

Chinese students visiting two Chino Valley schools this summer

More than 1,000 Chinese high school students will take summer school and evening classes at Chino and Chino Hills high schools under a cultural program this summer.

Through mid-August, alternating groups of Chinese students will visit the Chino Valley, staying one to two weeks, said Preston Carr, director of Alternative Education for the Chino Valley Unified School District (CVUSD). The first group of students arrived in early July.

On the students' agenda are morning classes in math, science, U.S. history, physical education, and fundamentals of art through the district's remediation summer school program. Carr said the students fill in vacant slots in those classes. From 1 to 3:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday, the visitors will take classes in floriculture, ceramics, photography, baseball, basketball, tennis, and leadership.

The cultural, fee-based program is facilitated through three groups: American International Education Group, Inc., ESL Consulting Inc., and ESL4Asia.

Carr said groups are always inquiring about sending foreign students here because of the district's F-1 Visa International Student program that began several years ago and allows students from other countries to attend a CVUSD high school for one year for a tuition of \$15,500. Last year, 32 students, mostly from China, participated in that program. Carr said sign-ups are already underway for the F-1 Visa program for the 2015-2016 school year. Registration will continue through late July or early August, he said.

More than 250 elementary and junior high students from China attended local schools for a few days during a visit this spring under a similar cultural program that was initiated after Carr and Deputy Superintendent Norm Enfield visited schools in China over a two-week period in January.

Chinese schools rely heavily on rote (memory) learning, Carr said. Chinese schools are huge, often with large, formal entrances and several stories, Carr said. A uniformed guard is usually stationed at the front gate. Often, classes are taught by experts in the field, Carr said. For example, a physical education class might be taught by an Olympic athlete, and an engineering class by a professional engineer. There is also a great emphasis on earning straight-A grades in Chinese schools, the Director of Alternative Education said.

"They don't have a discipline problem because it's considered an honor to go to school and learn," Carr said. "I think they have a pretty amazing educational system over there."

Chinese students and parents have a great interest in American schools and how they operate, Carr said. Chinese educational groups involved in the spring and summer programs in the Chino Valley district would like to do a cultural exchange program where American students visit Chinese schools, Carr said.

Such a program might be a good fit with a dual language program envisioned by Deputy Superintendent Enfield, Carr said. That program would have students learning both English and another language in their classes. Among the languages considered for that potential program are Mandarin, Spanish, and French, Carr said.

In October, approximately 10 CVUSD officials may visit China again in an effort to increase interest in the district's F-1 Visa International Student program, and in cultural exchanges like those held this spring and summer, Carr said.

Pictured: Chinese students hold the certificates of achievement they received for completing classes at Chino and Chino Hills high schools this summer as part of a cultural visit. Pictured with them are adults involved in the cultural program.