



THIS ISSUE

- P.1** Comments on Outline Planning of China's Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)
- P.2** Charles and Richard's Participation
- P.2** What can alumni do as we're building "an engineering school second to none?"
- P.3** Community, a way of life
- P.4** Some Tips from Experts
- P.5** A-level, AP or IB

Comments on Outline Planning of China's Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)

By Kent Zhan Xu

A significant event in China's education history came into play in early 2010 when Chinese Prime Minister Mr. Wen Jiabao hosted five meetings at National State, listening to various representatives from education system like school principals, experts of institutes, students of different grades, professors from universities, parents of students from rural areas, and teachers from kindergartens. Not long after that, the Outline Planning of China's Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) was issued for public review and comments from February 28th to March 28th, 2010.

This document is supposed to be the guideline for China's education reform and development in the next ten years. It covers all the important aspects around education which is recognized by the country as the strategic position that Chinese government could never afford to lose. Definitely, when implementation schedules and detailed policies come into stage, China's education system will move into a new era.

As a reflection, my few comments on this outline and its impact in future are:

1. Education reform in middle or high school is difficult to move ahead if the National College Entrance Examination system does not change in a way align with the reform

Every revolution has its driver and motivation. If high school education reform, targeting at enhancing students' creativity and developing multiple-talent, has little impact on his/her college admission competition, schools and students will never really embrace this change. Looking at college admission practice in the US, it is not that difficult for China to simulate. First, standardize National College Entrance Examination, like SAT, SAT II and offer students few times a year. Second, each college has its right and requirement on admission, but they are all based on two criteria, one is standard test scores, such as SAT, SAT II, or GPA; The other is his/her personal qualities including talent, exceptional achievement in his/her extracurricular activities.

Full score students could be rejected if s/he is poor at personal quality. It all set then! The biggest worry here is the reality of corruption in China. Comparing with USA, China is ranked a way lower in terms corruption level and academic integrity.

2. Other than improving National College Entrance Examination system, a more difficult mission is how to turn around China's education system from a knowledge delivery machine into an incubator nurturing creative mind, talent, curiosity and providing fertile for high personal quality development

To change an admission system is much easier than changing the whole education system. As college examination plays a unique and critical role in the whole education system, it will be wise to start from this point. To change the whole education system, huge efforts are required from redefining ideology, methodology, training existing teachers, investing on new facilities and equipment, and recruiting professionals into teachers' pool. That will take tons of money and many years of development.

3. Education as a system, or in general as a life long experience, could never go alone without ideology or humanities as fundamental pursuit.

Many well accepted western education concepts and methodologies are rooted in their culture and values on humanities which are very difficult for China to fully accept in a short term. Ignoring this difference may lead our planning aiming at taking some best practice from western education, like all around talent developing education at high school, to a dead end. You will find out China as a society takes quite different ways of evaluating what you believed or learnt from western standardized system at high school. The bottom line is an ideally trained high school graduate, like our education reform expects, might find s/he is difficult to compete with a students trained by existing education system in our society.

Charles, Richard's Participation as Advisors

Charles Zhang

Charles Zhang is a Partner at DT Capital Partners. Prior to joining DT Capital, Charles worked in Goldman Sachs, Investment Banking Division. He has gained abundant experience, and he had worked as key team member for many investment, M&A and IPO projects. Prior to that, Charles was the senior manager in HuaWei Technologies in U.S office to open the overseas market. And also Charles worked in the Alcatel as product manager. The working experience at home and aboard gives him the double advantage of internationalization and localization.

Charles studied in MIT Sloan Business School and received MBA degree. He also holds the B.S and M.S from Harbin Institute Technology.



Richard Yang

Mr. Richard Yang was most recently a Associate Director at Starr International, a \$ 2 billion private equity firm (owned by Mr. Greenberg) focused on China investments, and successfully close a US\$ 70M clena energy investment project. Prior to Starr, Mr. Yang was a Vice President of the Hina Group based in Shanghai, mainly involved in cross-border M&A. Before joining the Hina Group, Mr. Yang was a Corporate Business Development Manager at Advanced Micro Devices ("AMD") ,where he helped the company to pursue opportunities in technology transfer commercialization, strategic investments, and alliances. Prior to AMD, Mr. Yang Co-founded and managed SEACOMES Technologies, a pioneering media streaming company, and led fundraising, strategy, business development activities.

