



Board Workshop: November 19, 2024

Title: China - 6/2/2026 - International Travel Request - Zhou Wang and Ling Ma - Edina High School - World Language

Type: Discussion

Presenters: Jody De St. Hubert, Director of Teaching and Learning; Jenn Carter, Edina High School Assistant Principal; Zhou Wang, EHS Chinese Teacher; and Ling Ma, EHS Chinese Teacher

Background: In accordance with Policy 538, the following international student travel experience for up to 20 Edina High School Students students for twelve days in June, 2026 has received support from the school's administration. Participating students will not miss school days for this travel experience.

This experience is coordinated by Phoenix Tree International Education Center, an organization that designs tours with a focus on social responsibility. Phoenix Tree Education is an organization under the Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU), a renowned institution in Beijing, China, that specializes in sharing Chinese language and culture through opportunities both within and outside of China. Established in 1962, BLCU is the only university in China that focuses exclusively on teaching Chinese language and culture to non-native speakers.

Summary of Travel Experience:

A professional counselor from BLCU will be assigned to chaperone the whole trip, with safety and well-being as the top priority so that our program participants can relax and enjoy the fun of visiting another country abroad without all the complications and worries that come with it. With the guidance of a counselor, our students can enjoy a local perspective and the assurance that the tours and activities are conducted with the highest safety standards outlined before the start of each program.

Students will explore the essence of China across three major locations: explore the traditional architecture and palaces in Beijing, go hiking in the wilderness of Xi'An, and encounter the international fusion of cultures in Shanghai. Some of the activities include making shadow puppets, participating in a Chinese tea ceremony, learning to sing a Qin Qiang opera, watching an eggshell carving performance in person, practicing Chinese Kung Fu, and learning how to perform Chinese acrobatics. Edina students will also participate in language partner activities with students from BLCU.

Cost: The anticipated inclusive cost of this experience is approximately \$5,000 per student. This price includes all transportation, accommodations, meals, and transfers. Students will be responsible for all costs. There will be need-based scholarships and other scholarships offered. There will also be extensive fundraising opportunities, as detailed in the fundraising plan attached below.

Transportation: All students and chaperones will travel as a group from Minneapolis to Beijing International Airport, Beijing China. Internal travel includes flights to and from Beijing and high speed trains in China. The group will return from ShangHai via a major U.S. international airline or partner.

Accommodations: Students and chaperones will be housed in hotel rooms throughout the stay.

Supervision: Staff members traveling with the group are Edina Chinese Teachers, Zhou Wang and Ling Ma.

Recommendation: Review the international travel experience information and come prepared with your initial reactions (comments and questions). An additional discussion will occur at the Board Meeting on 12.2.24 and action will occur at the 1.6.25 Board Meeting.

Desired Outcomes for the Board: Review the background information provided and come prepared with your initial reactions (comments and questions) on the student travel experience.

Attachments:

1. Appendix III Board Policy 538 , [Extended Field Trip and Travel Application Preliminary Approval](#)
2. [The Pheonix Tree International Group](#)
3. [The Pheonix Tree International Tour Itinerary](#)
4. [Fundraising Plan](#)
5. [Insurance](#) [Insurance Certificate](#) Contact: Jim Kang, Jiankang@phoenixtree.com
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