

China Institute chose the WSWHE BOCES to participate in our 2009 Rural Study Tour through China (April 9-19) in recognition of the wonderful work the various school districts have demonstrated in providing ever increasing opportunities for students to study Chinese language, culture, history, and society. At China Institute, we believe there is no more important international relationship shaping American students' futures than that between the United States and China. With that in mind, and since our Spring tour theme was to look at issues affecting China's rural education system, we thought it would only be a natural fit to extend an invitation to school districts in Upstate New York to see what similarities (and what differences) exist that are shaping the lives of American and Chinese youths and their education system.

Globalization is not only a force affecting New York City youths or Beijingers and Shanghainese -- it is equally shaping the futures of children in the Adirondack region and the mountain towns of Sichuan which participate in the economic and cultural nature of globalization in just as crucial ways as their urban counterparts, although perhaps that does not attract as much media attention as the global cities receive. This trip promises to tap into the creative energy of WSWHE BOCES educators so that China Institute can explore how to enrich both our own programming and hopefully provide increased opportunities for students and teachers in Upstate New York to increasingly make connections to China by studying it and even visiting it.

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