

Abroad Perspective - Regulating China's international education industry

Higher-Edge, in its travels throughout China, has encountered considerable policy differences, which naturally reflect the latitude granted to provincial jurisdiction in the field of international education initiatives. Recognizing that there are some shortcomings that go along with decentralization, Beijing's Ministry of Education (MOE) announced this month that it has plans to set up an Office of Quality Assurance and Assessment to regulate all aspects of the international education market in China, including examinations and agencies. Currently in China, there are 712 joint education institutions, 270 official agencies as approved by the MOE, and 52 schools for foreign nationals. The main difficulty seems to lie in the breadth of enforcement and the lack of uniformity in policies.

Among suggestions for standardization are setting rules of conduct for the agent industry, and more stringently requiring that agents obtain an official permit before consulting students. The Office also intends to create a website with guidelines for overseas schools intending to set up partnerships with Chinese counterparts.

Source: <http://news.eastday.com/epublish/gb/paper148/20030214/class014800014/hwz883480.htm> (in Chinese)

For more information on "Insight, On-site: China", Higher-Edge's new publication dedicated to breaking issues in the China education market, visit <http://www.higher-edge.com/io.htm> •

The Playing Field - Ongoing campaigns of the IBO

Higher-Edge learned this week that the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), in keeping with its broader mandate of acting as intermediary between schools and government, has been consulting with various state governments in an effort to more smoothly integrate IBO's programmes with existing state curricula.

Bob Poole, Director of the IBO Vancouver office (an extension of the New York office operations), reports that the organization has negotiated for waivers in order that IB students are exempt from completing certain state-required courses. Mr. Poole indicates that "it is not that learning outcomes are not expected, but they get the information in other ways."

Mr. Poole also revealed that western states, namely Colorado and California, are experiencing the largest growth in number of schools participating in the IBO's programmes. For more information, visit <http://www.ibo.org> •

Please direct questions and comments to editor@higher-edge.com

Over The Counter - "Rogue" Japanese school in New Zealand

A recent incident in which a Japanese student was murdered by fellow classmates at a private training institution in West Harbour, New Zealand, has brought unwanted attention to Columbus Academy, and to the Ministry of Education's (MOE) failure to register and monitor the nation's private training institutions.

Education Minister Trevor Mallard revealed that the Japanese-owned school is not officially registered with the MOE, and that none of the Academy's students were in possession of valid immigration visas. Some students, however, did have student visas for admission in other registered New Zealand schools. It is not clear whether the students involved in the incident were registered at all to study in New Zealand.

Education New Zealand, a not-for-profit organization that works on behalf of government, private and public sectors of education to promote New Zealand as a destination for international students, conferred with Higher-Edge this week on the matter. CEO Lester Taylor commented that Japan is the greatest source of students for the country's English language programs and the incident will have "no effect at all" on the market. When asked how this school could go unnoticed by the MOE, Mr. Taylor indicated that Columbus Academy does not fall into the regularly defined categories of "academic institution" in New Zealand and is therefore an isolated case.

Source: <http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?thesection=news&thesubsection=&storyID=3198254> •

Globe Tipping - Taxis and more, in Dhaka

Sadia Humayun, our Assistant Manager in Dhaka, reports that while the city offers a dearth of public transportation modes, the taxi still remains the most convenient. It is also cheap, as a ride from Zia International Airport into the city centre will cost approximately 100 TK (Bangladeshi Taka), or about \$2 USD. Drivers, however, generally have limited abilities in English so one is advised to be armed with some basic Bengali phrases, as well as instructions on where you are headed.

For the more adventurous, the city's auto rickshaws, or tempos, have recently been installed with metering systems. •

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