

Confucius Institute at Troy University Promoting Confucius Classrooms in State of Alabama

Directors of Confucius Institute at Troy University (CIT) visited some schools which applied for Confucius Classrooms. CIT invited schools to propose how the funding could make a strong and sustainable impact to a new or existing Chinese program in their school. CIT received several proposals from about 12 different schools. The team of CIT crossed the state of Alabama to look within their communities and determine whether or not Confucius Classrooms programs would be a good fit. They had a conversation with the principals of the schools. The principals illustrated and explained Chinese language teaching long term and short term plan. CIT encourages programs to think about sustainability and how they would grow these programs over a five-year period; CIT will work with these schools to develop different criteria for evaluation; keeping track of student numbers, teacher development programs, community engagement, cultural events, etc... Dr. Iris Xu, the director gives a rough guide to schools thinking about starting a Chinese program or existing Chinese program in their school and includes information about proficiency levels, setting program curricula and expectations, and other issues to consider.

The first place they have visited was Altamont School where they met the principal of the school Mrs. Sarah W. Whiteside and the Chinese language teacher, Ms. Ying Fang a volunteer teacher was sent by Hanban two years ago. They had a wonderful conversation about Confucius Classroom. In Altamont School, with existing Chinese programs to enhance their curriculum through the addition of arts, culture, technology, and more Chinese language classes are awarded in different levels from Grade 8-12. With Chinese teacher and Chinese teaching classroom, Mrs. Whiteside attaches great importance to the teaching of Chinese language. She also showed great interest in the program of constructing Confucius classroom.

On Feb. 20, 2010, the team of CIT went to Highlands School in Birmingham and met with the principal of the school Mrs. Bar and the Chinese language teacher, Ms. Zhuo Han a volunteer teacher was sent by 2009, there to push the construction of a Confucius classroom. The team of CIT tries to find out how things are going, what kinds of support they need, and to discuss the growth and sustainability of each program.

On Feb. 23, 2010, CIT team visited Union Springs Elementary School to visit and also explore the possibility to build Confucius classroom. Dr. Iris Xu, the director of CIT had a conversation with the principal of the schools about Confucius classroom.

According to different needs for Chinese language in the state of Alabama, CIT introduced the program of Confucius classroom to principals of schools or Chinese language teachers. The program of this year's summer camp is also advertised. This laid a good foundation for the construction of Confucius Classroom and for the promotion of Troy University as well as CIT, Chinese language and Chinese culture.