

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Mount Airy City Schools delegation comprised of board members and school leaders returned from China this week. The purpose of the trip was to learn about Chinese education and culture and to develop partnerships to create dynamic learning experiences for our students and staff. Thanks to generous funding by Hanban, in collaboration with the College Board, MACS was able to take advantage of this incredible opportunity and establish innovative partnerships that will have a tremendous impact on our school community.

As a result of the trip, MACS established a sister school partnership with a school from the Jiangsu province and collaborated with Chinese and American educators to create exchange opportunities for both our students and staff that will allow them to experience China firsthand.

In the fall of 2014, Mandarin Chinese was added to Mount Airy High School's course offerings. Mandarin Chinese was chosen as a language offering for students because it is the number one business critical language. Learning a critical language:

- Equips students to choose their future and experience success.
- Allows students to become global leaders who are culturally aware.
- Empowers students with the tools necessary to be able to innovatively solve problems.
- Highlights the district's commitment to innovative leadership and teaching that leads to high academic achievement for students.
- Bridges the gap to turn students' goals and dreams into reality.

Business Week notes, "China will inevitably be a major economic, political, and cultural force in our children's future. We should prepare our students to engage, collaborate, and compete with their Chinese peers." Mount Airy City Schools is at the forefront of preparing our students to be globally competitive. In conjunction with STEAM, students who know multiple languages are able to communicate effectively with the world as well as work in multicultural teams. The addition of a business critical language, will greatly increase a student's career potential in any field.

Dr. Little states, "I am so excited about the possibilities this trip has created for our students and staff. The combination of STEAM along with the partnerships and relationships this trip has created lays the foundation for a very bright future for our district. I am grateful that Hanban provided such significant funding that made the trip possible. Their support will impact our students and staff for many years to come."

"Being a part of the delegation provided a life changing experience for me. Understanding education around the world shows me that we all care about students and their future. Partnerships in China will allow our teachers and students to realize the world is open to them and they can realize their dreams no matter where they live," Dr. Morrison added.

"The opportunity to travel to China and experience the Chinese culture, visit their schools, and share information with their educators was amazing. Seeing that their students are as hard working and spirited as our students, proves that while we were thousands of miles away from each other, we are very much the same. We share the same passion for education as they do, and partnering with them will strengthen the educational experience for all of our students and communities." - Wendy Carriker