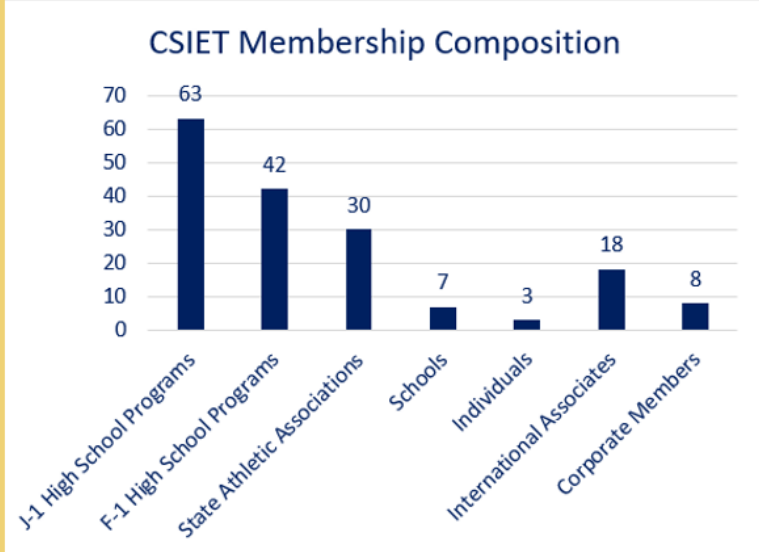


CSIET Strategic Plan

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2026

Our Purpose	To cultivate excellence, to facilitate a spirit of cooperation and support, and to help ensure safety and value for international exchange students, secondary schools, host families and natural parents.																
Our Mission	<p>The mission of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is to evaluate and certify long-term international student exchange programs at the secondary level. CSIET accredits only those programs that demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to CSIET's Standards of Excellence; • Engagement in the development and sharing of Community Preferred Practices; and • Advancement of the educational value of international student exchange. 																
Who We Serve	<p>CSIET is the only standard setting organization in the U.S. for international student exchange programming at the secondary level. Our seal of approval serves 150 member organizations representing a variety of constituent groups within the educational and international student exchange communities. CSIET's reach through these organizations extends to 196 countries.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>CSIET Membership Composition</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>J-1 High School Programs</td> <td>63</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F-1 High School Programs</td> <td>42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Athletic Associations</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schools</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Individuals</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>International Associates</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Corporate Members</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	J-1 High School Programs	63	F-1 High School Programs	42	State Athletic Associations	30	Schools	7	Individuals	3	International Associates	18	Corporate Members	8
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Our Programs and Services	<p>CSIET accomplishes its mission and purpose in five ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards development; • Evaluation and certification of international student exchange programs; • Advancement of preferred practices; • Professional growth; • Resource expansion. 																
Our Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. STEWARDSHIP: Advance/Promote the Value of International Student Exchange for CSIET Constituent Groups, Including International Students, Natural/Host Families, Exchange Programs and US Secondary Schools; 2. TRANSPARENCY: Align Expectations across the International Student Recruiting and Placement Continuum; 3. ENGAGEMENT: Improve CSIET Training/Volunteer Opportunities and Increase Member/Non-Member Involvement; 4. PARTNERSHIP: Grow CSIET's Capacity and Expand its Reach, through the Development of Existing and Emerging Partnerships. 																



Introduction

These are exciting times at CSIET! As we enter our 40th year of setting standards for international student exchange programs at the secondary level, CSIET (The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel) and its members continue a history of excellence. We share a strong commitment to the educational value of international educational travel and exchange. In its last strategic plan, the CSIET Board of Directors sought to provide increased oversight of F-1 programs and non-US based international student recruitment agencies. Having achieved this goal, CSIET turns its attention to the over ¹23,822 public (and 2,845 private) high schools across the United States. With 63 J-1/42 F-1 programs among CSIET's membership, and an increasing number of international members, the CSIET seal of approval has earned substantial recognition and has shown resilience during challenging times. It is clear that the international student exchange community values CSIET's unique role as its standard-bearer and looks to CSIET for comprehensive evaluation of programs. While we are proud of our accomplishments thus far, we are eager to expand our reach to U.S. high schools, both public and private, and the greater international student exchange community.

Background

According to CSIET's Statistics Report, 21,396 exchange students took part in the J-1 high school exchange experience in 2022-2023. This number represents a 7.1% decrease compared to 2017-2018. These students are represented by 63 CSIET J-1 certified organizations. Regulatory influences and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to complicate J-1 school outreach and host family recruitment. As a result, traditional J-1 organizations are feeling the need to do more with fewer resources.