Prior to graduate school, Mr. Yang worked for Huawei Technologies, China's leading Telecommunication Equipment Vendor, as Senior Vice President Assistant, and successfully implemented several strategic asset restructuring initiatives, such as the spin-off of Avansys Technologies to Emerson Electric at US\$750 million, draft of Huawei's break-through phantom stock option plan, and world-wide JV establishment (sales platform).

Mr. Yang earned his MA in Economics from the University of International Business and Economics ("UIBE") and MBA from the Harvard Business School. Mr. Yang is a native speaker of Mandarin Chinese and fluent in English, with conversant Japanese..



What can alumni do as we're building "an engineering school second to none?"

—Thoughts after the encounter with the new Columbia Engineering School Dean Mora

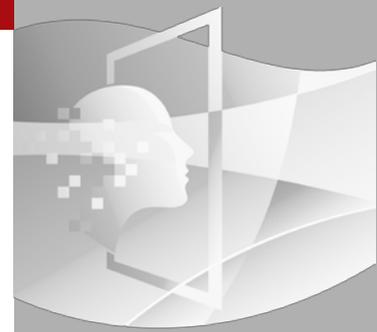
By Yiting Shen

I had the pleasure of meeting Dean Feniosky Peña-Mora during his 1st visit in London hosted by local alumni. It was a rather small get-together so we had quite close dialogues on current development of the school and his vision.

As the winner of numerous awards, Dean Mora's research interests include information technology support for collaboration in preparedness, response and recovery during disasters involving critical physical infrastructures. He is also involved in change management, conflict resolution, and processes integration during the design and development of large-scale civil engineering systems. His research has been groundbreaking in the field of construction engineering and management.

Dean Mora is the leader that we're looking for. As he was giving the speech to us, I had some trouble understanding him with a heavy accent. However, his voice and the subject matter attracted me very quickly. "We're going to building an engineering school second to none." He sharply talked about the comparison amongst different schools, drawing vivid examples, and the likes and dislikes. You can tell that he has the passion for building a world-class engineering school for Columbia. I feel so fortunate to have such a leader at school. Being an alumna outside of the country, what can we do to contribute?

Being nurtured by my mentor since college years, I was invited to various alumni events, from informal lunches and dinners, faculty house special talks, to black-tie award dinners at the Low Library. The influence of the alumni group and the commitment to giving back to school grew day by day. I was heavily involved in the Asian Columbia Alumni



KENT CONSULTANCY GROUP

- A global consulting firm, headquarter in Hong Kong with offices in Shenzhen, Beijing, Shanghai, New York, and London
- Professional team with education background of Ivy schools and Cambridge, Oxford of UK
- Certified MBTI provider, one of the best psychological testing tools in the world
- In-house proprietary professional database on top tier university, high school, occupation in the world
- Strategic partnerships with the US and UK schools, communities and service providers

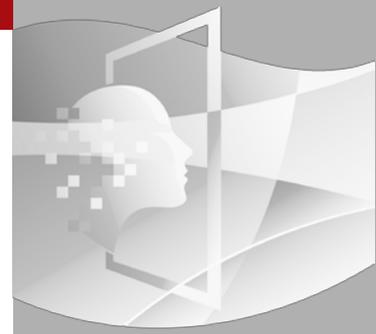
KCG CONTACT INFO

Addr: 1507, Eastern Block
Coastal Building
Third Haide Road
Nanshan District, Shenzhen
Guangdong, 518054
China

Tel: 755 86270330

Fax: 755 86270377

Web: www.kentcg.com



Association during the years when I worked in New York. Upon moving to London, I quickly immersed myself into the Columbia Club of London, organizing the CEO and COO programs in the last two and half years.

