



Strategic Plan

July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2012

INTRODUCTION

As CSIET enters its 25th anniversary year, it is evident that international youth exchange programs are considered more important now than at almost any time in history. Currently, the youth exchange community is receiving renewed interest with respect to increases in U.S. government-sponsored programming. In addition the K-12 educational community is developing new strategies and plans to globalize education and prepare American graduates for an increasingly inter-connected world. Moreover, U.S. state departments of education and private-sector educational leaders are formulating international education plans that focus on globalized curriculum, enhanced language learning, expanded resources for social studies and endorsements of teacher and student exchange programs. Simply put, we are entering into a tremendous time of increased awareness of and support for international youth exchange programs.

Building on its strengths in terms of reputation with the educational community and serving as a resource for the youth exchange program community, CSIET looks to enhance and strengthen its role as the central voice and information resource for international youth exchange programs. CSIET is well-positioned to serve as the leader of this community and to encourage growth in terms of quality programming, increased hosting capacities and community involvement to advance these programs.

CSIET's strategic plan for the upcoming three-year period demonstrates a renewed commitment to quality programming and support of the exchange program community to develop best practices and procedures to ensure that youth exchange participants receive a meaningful and safe exchange experience.

CSIET MISSION STATEMENT

As CSIET charts a course for the next three years – 2009 to 2012 – this plan presents slight modifications to the CSIET's previous mission statements.

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel is to identify, promote and support international youth exchange programs.

The purpose of CSIET is to identify reputable international youth exchange programs, to provide leadership and support to the exchange and educational communities so that youth are provided with meaningful and safe international exchange experiences, and to promote the importance and educational value of international youth exchange.

GOAL 1: PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Objective 1: School Outreach

A. *Recognition and Awards Programs* – Enhance existing recognition and awards programs and develop new initiatives to highlight innovative examples of school involvement in and support of international youth exchange programs.

- Increase awareness of the annual CSIET Global Classroom Awards Program;
- Develop a school winners group – comprised of each year’s winning schools –for educators/administrators nationwide and pursue post-award involvement; and
- Secure corporate/association co-sponsorship of the Global Classroom awards program.

B. *Conferences and Workshops* – Build on the National School Conference and/or Develop Regional Education Workshops to engage and inform the education community and to build new institutional partnerships.

C. *Local Action Network/Five-State Focus* – Build on the newly formed local action network to enable more active policy engagement with individual state departments of education and local school districts.

D. *School Outreach Working Group*

- Develop clear guidelines and expectations for members; and
- Establish organizational underpinning by inclusion in CSIET bylaws.

Objective 2: Public Outreach

A. *Public Service Campaign (PSA’s)* – Build on the current PSA campaign to increase the hosting capacity among host families and schools.

B. *Media Outreach* – Establish a media outreach capacity to gain wider exposure for CSIET initiatives and member programs.

C. *Website and On-Line Presence* – Enhance on-line presence and CSIET website to establish a recognized central site for international youth exchanges.

- Optimize web traffic; develop weblink campaigns; collect emails; use listservs and on-line marketing tools.

D. *Prominent Alumni Database* – Develop and maintain an industry-wide prominent youth exchange alumni database, with an on-line data collection capability, for both in-bound and out-bound participants.

E. *Student Speakers Tour* – Build a new program to highlight exemplary exchange students and program alumni by cultivating and organizing 3-5 annual speaking engagements at educational association gatherings.

F. *Host Family Awards Program* – Establish an awards program to recognize and highlight exemplary host families.

G. *Public Outreach Working Group*

- Develop clear guidelines and expectations for members; and
- Establish organizational underpinning by inclusion in CSIET bylaws.

Objective 3: Expand engagement with educational foundations and associations to develop new partners and strengthen existing relationships

A. *Maintain and Strengthen Existing Partnerships* – Develop a formal communication strategy to strengthen the long-standing partnerships with the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

B. *K-12 International Education Roundtable* – Establish a K-12 International Education Roundtable by bringing a new group of national educational and program organizations together to meet quarterly to share best practices and build awareness and support of international education initiatives etc...).

C. Seek and secure opportunities to co-sponsor activities with Asia Society, United States Center for Citizen Diplomacy which further CSIET mission.