According to statistics provided by the Department of Homeland Security, in the fall of 2022 there were 24,392 international F-1 students enrolled in US secondary schools and pursuing a full high-school diploma. Due to consolidation and attrition, the number of CSIET F-1 organizations has decreased to 42 in 2022-2023 (a 39.13% decrease compared to 2017-2018). 80.14% of F-1 international exchange activity remains without significant regulation/oversight; CSIET member organizations represent only 19.86% of F-1 high school students. Moreover, with 7,186 I-20 certified secondary schools and a decrease in F-1 applicants from China, the F-1 high school market is more competitive than ever.

¹ Vlasova, Helen. "How Many Schools are in The U.S (Statistics & Facts) - 2023." *Admissionsly.com*, 29 May 2022, <https://admissionsly.com/how-many-schools-are-there/>. Accessed 10 February 2023.

School and Host Family Outreach Challenges

Recent recruiting issues have caused increased attention on school outreach. An indication of the continued issues faced by programs is echoed in the results of a recent CSIET survey of its program members. CSIET program members cite school outreach as the #1 priority for CSIET in the coming years. Other top priorities include: host family outreach, J-1 advocacy, and increased training opportunities.

Regulatory Context

J-1 Visa: CSIET enjoys a cooperative and long-standing relationship with the US Department of State. Over our 40-year history, CSIET Standards and J-1 high school federal regulation have combined to create a high quality secondary school cultural exchange program. Though we no longer require management audits for our J-1 members, CSIET monitors program status with the US Department of State and we respond to complaints regarding program aspects not subject to 22 CFR \ PART 62--EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM \ § Sec. 62.25 Secondary school students, specifically, those issues related to athletic participation and program promotion.

The Department of State is currently reviewing the J-1 high school category to determine the need for regulatory change. In light of the fact that there is little appetite in Congress for consideration of a host family tax deduction, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is having early conversations about the feasibility of potential regulatory change that would allow for host family remuneration. Such conversations are only preliminary at this point, however, that they are happening at all demonstrates ECA's current commitment to exploring ways to increase hosting capacity and school readiness to accept J-1 students. The necessity for continued collaboration between CSIET and the US Department of State on school/host family outreach is clear and should be a top priority for CSIET.

F-1 Visa: CSIET maintains its relationship with ICE and SEVP, and our Standards for F-1 activity have increased student safety and welfare for 42 F-1 programs. However, with only 19.86% coverage of the overall number of F-1 students at the secondary school level, CSIET must increase its reach to the more than seven thousand F-1 schools that host these students. Without additional F-1 secondary school regulation in sight, CSIET's outreach must result in expanded F-1 oversight, in the same tradition it has for its other certified programs.

CSIET MISSION STATEMENT

As CSIET charts its course for 2023 to 2026, our Mission Statement seeks to meet the needs of our many constituent groups.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is to evaluate and certify long-term international student exchange programs at the secondary level. CSIET accredits only those programs that demonstrate:

- **Commitment** to CSIET's Standards of Excellence;

- **Engagement** in the development and sharing of Community Preferred Practices; and
- **Advancement** of the educational value of international student exchange.

CSIET's purpose is to cultivate **excellence**, to facilitate a spirit of **cooperation** and **support**, and to help **ensure safety and value** for international exchange students, secondary schools, host families and natural parents.

KEY PRIORITIES

CSIET believes that the next three years will be critical for advancing and promoting international student exchange programs that deliver safety and value to as many international exchange students, secondary schools and families as possible. To that end, CSIET's strategic positioning seeks to expand our reach, both domestically and internationally to include not only U.S. secondary schools, but also international student recruitment agencies. In 2022-2023, informed by the current educational and political landscape, the CSIET Board of Directors has approved a strategic vision and plan that aims to raise awareness and strengthen institutional relationships throughout the recruiting and placement continuum.

As CSIET pursues its strategic direction for the next 3 years, the Board of Directors has set forth priorities based on CSIET's four **core values**:

CORE VALUE: STEWARDSHIP

Priority 1: Advance/Promote the Value of International Student Exchange for CSIET Constituent Groups, Including International Students, Natural/Host Families and US Secondary Schools.

Objective 1: School Outreach

- Within the limits of financial and human resources, collaborate with CSIET Members, the Alliance and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to mount a cost-effective and far-reaching promotional campaign on behalf of J-1 program operators;
- Work with State Athletic Associations to increase awareness among schools about the advantages of working with CSIET certified exchange programs; and
- Connect with state and national secondary school educational associations to promote CSIET certified programs and educate school personnel on regulation, policy and preferred practices.