CEO is the Columbia Experience Overseas program, a combination of gaining full time work experience over the summer in an international location, immersing the students in new, exciting experiences, connecting with Columbia alumni, networking with professionals and learning about career opportunities. I led the organization of the London activities, i.e. setting up the receptions to welcome the students and being an active mentors taking students out for museums and dinners. It's been a fun time connecting students learning the latest development on campus. I feel young again.

Founded in 1997, Columbia Community Outreach (CCO) is a community service initiative that seeks to bring together the Columbia University community and raise awareness for volunteerism. In the past three years, I organised CCOs in London with various organisations to make our contribution to the local communities. The organisations that I led teams to volunteer with are Camley Natural Park, British Red Cross, and Coppetts Wood Natural Reserve. All of us are committed to continue this long tradition to raise awareness for volunteerism and to form mutually beneficial relationships with the local communities. We want to make our Columbia lion spirit shine in this part of the world!

Community, a way of life

—Joy of working with the MIT alumni group

By Yiting Shen

“We are changing the world. Join us.” MIT is such a unique place that we pour our heart and soul into it. Both founders of KCG are graduates from MIT. We have deep feelings for and involvement with this community whether in Boston, China or around the world. I thought to take this opportunity to share some of my volunteer work with the London alumni community.

A secretary

Upon arriving in London two and half years ago, my first thought is to get involved in the local alumni community. I started by doing small things and quickly got voted to look after the membership for the MIT Club of Great Britain. From answering alumni requests to collecting membership dues, I found it rewarding to be able to help the alumni. Although the admin stuff might not sound exciting and does take up quite some time, the fun part comes when I meet alums at our monthly socials. Talking with alums and sharing their life journey, laughs and cries, are part of my life. Their feedback guides my service direction. A few requested more free communication amongst business school alums. Thus, I set up a Google Group for the subgroup to share their opinions, opportunities and activities. This is where my value addition is: a little screw working in the big machine.

A listener

As I do more membership work, many alumni get to know my name and look upon me for advice, especially the new comers and the ones seek support. Naturally I was considered the sounding board and resource pool. Coffee sessions become a regular exercise. It is an enjoyable thing for me to listen to alums sharing their concerns as well as happiness. Sometimes I feel as if I live in their world. Initially, I had the tendency of pooling all my resources together and help to my best. Gradually I discover that sometime the help can be overwhelming, and what they need is not the advice, rather someone just be there, for them, and listen to them. Many “thank you” notes come to my way. When I am down, they remind me how important my role is in the community.

A maven

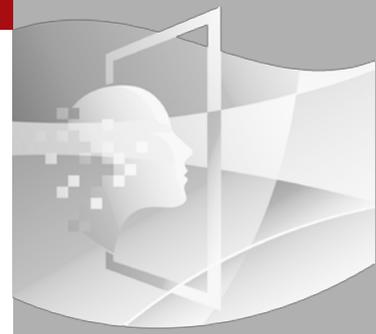
The concept of Maven came from Gladwell's book, Tipping Point. A Maven is the source of information, and more importantly someone who wants to solve others' problems by solving his own and vice versa. I consider myself a Maven for the alumni community here. I solve my own problems – my own emotional needs - by solving other people's problems. Emotion goes not only inside-out (I feel happy so I smile) but also outside-in (If I can make you smile, I can make you happy). As a maven, I feel having an enormous amount of influence over others- because I am emotionally contagious. Tying with many groups, I translate ideas and information from a highly specialized world into a language the rest of others can understand.

OUR GOALS

- As an independent consultant / advisor to your school
- Assist schools to counsel and advise students
- Focus on career development and university / program selection
- Help raise brand image of your school
- Employ MBTI psychological testing tool, KCG comprehensive database system, search engine and team of top experts
- Provide personalized career counseling and school / subject selection services

KCG CONTACT INFO

Addr: 1507, Eastern Block
Coastal Building
Third Haide Road
Nanshan District, Shenzhen
Guangdong, 518054
China
Tel: 755 86270330
Fax: 755 86270377
Web: www.kentcg.com



A junior family member

My heart got squeezed when I hear bad news happening from the alums. It is a feeling belongs to family members. Since I left my parents in China more than 13 years ago, I treat schoolmates and alums my 2nd family. I resonate what alums talk with me and I feel reciprocal. Being a family member means that I do things for them without asking for any returns and I do my best. Acting as an Education Counselor, I interview candidates for MIT undergrads and make efforts to convince them to choose MIT once they get accepted. I couldn't tell you how happy I felt when a new admitted student said that "I've made my mind that it is MIT (against Stanford and Oxford). I feel home." At the same time, I seek deep understanding of our alums, find compassion, the desire and ability to ease their concerns, feel joyful, and give freedom and inspiration.

