

'Harris's no 2 taught in China': Chinese internet reacts to Walz

7 August 2024

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BBC News



The Democratic Party's vice president nominee Tim Walz

Kamala Harris's vice-presidential pick Tim Walz has drawn attention halfway across the world in China.

Chinese social media users have been discussing how Mr Walz spent a year teaching in the south-eastern province of Guangdong in 1989 - a topic that was trending on Weibo with 12 million views.

He and his wife, fellow teacher Gwen Whipple, later honeymooned in the country.

Mr Walz once described his decision to teach in China as "one of the best things I've ever done".

The 60-year-old Minnesota governor was a history teacher and football coach before he joined politics.

He was fresh out of college when he moved to China to teach English and American history at a high school.

The fact that it happened in 1989 - the year of the Tiananmen Square massacre - was not lost on those commenting on Chinese social media.

On 4 June that year, Chinese tanks rolled into Beijing's central square, where hundreds of thousands had gathered demanding political reforms. The day ended in bloodshed and to this day it is unclear exactly how many died. Some estimates put the death toll upwards of 10,000.

Chinese social media users cannot say much about 1989 or risk getting censored. They refer to it obliquely - one comment simply said "If you know, you know".

Foreigners who were in China at that time "are the most anti-China", said one user.

Others pointed out that China in 1989 was a vastly different country. It was well before China became the world's largest manufacturing hub, then its second-largest economy and finally, a powerful US rival.

"This candidate was in China at a very different time. The atmosphere was very different," one comment read.

And yet they hoped that if he wins, he may signal better US-China ties. The two countries have been at loggerheads on trade, advanced technology, and China's geopolitical ambitions.

One Weibo user pointed out that Mr Walz's "unique background gives him a real perspective on China", and he could "promote cultural exchanges between China and the United States at a time when... relations are extremely difficult".

Back then, Mr Walz spent a year teaching at the Foshan No 1 High School under a Harvard University volunteer programme.

When he returned to the US, he told a local newspaper that there were "no limits" on what the Chinese could accomplish "if they had proper leadership".

"They are such kind, generous, capable people," he said.

Mr Walz and his wife were married on 4 June 1994 - the fifth anniversary of the Tiananmen uprising. She said in an interview that "he wanted to have a date he'll always remember".

The couple then started a business which organised summer educational trips to China for US students.

There hasn't been much official reaction yet from the Republicans to Mr Walz's time in China.

But some allies of Trump have said Mr Walz's nomination would be welcomed in China, although Beijing has not commented on it.

"Communist China is very happy with @GovTimWalz as Kamala's VP pick," Richard Grenell, a former acting director of National Intelligence in the previous Trump administration, said on X.

Social media Kamala Harris Asia Democratic Party China US election 2024

Tim Walz United States

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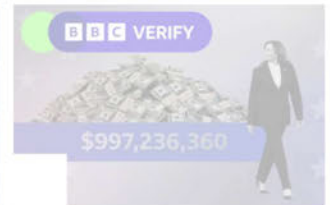
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China is happy

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c74j887e710o>

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you need components

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and CIFTs too

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with FBI mission in the CI field i believe they need to get included

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i think you something for this ACE talking about CIFT coordination or something

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CITF

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China is happy <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c74j887e710o>

I think this conversation is FOIA-able...

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(b) (6) (b) (7) (C) makes a great point about CITF coordination, I will state though that folks need to be cognizant of who the primary players even with FBI being the executive agency for CITF. le dealing with SAPs here so CI depends on what the problem set is and who will take point

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(b) (6) (b) (7) (C) makes a great point about CITF coordination, I will state though that folks need to be cognizant of who the primary players even with FBI being the executive agency for CITF. le dealing with OGAs here so CI depends on what the problem set is and who will take point

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CITF does not necessarily mean FBI is point

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NST HQ friends, do you all have a SECRET level sub-national and foreign investment presentation already put together? If not I will just pull from (b) (6) (b) (7) (C) slide deck just wanted to confirm before I start. Briefing the Governor chief of staff this week on these two topics at the classified level

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I do not believe we have a foreign investment presentation (not sure about sub-national engagement). We can probably assist if you need.

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(b) (6) (b) (7) (C) might be able to help with subnational engagement

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Okay thanks

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I have (b) (6) (b) (7) (C) notes / talking points. Just wondering if we have a slide deck too

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Hey all I'm interested in this as well given the IIRs I'm pushing on the topic here in Nevada 3 of 27 have been published still collecting for the otherss