Objective 2: Membership Development

- Engage new and existing International Associate Members to explore the development of Model Standards/Practices for I-20 certified schools. Such practices should focus specific attention on the recruitment, placement and oversight of F-1 international exchange students;

- B. Develop a robust and sustainable value proposition for U.S. schools that includes training and the possibility of CSIET certification;
- C. Within declared budget and fundraising constraints, explore a financially sustainable and operationally scalable model for the certification of non-US based, F-1 international student recruitment agencies; and
- D. Develop agreements with educational associations to expand opportunities for CSIET membership.

CORE VALUE: TRANSPARENCY

Priority 2: Align Expectations across the International Student Recruiting and Placement Continuum

Objective 1: Evaluation and Accountability

- A. Review and re-articulate the role of the CSIET Complaints Process as it relates to determination of program Certification Status;
- B. Review and revise (if necessary) CSIET's evaluation process of J-1 secondary school programs and articulate the process after the review and revision, if any;
- C. As necessary, review and revise the CSIET Complaints Process to meet the needs of constituent groups (Natural Parents, International Student Recruitment Agencies, International Exchange Students, Schools, Athletics Associations, Host Families, etc.); and
- D. Within the declared budget, design and implement a modernized methodology for the collection, presentation and adjudication of complaints materials.

Objective 2: Education

- A. Review and revise existing CSIET publications for inclusion of relevant content that specifically targets secondary schools;
- B. Design and implement a publications strategy/portfolio that ensures timely delivery of accurate content/resources;
- C. Define and refine CSIET's process for periodic review of print and digital publications;
- D. Research and implement existing and emerging technologies for efficient delivery of CSIET publications and materials; and
- E. Develop a defined set of preferred practices relative to the promotion of international student exchange programs (both US and internationally based).

CORE VALUE: ENGAGEMENT

Priority 3: Improve CSIET training/volunteer opportunities and increase member/non-member involvement.

Objective 1: Relevant and Timely Training, Workshops and Conferences

- A. Explore the development of a local coordinator training module that J program sponsors can use to demonstrate compliance with Dept. of State regulations in order to be certified;
- B. Establish a standing planning committee for CSIET Conferences and Workshops;
- C. Develop and implement criteria for timely selection and delivery of relevant content for CSIET's virtual training and in-person conferences; and
- D. Develop relevant online training, information workshops, and in-person events for schools and non-US based international student recruitment agencies.

Objective 2: Effective Technology Use

- A. Within the limits of resources and budget, introduce a blended member/non-member outreach strategy that implements the technology resources for the collection and maintenance of user contact information; and
- B. Create a standing Website Review Committee to help develop CSIET's outreach capacity to schools and host families. Conceive a new communications/technology plan, and advise CSIET Staff on preferred practices.
- C. Create proprietary training modules that can be delivered online to local coordinators, designated school representatives, and non-US based student recruitment agencies.

CORE VALUE: PARTNERSHIP

Priority 4: Grow CSIET's capacity and expand its reach, through the development of existing and emerging partnerships.

Objective 1: Strategic Alliances

- A. Develop clear channels/practices for recruitment of additional state athletics/activities associations, secondary schools and non-US based student recruitment agencies for CSIET membership;
- B. Research, identify and acquire new corporate partners, as well as state and national associations, for engagement with CSIET and its members; and
- C. Maintain and seek endorsements from state, national and international education associations.

Objective 2: Advocacy

- A. Federal Engagement and Partnership
 - Develop, document and maintain a formal strategy for engagement with the U.S. Departments of State and Homeland Security;

- Define CSIET's role relative to partners who engage in advocacy efforts on behalf of the secondary school exchange community.
- B. Public Outreach
- Conduct a formal needs assessment in cooperation with CSIET certified organizations, stratified by size and longevity. Review how CSIET can further support these members, and specifically, its larger and established members;
 - Within the limits of resources and budget, equip members with relevant tools and content so they might campaign on behalf of safe and transparent international student exchange; and
 - Create a standing State Policy Monitoring Committee to establish a clear process for the collection, appraisal and sharing of state policies relative to international student exchange.

Objective 3: Market Research and Analysis (Surveys, Polls, Market Studies, Statistical Reports)

- A. Conduct a thorough review of existing statistical reports to determine relevance and value;
- B. Research new areas for market analysis and statistical reporting; and
- C. Within the limits of resources and budget, partner with complementary entities to research and pilot new methods for the collection, sharing and interpretation of data.

Approved by the CSIET Board of Directors, April 27, 2023.