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Bad Dragon?: Why China Has the Best (and Worst) Education System in the World

Online talk by
Dr. Yong Zhao

Foundation Distinguished Professor
School of Education, University of Kansas

3:30 — 5 p.m. Tuesday, September 28, 2021



Dr. Yong Zhao is a Foundation Distinguished Professor in the School of Education at the University of Kansas and a professor in Educational Leadership at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education in Australia. He previously served as the Presidential Chair, Associate Dean, and Director of the Institute for Global and Online Education in the College of Education, University of Oregon, where he was also a Professor in the Department of Educational Measurement, Policy, and Leadership. Prior to Oregon, Dr. Zhao was University Distinguished Professor at the College of Education,

Michigan State University, where he also served as the founding director of the Center for Teaching and Technology, as well as the US-China Center for Research on Educational Excellence. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Education and a fellow of the International Academy of Education.

Abstract: Chinese students' consistently stunning performance on the international PISA exams—where they outscore students of all other nations in math, reading, and science—has positioned China as a world education leader. American educators and pundits have declared this a “Sputnik Moment,” saying that we must learn from China’s education system in order to maintain our status as an education leader and global superpower.

In this presentation, Dr. Yong Zhao offers an entertaining, provocative insider’s account of the Chinese school system, revealing the secrets that make it both “the best and worst” in the world. Born and raised in China’s Sichuan province and a teacher in China for many years, Zhao has a unique perspective on Chinese culture and education. He explains in vivid detail how China turns out the world’s highest-achieving students in reading, math, and science—yet by all accounts Chinese educators, parents, and political leaders hate the system and long to send their kids to western schools. This presentation is based on his book *Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Dragon?: Why China Has the Best (and Worst) Education System in the World*.