Gandhi said, 'be the change of the world you want to be.' Come join us.

Some Tips from Experts

By Joyce Fu

How can a professional educational consultant help your family?

A professional educational consultant works one-on-one with each student, helping to identify colleges and universities that offer the best matches for the student's unique needs, and keeping the student on track through every phase of the college application process.

A professional educational consultant can help your family with:

- **High School curriculum planning.** A consultant can help students make smart choices about their high school courses so that they stay on track for college admissions.
- **College admissions profile assessment.** Although no consultant can guarantee admission to any individual college, a consultant can help your child identify their strengths as an applicant.
- **College selection.** A consultant can assist your child in finding the colleges and universities which best match their interests, personality, needs and admissions profile.
- **College entrance exams.** A professional consultant can answer questions about which college entrance exams are most appropriate for your child and when to schedule testing. Some consultants also provide assistance with test preparation.
- **College applications and essays.** A consultant works with each student to establish a realistic schedule for staying on top of application details and deadlines. Consultants may also review application elements, including essays.
- **Majors and Careers.** Students often benefit from guidance in choosing majors and careers that are a good fit, as well as information about which colleges offer strong programs in areas of interest.
- **Financial Aid.** Many families worry about how to pay for college expenses. A consultant can help your family navigate these concerns, while pointing your family in the direction of financial aid and merit scholarship opportunities.
- **Help from a non-biased third party.** You and your child can focus on enjoying this time together, rather than arguing about completing college applications

How to Find the right college Match?

With over 2,500 colleges and universities in the US and UK, deciding which colleges might be the right match can be a daunting task. Here are some tips from our senior educational consultants to help you with your college search:

Finding the perfect college match does not mean that there is only one school for you. There are several schools that are a good match for every prospective student. Think beyond looking for the one ideal place and expand your horizon and expectation. You will be pleasantly surprised at the choices that you will discover.

If you have a particular goal for your studies, and want to study a subject in depth, check out UK universities. Costs for US students are close to in-state tuition, and US citizens still qualify for the standard loans available for a US college. Many universities have courses with world ranked reputations and personalized teaching; classes are relatively small and often include tutorials. Hitches? The student really must know what he wants to learn because study at college level is very specialized. Also, students must be mature enough to learn in a style that requires independence and organization.

KCG SERVICE OFFERING

Module 1 MBTI

Industry / Career

Module 2 Tutor

Summer Camp / Summer School

Module 3 University Choice / Application

Module 4 University Stay

Summer Internship / Job Hunting / Graduate Study

KCG CONTACT INFO

Addr: 1507, Eastern Block

Coastal Building

Third Haide Road

Nanshan District, Shenzhen

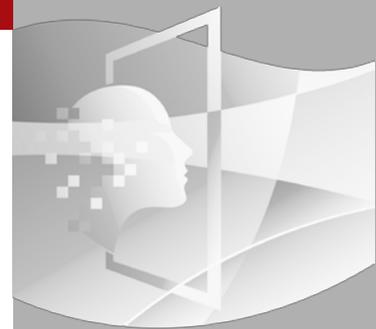
Guangdong, 518054

China

Tel: 755 86270330

Fax: 755 86270377

Web: www.kentcg.com



Above all, be honest about who you are. It's like dating. Someone will value you for who you are, so be yourself. Only apply to colleges that you would love to attend. It is okay to reach, but have several schools on your list that are likely to accept you and a "safety" or two so you and your parents may sleep at night. Choose a balanced list of attractive schools that will value you for who you are and what you have accomplished.

