Jon Tragash

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Professional Summary

Educational Program Manager & Learning Specialist

Bilingual educator and AI-building instructional leader with 19+ years of international experience spanning classroom teaching, program leadership, and hands-on EdTech/AI product development. Builds working software — full-stack teacher tools, adaptive assessment prototypes, and AI-driven instructional systems — alongside leading accreditation work, faculty development, and asset-based EAL programming. Based in Guangzhou; open to EAL, EdTech, and AI-in-education roles in China or internationally.

Core Competencies

- **Instructional Leadership:** U.S. Standards-Based Education, IB Frameworks, WASC Accreditation, Backward Design.
- **EdTech & AI:** Text Engineering (Canva/AI), Gamified Learning Design, AI-Assisted Tool Development, Web-Based Tools (HTML/JS).
- **Language Specialization:** Multilingualism & Translanguaging, EAL/ESL Instruction, Structured English Immersion, WIDA.
- **Literacy Intervention:** UFLI Foundations, F&P Leveled Library & Text-Level Assessment, Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), running records.
- **Cultural Competence:** Mandarin Chinese (Proficient), Cross-Cultural Communication, Global Citizenship Education.
- **AI & Software Development:** Python (Flask), JavaScript/HTML/CSS, AI Agent Orchestration & Automation (multi-agent Claude Code systems), Prompt Engineering, Privacy-by-Design Data Architecture.

EdTech & Innovation Projects

- **Adaptive Diagnostic Engine ("Growth Measure 3.0"):** Designed and prototyped a browser-based adaptive assessment tool (HTML/JS) simulating computer-adaptive testing logic to predict student RIT bands; presented to school administration for potential adoption.
- **Text Engineering & Curriculum Design:** Leveraged Generative AI and Canva to engineer "Micro-Passage" assessments and differentiated literacy materials, cutting resource-production time.
- **Student Portfolio & Reflection System:** Architected and built a full-stack teacher tool (Python/Flask + desktop companion) to file WIDA-aligned reflections and language-development evidence for 30+ students across four homerooms, with a privacy-first data model excluding student-identifying data from source control.
- **Concept-Aware EAL Unit Planner:** Built an AI-assisted planning tool that ingests a teacher's draft unit and generates differentiated, concept-specific EAL scaffolds (vocabulary, sentence frames, translanguaging prompts) matched to each Line of Inquiry's concept type, replacing one-size-fits-all templates.
- **Reading Specialist Instructional Framework:** Designed a research-grounded (Scarborough's Reading Rope) 7-lens read-aloud framework and the supporting AI tooling to apply it consistently across classrooms.
- **AI Systems Engineering (Self-Directed):** Independently designed and built a multi-agent AI orchestration system (structured knowledge base, automated session logging, cross-project routing) to scale instructional-design work across six concurrent classroom initiatives — self-taught.
- **Vibe-Verse Phonics & Word-Study Arcade:** Born from an IB units-of-inquiry game-design unit teaching students to design their own games; grew into a full anime-style trading-card-game universe (UFLI-aligned phonics mechanics, bilingual Korean/Mandarin scaffolds), published for sale on Teachers Pay Teachers, plus a companion browser game arcade (teacher-jon.github.io/WordStudy).
- **Classroom Tools Born from Real Needs:** Designed Neon City Architects, a whole-class gamified writing tool, after a Student Support Services meeting surfaced a shared need for classwide engagement; co-built Classroom Rhythm (play.vibeverseedu.com), a real-time app that streams individual sheet-music parts to student devices with gamified elements, born from his own child's idea; used in daily classroom practice with the school's music teacher and deployed on the school server for a live concert, connecting roughly 15 iPads simultaneously.
- **Math Specialist AI Agent:** Building an AI-assisted planning tool aligned to Illustrative Math (adopted school-wide, 2026–27) that generates research-grounded scaffolds and practice materials, mirroring the Reading Specialist framework's approach.

Professional Experience

EAL Specialist & Peer Coaching Coordinator | American International School of Guangzhou

Guangzhou, Guangdong | Jul 2022 – Present (Grade 2, EAL / Multilingual Learners)

- **Accreditation Leadership (WASC):** Led a WASC Focus Group Section (2025–2026) for the school's self-study, facilitating staff collaboration and data analysis to demonstrate alignment with international standards.
- **Inclusive Teaching:** Co-plan units with homeroom teachers so language objectives are embedded directly in content instruction, not delivered pull-out.
- **Asset-Based Co-Teaching:** Work in a full-time, asset-based co-teaching partnership with homeroom teachers, designing and delivering the scaffolds every student in the room needs — leveled by WIDA proficiency, not limited to EAL-identified learners.
- **Assessment & Reporting:** Assess, track, and report on student language development, collaborating with teachers and parents on progress and next steps.
- **Environment:** Foster an inclusive classroom environment utilizing translanguaging and asset-based approaches.
- **AI Tooling & Innovation:** Independently designed and deployed instructional-technology tools (student portfolio system, EAL unit planner, reading-specialist framework) now used in daily classroom practice, cutting materials-prep time and standardizing WIDA-aligned scaffolding across the grade level.
- **Digital Champion — Grade-Level Technology Coaching:** Serve on AISG's Digital Champion committee, coaching Grade 2 colleagues on instructional technology and representing the grade level in school-wide technology initiatives and presentations; consulted with outside experts (including Scott McLeod) and worked through protocols on innovative practices to bring back to the school.
- **Peer Coaching & Strengths Leadership:** Coordinate AISG's school-wide Positive Foundation Program (Solros Development Group model) — a year-long Strengths-Based curriculum for PLCs and Learning Leader teams plus weekly whole-staff meeting warm-ups — applying ICF coaching competencies across grade-level and leadership groups (2026–2027).

