



The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
U.S. Senate
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Ranking Member Risch,

An investigation conducted by our partner organization, Parents Defending Education (PDE), exposed how millions of dollars of China-linked funding has flowed into America's K-12 classrooms. Through records requests and publicly available information, PDE discovered that 143 school districts across the United States have engaged in contracts to establish Confucius Classrooms or other Chinese government-backed programming. This includes three of the nation's top science and technology high schools and in locations near 20 U.S. military bases.

In March of this year, another PDE-led investigation found that a nonprofit linked to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology had received more than [\\$1 million](#) in financial aid from Chinese government-affiliated entities over the course of a decade. This led PDE to conduct a wider investigation to see how many Chinese Communist Party-affiliated education programs had been established in K-12 schools nationwide. The findings revealed in the investigation were alarming. Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia have had schools that have engaged in financial exchanges with the Chinese government or affiliated entities ranging from a few thousand dollars to more than a million dollars per contract.

Since 2009, the Chinese government has used Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms to push their agenda in schools around the globe. Chinese Communist Party officials have openly stated how they are using these educational partnerships established under the guise of "cultural and language immersion programs" to expand [China's overseas propaganda campaign](#). In a [Chinese state media article](#) from 2016, the Chinese Communist Party "lauded" Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms for promoting its Belt and Road Initiative. Security concerns with these China-linked programs became so problematic that the State Department declared them a "[foreign mission](#)" during the summer of 2020.

These programs have created significant security vulnerabilities for the United States and gave the CCP unfettered access to curriculums and America's classrooms. PDE uncovered at least two connections between U.S. and China schools tied to the Chinese military and energy operations. Excerpts from the report included below:

- Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Virginia partnered with Tsinghua University High School, helping the Chinese-based school to adopt rigorous science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programming. Tsinghua University High School is connected to Tsinghua University, a [Chinese military school](#) that is "supervised" by the Chinese defense industry, according to the [Australian Strategic Policy Institute](#).

- The Simpson County Board of Education in Kentucky entered into an agreement with the [North China Electric Power University](#) to develop the Confucius Institute of Western Kentucky. The North China Electric Power University works directly with the Chinese government's energy sector to push China's global energy initiatives, as part of its [Belt and Road Initiative](#). The Chinese International Education Foundation, sponsored by the Confucius Institute, tasked the university with selecting more than 34 Chinese teachers to send to Simpson County Public Schools for the 2020-2021 school year.

The fact the Chinese government had so much access to American classrooms, students, and curriculums should worry families. The CCP is openly using deceptive tactics to influence the next generation of Americans to advance their own self-serving agenda. We cannot allow this to happen. We urge the committee to take immediate action to investigate, expose, and hold hearings on the Chinese government's involvement in America's schools. PDE looks forward to working with you in protecting our students from the threats of the CCP.

Respectfully,

Michele P. Exner
Director of Federal Affairs, PDE Action
Senior Advisor, Parents Defending Education