The secret to getting into the right college is really quite simple: Believe in yourself; study and get involved in your school and community; follow your passion, and commit the necessary time and effort into putting together application materials that honestly reflect who you are.

How to make your final college choice

Deciding where to attend college can feel monumental. Good decisions are based on both head and heart, so check in with each before signing on the dotted line. Think back to the beginning of your search. What were you looking for in a college? Consider how well each of your options meets your "shopping list" of college characteristics. This is the "head" part. Now, look into your heart. Imagine yourself at each school. Which option feels most right? If you balance "should" with "wants" your decision will be a good one!

It's easy to look at college rankings to determine which is the 'best' school you got into, but finding the right fit is critical. You need to feel comfortable in your surroundings. Try not to over-think it. What is important to you: class size, demographics, location, even quality of food and leisure life may rank as highly important on your personal list. It sounds so simple, but a gut instinct is often the best choice because you know your own comfort level best...trust it!

Even if you visited colleges before applying, it's worth another visit before making your final decision. You see a school differently after you've been admitted. It's more real. You notice different things as you walk across the campus and think about whether this is where you want to be next year. The question is whether to attend a college's special program for admitted students or go on a regular school day. The special program can be fun, and you get to meet prospective classmates, and learn about programs and clubs. The advantage of going on a regular school day is you get to see what it would be like to be a student at the school, especially if you can arrange to sit in on classes, and stay overnight in a dorm.

Try to visit or re-visit your top two to four schools. Remember, you've changed a lot in the past year. Think about: How do I feel on this campus? Are these kids I'd want to be my friends? Do students make eye contact? Do they smile at each other? Do they greet each other as they pass, even though they may not know everyone? Or, do I want more anonymity? Remember, this decision is not totally objective. Your emotions are involved - and should be - because how you feel in a place where you'll spend four important years is crucial!

If you've been admitted to several colleges you really like and can't decide which one to choose, know that there is no right choice. You can be happy at any of them. Once you make your decision, you will invest emotionally in that school, and it becomes the right choice.

A-level, AP or IB

By Minghui Xu

Introduction

Education is the core of today's students' lives. In China, Numerous Students are Planning to Study Abroad. Those aspiring students want to take up a challenging course to put themselves in favorable positions when applying to outstanding universities and succeed in their lives. Hence, Every year there are thousands and thousands of students who strive to take up an A-level, an Advance Placement and an International Baccalaureate course. Yet, many students are unfamiliar with these courses. Thus, It is time we explore the truth of A-level, AP and IB.

Brief Description of the 3 courses

A-level The Advanced Level General Certificate of Education, universally referred to as an A-level, is a qualification offered by education institutions in England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. A levels are usually studied over a two year period and are widely recognized around the world, as well as being the standard entry qualification for assessing the suitability of applicants for academic courses in UK Universities¹. In other words, A-level is the open sesame of being enrolled by universities in the English speaking countries. A-level offers more than 60 subjects for students to choose, including English language, literature, Math, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, History, Geography, Economics, Fashion and design, etc².

KENT CONSULTANCY GROUP

- A global consulting firm, headquarter in Hong Kong with offices in Shenzhen, Beijing, Shanghai, New York, and London
- Professional team with education background of Ivy schools and Cambridge, Oxford of UK
- Certified MBTI provider, one of the best psychological testing tools in the world
- In-house proprietary professional database on top tier university, high school, occupation in the world
- Strategic partnerships with the US and UK schools, communities and service providers

KCG CONTACT INFO

Addr: 1507, Eastern Block

Coastal Building

Third Haide Road

Nanshan District, Shenzhen

Guangdong, 518054

China

Tel: 755 86270330

Fax: 755 86270377

Web: www.kentcg.com



AP The Advanced Placement program offers college level courses at high schools across the United States and Canada. According to the Good Schools Guide International, it is "usually much more rigorous than the general course offerings.

According to the college board, AP has 37 courses and exams across 22 subject areas, including Calculus, Physics, Chemistry, Economics, Computer, English writing, Literature, Environmental Science, American politics and Government, American history, European history, Foreign languages, etc³.