Director | Griggs International Academy (HMIS)

Guangzhou, Guangdong | 2010 – Oct 2022

- **Academic Achievement:** Raised school-wide Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test scores close to US grade-level benchmarks through systematic standards-based instruction.
- **Curriculum Design:** Designed and implemented a curriculum tailored to adapt English Language Learners (ELLs) to a US curriculum, including K-12 standards-based testing for incoming students.
- **Leadership:** Coordinated the academics and professional development of a teaching team within the U.S. accredited program.
- **School Culture:** Instituted program-wide assemblies based on Key Values and implemented a school-wide House System.
- **Operations:** Implemented Office 365 for administration and classroom teachers and facilitated efficient bilingual communication with parents and administration.

GIA China Director | Griggs International Academy

Guangzhou, Guangdong | May 2016 – 2018

- **Teacher Training:** Instructed educators and directors on strategies for successful teaching, differentiation, CLIL integration, and home-school communication.
- **Quality Assurance:** Audited schools for setup and ongoing compliance requirements; conducted teacher recruitment and onboarding across China.
- **Curriculum Adaptation:** Developed and adapted the GIA curriculum and standards for effective use across the China region.

S.T.E.M. Curriculum Author & Project Development | International School

Brazil (Remote) | 2015 – 2016

- **Curriculum Authorship:** Authored a series of STEM textbooks and lesson plans in cooperation with LEGO Brazil.
- **Training:** Assessed training materials and conducted training sessions related to the curriculum.

Primary Homeroom Teacher | GIA Hua Mei International School

Guangzhou, Guangdong | 2008 – 2014

- **Instruction:** Taught grades 1–8 in an international school using U.S. grade level standards; developed interdisciplinary project-based units.
- **Differentiation:** Implemented "Words Their Way" and created audio aids to differentiate for multiple learning styles.

ESL Educator | Loudi Foreign Language School

Loudi, Hunan, China | 2007 – 2008

- **Instruction:** First classroom teaching role in China; taught foundational English lessons to English language learners.

Conference Presentations & Workshops Facilitated

- **ACAMIS Leadership Conference (2026):** Co-presented "From Extra Hands to Extra Minds: Maximizing the Impact of Educational Assistants" (findings from a year-long MLRC action-research cycle, 2024–2025, on EA-supported scaffolding for multilingual learners) and "From Champions to Change: How Collective Leadership Accelerates School Improvement" (drawing on AISG's Digital Champion model — a distributed-leadership model for scaling instructional-technology innovation school-wide).
- **Co-Authored Publication:** "We Spent a Semester Observing Educational Assistants in the Classroom. Here's What We Found." (with Ashley Faulkenberry, May 2026) — the research write-up behind the presentation above. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/we-spent-semester-observing-educational-assistants-faulkenberry-cjxbc/
- **ACAMIS EAL Conference (2024):** Presented "Collaborating with Caregivers in a Multilingual Classroom" and "Translanguaging in the Multilingual Classroom."
- **Personalization for Maximum Engagement:** Presented on a co-taught, inquiry-based unit where students utilized AI tools to compose original classroom songs, fostering student agency and creative expression.
- **Text Engineering & Educational Design ("Empowering Multilingual Learners: Innovative Tech Tools for Scaffolded Success," ELLSA Conference, Beijing — hosted at International School of Beijing, 2025):** Led professional development sessions on leveraging Canva and AI-integrated tools for text engineering to generate high-quality, differentiated curricular resources.
- **GIA Teacher Training Series (China):** Designed and delivered training modules on Strategies for Successful Teaching, Differentiation, and CLIL Integration for partner schools across China (2016–2018).
- **STEM Curriculum Implementation:** Conducted training sessions for educators on implementing LEGO-based STEM curricula and inquiry-based learning strategies (2015–2016).

Education

- **Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.), Elementary Education** — University of the Cumberlands, 2011–2015
- **Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Political Science** — University of Central Florida, 2003–2007

Certifications & Licensure

- **Certified Positive Peer Coach** — ICF Level 1 Coach Training Program, Solros Development Group (65 ICF-Approved Coach-Specific Training Hours, 2025)
- **Certificate in Leading People** — Harvard Graduate School of Education (2020)
- **Certificate in Leading Change** — Harvard Graduate School of Education (2019)
- **Certificate in Leading Schools** — Harvard Graduate School of Education (2019)
- **Teacher Certification** — State of Arizona & State of Kentucky
- **Structured English Immersion** — Arizona (2018)