**Sarah Chang –XJHS Visit December 12-30, 2011**

**Meetings and Discussions with XJ Administrators:**

1. During my visit, I spent quite some time with Elaine and Avie on different days to discuss how community colleges work, what the EBUS advantage is for the XJ students, and what a huge "leg up" these college classes can be for their students. I also had two meetings with Mr. Chen to explain the community college courses and AP classes to help him understand the two systems and to see why it is important to encourage AP students to take CCC courses too.
2. At the moment, XJ believes S1-3's quality is too low and XJ wants to get rid of them.  XJ had a meeting with their parents and encouraged parents to send these students abroad for high school. XJ will also help them to contact American high schools.  From my counseling session with each of these students, most of them were clueless but I think there are quite a few who can have a lot of potentials.  Jimmy recommended 5-6 of them to move to Chris' ESL class.  There is a couple who have already started applying for American high schools. Personally, I think they can make it to CCC even though they might not be able to take too many CCC’s college courses at XJ.
3. XJ wants to spread out current S2 students into S1 classes next semester since there will be only a few students left next semester. S-2 students and parents have a hard time to accept this. A couple of parents came in to talk to Avie and me. XJ will continue to work on this and to figure out the best solution for everyone.
4. There are a lot of communication problems between XJ and ESL instructors.  There are quite some complaints from ESL instructors.  There were discussions on how to resolve some of the problems.  Hiring a bilingual coordinator was discussed in the meeting. I believe that will help things a great deal.

**Workshops at XJ:**

While I was at XJ for three weeks, I did an “Introduction to Higher Education” workshop to each S-1 class individually. I also had one workshop for their parents and one for the new teachers at XJ.  I did an information seminar/orientation with S3 students to go through some general information.

**Meetings with Students and Parents:**

1. I had one-on-one meetings with every single Sr. 1 student to go through their ESL evaluation and answer their questions. I didn’t develop an ILP with each student during this trip because S1 is the new group and quite some of them are heading towards AP class. With that in mind, I only did "Intro to Higher Ed" workshop with each S1 class and their parents. I told Laurie that I would do "IGETC and CSU GE" workshop next time because by then, we will know who will go to AP side and who will stay with CCC. Without talking about IGETC, it will be very difficult for these students to work out an ILP with me. It will be me making one for them without them understand what that is. So I will do the IGECT and CSU GE workshop next time to CCC students and after that, do the ILP. Also there are over 70 students among S1 and I need to have a private counseling session with each of them. That takes quite some time. It will be difficult for me to make an ILP with each individual on top of that. Next time, I can meet each of them to discuss EBUS briefly, answer their questions, and then work out the ILP.
2. I also met with S-2 and S-3 students and parents on a need base. I did an Information Seminar/Orientation with S-3 to get them ready to attend CCC here in the states. All of them had their visa interviews by then.  Cindy and Ocean didn't get their visa.  I asked all the students to write down the questions that were asked at their interviews so I could use them to prepare Cindy and Ocean for the next interview.  Elaine was also involved in this.
3. There are 6 students from S2 who still want to go to CCC.  I met with them individually and I was told that their parents wanted to talk to me too.  So I made myself available in a couple of afternoons for their parents to come and talk to me. Parents’ main concerns were when they should apply, what they would study once they get to CCC, where are they going to stay, who will help them find housing…etc.
4. I don’t' know what's the plan with AP students in the future and if and when they are going to take our college courses.  No one has said anything to me except Mr. Chen asked me not to talk about community college with AP class.  I feel that I am not in the position to talk to AP class about AP and university application.  I think that's UCI's role and I don't think they will be happy to hear that a community college counselor went to the AP class to talk about their AP classes.   Since Mr. Chen, Elaine, and Avie didn’t think it is a good idea or necessary for me to do a workshop with AP students, I didn’t do a workshop for AP students and their parents this time.
5. Some of the students from S1-2 are pretty torn between AP and CCC.  But I believe majority of S1-2 will take the CCC route. Most of these students are pretty good.  There is only a couple who are planning to either go to the states for high school or go to another country (not USA) for college.  The rest have a pretty clear goal---USA.

**Meetings with EFL Instructors:**

1. During the first a couple of days after I arrived at XJ, I met with each ESL instructor to go over the final roster for the math class in the spring. Jimmy recommended moving 5-6 of his students to Chris’ class because these students did well and their English level is above average. Personally I think if some students have been studying very hard and are making more progress than their peers, they should be rewarded to move up and this could be also a motivation to other students.  Later on, I discussed with Avie and I was told that XJ would respect our ESL instructors’ recommendation to move students to the proper ESL classes.  Later on, during my individual counseling sessions, I informed those recommended by the ESL instructor the possibility to move to another ESL class and see how they would feel.
2. When I met with each ESL instructor, we also discussed each of their students' SAP.  Chris believes that all of his students are still within the similar English level and they are good to stay in the same class. Susan has the best students of the whole S-1 but somehow she is not happy with her class. A lot of her students didn’t do all the home work and so probably half of the classes got under 70%.