GOAL 2: IDENTIFY REPUTABLE YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Objective 1: Standards Setting

Re-examine and refine when necessary the standards as they relate to emerging trends.

Objective 2: Compliance Audit Review and Listing

Enhance the audit review and listing process by continuing to formalize the review structure and criteria.

Objective 3: New Program Activity

Revisit and explore options for identifying additional youth exchange programs so that CSIET is the primary resource for youth exploring international exchange options.

GOAL 3: SUPPORT THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Objective 1: Networking, Professional Development and Membership Communications

A. *Annual Meetings and Workshops* –Create new membership meetings and specialized workshops/training gatherings.

- Increase the level of membership involvement by:
 - Expanding workshops and informational sessions;
 - Creating new formats and schedules; and
 - Securing new sponsorships
- Develop training and or information workshops to respond to new programming realities.

B. *Membership Communications*

- Transform the printed newsletter to a monthly, electronic newsletter and increase the number of email updates; and
- Establish communication opportunities to public and private schools that are authorized to issue F-1 visas and provide informational services regarding visa law, consular issues and SEVIS.

Objective 2: Knowledge Creation and Information Sharing

A. *Best Practices and Policy Formulation*: Establish clear definition to the policy formulation process by creating a Policy Steering Committee. Possible initial efforts to include:

- Crisis Communication Plan;
- Local Rep Training and Supervision; and
- Student Safety.

B. Data Collections, Statistics

- *School/State Policy Database*: Develop a broad-based clearinghouse of national, state and local policies, laws and regulations related to international youth exchange programs, including, but not limited to:
 - school and school district enrollment guidelines;
 - athletic eligibility procedures;
 - state-level registration and immunization requirements; and
 - schools not open or receptive to hosting exchange students.
- *Annual Statistical Report* – Expand the exchange student statistics report.

C. Publications and Informational Materials

- *Advisory List*: Seek additional endorsements of the *CSIET Advisory List*, State-by-State (State Departments of Education, Boards of Education).
 - Increase distribution of the *CSIET Advisory List* to parents and youth groups, educators, guidance counselors, and school administrators.

Objective 3: Advocacy and Outreach

A. Federal Engagement and Partnerships

- Develop a plan to strengthen and build effective working relationships with the U.S. Departments of State, Education and Homeland Security; and the U.S. Congress;
- Support passage of the Host Family Tax Deduction legislation or other new legislation to provide tax relief for host families; and
- Seek updated regulations for the F-1 visa at the secondary-school level.

B. State and Local Activities

- Continue CSIET's reactive response capacity to state and local legislative proposals affecting youth exchange programs; and
- Pursue adoption of legislation to benefit the community, including state-level host family tax deduction, support of out-bound programs, etc.

GOAL 4: OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Objective 1: Enhance Financial Performance

A. Develop an annual budget process with the goal of sustained growth in revenues and a balanced budget.

- Explore new sources of non-dues revenue including fees for services and institutional/corporate support;
- Develop partnerships with foundations, corporations and individuals to support general operations and the activities outlined in this plan; and
- Maintain financial reserves at a level of six months of operational expenses to ensure continuous service and viability.

B. Build a membership recruitment and retention strategy to annually increase membership revenues by 3% to 5%.

- Explore new membership options for school members; and
- Consider annual membership dues increase at the rate of inflation or less.

C. Develop external controls and enhanced Board oversight to ensure fiscal responsibility and financial oversight.

- Develop clear responsibilities for the CSIET Financial Review Committee.

D. Explore operational cost-savings options, including utilizing technology to distribute the annual CSIET *Advisory List*.

- Review the utility of producing and distributing a hard copy of the *Advisory List* to all public and private schools in the United States; and
- Establish on-line capability for CSIET payments and annual fund contributions.

Objective 2: Organizational Effectiveness and Governance

- A. Enhance communications and expectations between Board members and staff to establish clear expectations of goals, deliverables and outcomes.
- B. Develop an annual standardized orientation program to train and develop new Board members.
- C. Engage wider CSIET membership during the Board nominations process to encourage a broad range of candidates.
- D. Organize a formal review effort to update the existing bylaws.

Objective 3: Review and Upgrade Existing Information Technology Functions

- A. Establish an annual technology review to assess software and hardware needs.
- B. Develop a phased-in technology replacement process to maintain an updated office information system.