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## China turns to area for teaching help

### Monterey's McGraw-Hill sees potential

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Sweeping reforms in China to help teachers learn new teaching methods, combined with a national mandate that every K-12 student learn English, could spell dollars for Northern California companies that provide educational content and the technology to deliver it.

At the invitation of Apple Inc., members of the Chinese government's National Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development, and the privately held Today's Teachers Technology & Culture Ltd. spent several recent days in Silicon Valley, touring a school in San Francisco and meeting with Apple representatives to discuss educational content delivery.

The group also spent several days on the Monterey Peninsula, touring the private Chartwell School and meeting and dining with the heads of the Defense Language Institute, the Monterey Institute for International Studies, educational test materials developer CTB McGraw Hill and California State University Monterey Bay.

An Apple spokesman did not return a call requesting comment by deadline.

Apple began talking about six months ago with Chengfeng Zhou, chairman and CEO of Vancouver, B.C.-based China Education Resources. The talks with CER, which develops China's largest Web portal for teachers and students, were about providing technology and developing content — including podcasts and streaming media — to reach China's 240 million students, according to CER director Jeffrey Munks.

Last month, CER, in collaboration with Apple and more than 100 national educational experts, launched a new online teacher

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**Jeffrey Munks**  
China Education Resources



**'Our company** has a long history of serving the education needs of the Chinese market.'

**Ellen Haley**  
CTB/McGraw Hill



training program to 16,000 primary and junior high school teachers in China.

Nobody can quite yet put a dollar amount on



how much the business of K-12 education could be worth to American companies like Apple or

CTB McGraw Hill, but with 12 million teachers, 240 million students and 700,000 schools in question, even pennies on each transaction could be huge.

"I would go back to the fact that it's a volumetric model," said Munks, a former San Jose police officer who sold the translation-on-demand company he co-founded, Language Line Services, to AT&T. "When you think about the scope and scale of 12 million teachers and 240 million students, even a nickel or two on each transaction is a staggering amount."

According to Jian Liu, China's director of curriculum and the online training and research office of the National Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development, the

push toward education reform in China comes because while Chinese students perform very well on paper (better, he said, than students in other countries) they lack creative problem solving ability.

“We have to teach them how to become creative problem solvers,” Liu said. Speaking through an interpreter, Liu said changing the way students are taught means developing a “more open, more democratic” way of doing things.

“The government can’t do everything. They need corporations to solve these issues,” Liu told the *Business Journal*. “We find many successful cases in the U.S. schools and universities we can integrate for our curriculum to help our teachers improve their ability, particularly through web technology.”

The Chinese delegation, along with the CEO of China Education Resources Inc., spent two days on the Monterey Peninsula at the invitation of California State University Monterey Bay.

The interest in the Monterey area was twofold, Munks said. First, about 25 percent of this nation’s post-secondary language education takes place in Monterey at places such as the

DLI and the MIIS; and second, CSUMB has a growing reputation as a leading school for teacher education.

The delegation also had a dinner at the Monterey Bay Aquarium attended by the presidents of CSUMB, MIIS, and Monterey Peninsula College; the headmaster of the private Chartwell School; the DLI commandant and the president of CTB/McGraw Hill.

In a written statement, CTB/McGraw-Hill president Ellen Haley said: “Our company has a long history of serving the education needs of the Chinese market. In fact, we opened our first education office there more than 20 years ago. We believe we can continue this strong tradition by working with the Chinese government in its quest to expand the English speaking population and sharing our K-12 and adult education assessment practices.”

CTB/McGraw Hill spokeswoman Kelley Carpenter confirmed that one of the company’s research scientists had a private lunch with delegation members, but described the event as “very casual.”

China Education Resources, through its Chinese operating subsidiary Today’s Teach-

ers Technology & Culture Ltd., along with the Chinese Ministry of Education, developed its web portal to distribute online educational and administrative services to the teachers and students in the K-12 market.

Through the portal, teachers in China can learn about topics ranging from classroom management and curriculum reform. The portal launched in the summer of 2006, and 10,000 teachers were selected by the Ministry of Education to participate in online learning.

China Education Resources now is focused on becoming the world’s largest provider and repository of “ePortfolios,” an electronic record of an individual’s achievement, interests, aptitude, course completion and other data related to educational activities in China.

“I think Apple sees an opportunity to get more involved in the K-12 marketplace in China and I think that the (education ministry) and CER see an opportunity to enhance and enrich their offerings and level of interactivity,” Munks said. “It’s mutually beneficial and it’s being explored here.”

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