IB The International Baccalaureate, formerly the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), is an international educational foundation headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. Founded in 1968 in Geneva, The IB Diploma Programme is designed as an academically challenging and balanced programme of education with final examinations that prepares students, normally aged 16 to 19, for success at university and life beyond⁴. Students who pursue the IB Diploma must take six subjects, one from each of subject groups 1–5, and either one from group 6 or a permitted substitute from one of the other groups, as described below. Either three or four subjects must be taken at Higher level (HL) and the rest at Standard level (SL)⁵.

Comparison between the 3 courses

1.Level of difficulty A-level course are comparatively easier for Chinese students. A-level courses just emphasize the study of the subjects, students only have to finish three or four course within two years period, it's parallel to the education system in China, hence, it's easier for Chinese students to get used to it. In addition, there are a lot of similarities between A-level and SAT II courses, Taking the A-level courses can also help students pass the SAT II examinations. As for IB, students need to take more subjects, IB emphasize on developing the overall quality of the students, that's why a number of Chinese students feel the heavy study burden and hard to deal with the high pressure. It takes them a long time to adapt. In terms of AP courses, since the courses are at the university levels, there's no doubt that high school students feel they are difficult.

2.Credits awarded Both AP and IB credits give students strong and challenging course work and show university admissions offices that the student is taking the hardest classes available. If the student's university is willing to award credit for courses taken, it can represent a significant savings on tuition fees and time. On the contrary, A-level credits are not transferable and awarded into university credits. The reason is that A-level is regarded as fundamental courses while the rest two are considered as advanced courses. That's the most distinct advantage of AP and IB over A-level courses.

3.Acceptance of admission Various universities at international levels accept the International Baccalaureate while AP courses are primarily accepted by universities within the United States and Canada though some universities in Britain and other countries began to accept AP as well. On the other hand, A-level is primarily accepted by universities within Britain. In other words, A-level is just like SAT in Britain. That is if students are trying to apply universities in US and Canada, A-level wouldn't help much. The other difference is that A-level and SAT are required for entrance to universities while AP and IB are not mandatory, that is, a student can not be admitted only with AP, or IB, he or she must possess SAT or A-level score or other equivalent score as well⁶.

4.Assessment and extracurricular activity A-level and Advanced Placement only offer external assessment exams, while internal assessment is considered important by Internal Baccalaureate courses. International Baccalaureate programs coach students to be an all rounder, as it opens up avenues to take up The (EE) extended essay(TOK)(Theory of knowledge and CAS(Creativity, action, service) courses⁷. That is another evident difference.

5.Who can sit the exams Any student may take an AP exam or A-level exam; specific courses are taught but are not a prerequisite for the exams; IB students may take AP exams or A-level exam. In contrary, Only IB students enrolled in the IB program may take IB exams or receive IB credit⁸.

References

1. Wikipedia. (2010) GCE Advanced Level: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alevel.
2. The Student Room. (2010) : www.thestudentroom.co.uk.
3. Wikipedia. (2010) Advanced Placement: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advanced_Placement_Program.
4. Wikipedia. (2010) International Baccalaureate: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Baccalaureate.
5. International Baccalaureate Organization. (2010) : www.ibo.org.
6. Journal of Overseas Students, August 2009
7. The IB Programme at NWSS. (2010) : www.sd40.bc.ca/nwss-ib/tok.html.
8. Differences between IB and AP. Available from:
www.minnetonka.k12.mn.us/academics/ib/Pages/DifferencesbetweenIBandAP.aspx.

KENT CONSULTANCY GROUP

- A global consulting firm, headquarter in Hong Kong with offices in Shenzhen, Beijing, Shanghai, New York, and London
- Professional team with education background of Ivy schools and Cambridge, Oxford of UK
- Certified MBTI provider, one of the best psychological testing tools in the world
- In-house proprietary professional database on top tier university, high school, occupation in the world
- Strategic partnerships with the US and UK schools, communities and service providers

KCG CONTACT INFO

Addr: 1507, Eastern Block

Coastal Building

Third Haide Road

Nanshan District, Shenzhen

Guangdong, 518054

China

Tel: 755 86270330

Fax: 755 86270377

Web: www.kentcg.com