On November 8–9, the Center for Educator Development in Fine Arts (CEDFA), TMEA, and Austin area schools hosted a delegation from China visiting the United States to observe quality arts and physical education programs throughout our country. The visitors were interested in a wide range of areas related to these topics, including government policy, national and state standards, curriculum development, teacher training, as well as community involvement.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two governments in the early 1980s, the Chinese Ministry sends two delegations to the U.S. every year, and the U.S. Department of Education sends a group of American educators to China each summer. Hi Di, Program Officer, National Committee on U.S. China Relations, chose for the group to visit Austin based on her research, where she found CEDFA was the only academic arts center in the U.S. that offers educator training in art, dance, music, and theatre.

During the three-hour visit to TMEA headquarters, members of the CEDFA Board shared brief presentations through an interpreter. Topics included information on our state and federal standards, professional development, state law and policy relative to arts education, student access to fine arts courses, special grants, and the CEDFA Cadre program. Those in attendance participated in an interactive, participatory arts project using digital cameras and iPads. Despite the language barrier, it was evident that all in attendance shared the same passion for how we serve students in our countries through the arts and recognized the role of the arts in a complete education for all children.

Members of the delegation, CEDFA, and TMEA collaborate in a participatory arts project.

Members of the Chinese delegation, CEDFA Board, and TMEA staff

Executive Director Robert Floyd discusses state law and policy relative to fine arts education.

by Robert Floyd

Chinese Delegation Visits Austin to Learn About Arts Education