by a collaborative network involving universities, municipal and county teacher development institutions, excellent schools and professional training organizations, Yu said.

He added that programs such as the national teacher training plan have created models to guide local innovations in training methods and management.

A special focus in teacher training has been given to subjects such as arts, physical education and mental health education.

"In addition, leading teachers and school principals have been sent to countries such as Singapore and Finland for advanced training," Yu said.

The ministry launched the "teacher development" section of the National Smart Education Platform in 2022 to provide online teacher training. To date, teacher trainings on the platform have been completed 61 million times, and 225 online workshops taught by top teachers and principals have been established, benefiting nearly 100,000 educators.

Pilot projects have also been launched in 103 schools to explore how artificial intelligence and other new technologies can enhance teacher development, he said.

Teacher training efforts have prioritized teachers in underdeveloped regions, including the central and western regions and rural schools, Yu highlighted.

Partnerships between high-level normal (teaching) universities and weaker teacher training institutions in these regions have improved local teacher training quality, he said.

The special post program has helped 22 provinces in the central and western regions recruit 1.15 million teachers for over 30,000 rural schools. A total of 243,000 teachers have been sent to teach in rural and underdeveloped regions under multiple projects.

The government has offered living allowances for rural teachers, benefiting around 1.3 million educators across 22 provinces. The average monthly allowance per teacher is around 400 yuan (\$56.3).

Additionally, over 281 billion yuan has been invested in building 637,000 housing units for rural teachers, benefiting over 871,000 individuals.

"This year, we will continue to support young rural teachers by improving their working conditions and increasing the annual subsidy for teachers under the special post program by 3,600 yuan per person," Yu said.

In recent years, teachers have been burdened with noneducational tasks, disrupting their focus on teaching. To address the problem, the ministry launched a special campaign to restrict noneducational activities from entering schools.

Local authorities are encouraged to review and set entry standards to distinguish between school-related activities and those unrelated to education. Activities that disrupt normal teaching, promote negative values, or contain commercial content are strictly prohibited from entering schools.

Each province has published a white list of approved activities, and schools are suggested to integrate these activities with curriculum-related teaching and school culture-building to ensure that such events are of high quality, Yu said.

Zhang Zhiyong, a professor at Beijing Normal University, said building a high-quality teaching workforce requires addressing questions in response to the decline in China's school-age population and the trend of urban population shifts.

"We need to consider questions including how to build a teaching workforce that meets the needs of personalized education, and how to construct a team that supports the comprehensive development of students," Zhang said.

To improve the qualifications of educators, more professional teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees are needed, he added.