



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on October 27, 2020

Senator Blackburn Demands Answers on SAT Maker's Chinese Ties

Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) is calling on the College Board to provide an explanation regarding its longtime partnership with the Confucius Institute, the Chinese front group that gives the communist state a means to exert influence over thousands of American students.



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Blackburn [told](#) the educational nonprofit to clarify its relationship with the organization, which is also known as Hanban and which the federal government asserts is a propaganda instrument of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Blackburn expressed concern that the partnership could have a negative effect on the College Board, which administers the SAT and college-level "Advanced Placement" (AP) courses for high schoolers.

"It is my concern that the Chinese government is manipulating this [College Board] partnership to characterize China in a wholesome light and stifle conversation that might be detrimental to the reputation of the Chinese Communist Party," Blackburn said in a letter. "College Board's relationship with Hanban creates momentous security concerns."

According to an August [report](#) from the National Association of Scholars, the College Board received nearly \$700,000 from the Confucius Institute to develop the Chinese-language curriculum for its Advanced Placement program, which molds the education of thousands of American youth who take the course every year.

Additionally, the College Board helped place hundreds of Chinese teachers (which the Confucius Institute vetted) in schools throughout the country. It also co-hosts the biggest conference for Chinese teachers along with the communist-backed group.

Blackburn asked College Board CEO David Coleman how involved the Confucius Institute is in teacher selection and test criteria, as whether the relationship could give CCP officials "undue influence" over American students.

The *Free Beacon* notes:

The senator's letter, which was sent Tuesday, is the latest in the bipartisan push to rein in the activities of the Confucius Institute, which had more than 100 branches in U.S. colleges and K-12 schools across the country at its height in 2017. Congress prohibited American universities from diverting Pentagon funding to support Confucius Institute programming in



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2018, and the Senate unanimously passed a bill in June that would require all federally funded universities to exercise “full managerial control” of the China-backed programs.

The Confucius Institute has said its operations are only designed to foster Mandarin literacy and appreciation for Chinese culture. Experts and U.S. officials disagree — several bipartisan government reports found that the Confucius Institute often requires its instructors to follow Chinese laws on U.S. soil and prohibits them from discussing issues related to Tibet, Xinjiang, and other topics deemed sensitive by the Chinese government.

College Board [also collaborates](#) with Confucius Institutes on an annual Chinese Bridge Delegation to China (a “weeklong program in China to help educators start or strengthen their institution’s Chinese programs and partnerships”) and on the annual National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC).

Many Chinese tutoring centers have taken advantage of College Board’s practice of reusing test materials such as the SAT and Advanced Placement exams, divulging answer keys to students before tests are administered.

Documents reveal that College Board officials [were aware](#) that, in one year alone, China “compromised” at least four exams. Despite this, the organization “took no steps to restrict testing in China, the SAT’s largest international market by far, even as it tightened security in smaller countries where exams had leaked.”

Through Confucius Institutes, the Chinese government has poured millions of dollars into American colleges, much of it undisclosed.

In fact, federal and Senate investigations have found that the Chinese regime itself hires the instructors for the program and forbids them from telling students anything negative about China.

In a blow to China, President Trump [designated](#) Confucius Institutes “foreign missions,” which subjects them to rules similar to those for embassies and consulates.

Moreover, the administration [launched an investigation](#) of Harvard and Yale for their foreign funding. The White House maintains that Yale has not reported, at minimum, \$375 million in foreign funding after failing to file reports for three years from 2014-2017.

Due to growing scrutiny of Confucius Institutes, along with student and activist [protests](#) against the organization, dozens of American universities are [closing down](#) the program on their campuses.

With concerns about “election interference” thrown around so often today, those concerned about the issue should set their sights on Hanban and crack down on interference where it is having the most devastating impact — in the classroom.



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