**Class Issues and Issues between XJ and EFL:**

1. On my second day at XJ, Mr. Chen had a meeting with me and all of the American instructors to discuss different issues and also the math class in spring. To Susan's and Chris' understanding, S1 students need to get their recommendation to be able to take math.  So far, Susan thinks there might be 10 to 12 students from her class and Chris thinks maybe 1 or 2 who might be good enough (both English and maturity wise) to take Math.  XJ says that if there are not at least 24, they don't think that they want to have math course in the spring.  Susan and Chris both think that we are setting students for failure if we let the rest of the students take college math in the spring.  From XJ side, if none of the S1 students will be taking college course next semester, a lot of S1 students will leave XJ after this semester because they came to XJ for CCC’s college courses and AP classes.  XJ's thinking is that they have to meet the parents' need to keep these students.  Even if these students find the math too difficult and have to drop in the middle, at least  XJ kept its words and they gave them a chance to try.

2.  It is very difficult for Susan and Chris to understand why XJ hires Chinese ESL instructors while they are here teaching ESL.  They believe that XJ is making it more difficult for students to learn the proper English with non-native English teacher.    XJ believes that it is absolutely necessary for the Chinese English teacher to work with students in lower English level. There are definitely a lot of conflicts between two parties and I believe it will take time for both sides to understand each other. It will take time for American instructors and XJ and parents to understand each other’s educational system.

3. Susan and Chris do not think it is the right thing for S1 students to take TOEFL class and TOEFL test in May.  They believe that ESL class should be a priority and XJ shouldn't focus so much on TOEFL instructions.  Susan and Chris said that a lot of their students were doing TOEFL home work or reading their TOEFL books in their classes.  XJ says that one of XJ's selling points is that they offer TOEFL classes, AP classes, and college classes.  Parents use the TOEFL score as a measurement of their students' English progress.  Also for S1 students to go to AP classes in the fall, they have to take their TOEFL by May 2012. So with some students wanting to get into AP classes, they have no choice but prepare for TOEFL test since that is the requirement.  XJ believes if they stop providing TOEFL classes, some students will transfer to another high school that provides TOEFL classes.  Many students are hoping to get into AP class in the fall and if they don't, they might leave too.

4. After my meeting with Susan, I found out that a lot of S1-1 students only received 50%-70% from her class. I was pretty shocked since they were supposed to be the most advanced students.  When I started meeting with each student individually, I started to hear complaints from these students.  To my surprise, quite some, probably more than 50% of S1-1 students are not happy with Susan's teaching style.  Most common complaints are that Susan didn't create a nice atmosphere for them to study; the lectures were very dull, boring, and uninteresting; they didn't feel Susan cares that much about whether they studied, did home work, listened carefully in the class; they didn't feel motivated to learn in her class; there was not much disciplinary actions; a lot of homework were given away ahead and so eventually they forgot later on; Susan communicated a lot with them by emails and a lot of students didn't or couldn't even check their emails on a regular basis; when they had questions or didn't understand, they didn't feel that they were encouraged to ask...etc.  When I asked them if they ever told XJ or Susan directly, some said that they did mention this before to their teachers or Avie.

As to Chris' students, what I heard most was that Chris was very strict but students seemed ok with it and they felt that they had learned a lot and their English had improved.

With Jimmy, some students said that they felt his class was too easy and simple.  To my understanding, Jimmy's students have a wide range of English skills.  Jimmy has decided to move 5-6 advanced students from his class to Chris' class in the spring semester.  I have informed these students during my individual counseling session.  Hopefully Chris won't have a problem to take these students and will take good care of them in the spring.

5. Elaine sent out a couple of emails regarding the apartment issues. The story behind these emails is that they got kind of upset with the ESL instructors because ESL instructors made a lot of requests regarding their apartments and classrooms, etc when they just arrived.  I heard a lot of stories from different XJ staff.  Billy was also demoted (sort of) from all of these and XJ had to divide Billy's responsibilities to three different people.  Elaine sent an email to all of ESL instructors before they left and asked them to make sure that the new instructors have access to the whole apartment.  But it turned out only Susan left her apartment fully accessible.  Both Jimmy and Chris put their belongings in the main bedrooms and locked them.  Chris locked his main bedroom knowing nobody including himself even has a key to open that door.  He said that he didn't know what happened and it locked by accident but he lived there for months and it had never happened.  So eventually XJ will have to figure out a way to open it if they can't get a key from the landlord.  All of the ESL instructors were also asked to clean up their apartments for the new instructors.  Jimmy did a good cleaning job.  But XJ has to send someone to clean up Chris' apartment and I heard that he didn't even wash his dirty dishes.