



CSIET Standards and United States Department of State Regulations

CSIET Standards for International Educational Travel Programs

CSIET (Council on Standards for International Educational Travel) is a not-for-profit organization committed to quality international educational travel and exchange. It establishes “standards” for organizations operating such programs at the high school level and monitors these organizations for compliance with those “standards” and also disseminates information regarding these organizations.

Agent: Individual or organization authorized to represent or act on behalf of the organization in administering one or more aspects of the program, for example, an overseas partner.

Organization: Entity that sponsors international educational travel activities.

Program: Organized international educational travel activity that begins with participant recruitment and selection, includes the components outlined in the standards which follow, and terminates when the participant returns to his or her point of origin or otherwise severs the relationship with the program sponsor.

Short-term Program: A short-term program is one whose in-country duration is generally eight weeks or less.

Volunteer: 1. A representative who is compensated for out-of-pocket expenses only. If a representative receives regular compensation, such as a per student placement fee, this individual cannot be considered a volunteer. 2. A host family that provides room and board gratis to a student.

STANDARD 1: EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Programs shall be designed to fulfill educational purposes related to an international experience.
- B. The organization sponsoring the program shall have clearly established goals and learning objectives to fulfill the educational purposes of its programs.

STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

- A. The structure and administration of the organization shall be clearly defined.
- B. The organization shall have the personnel needed to administer its programs effectively.
 1. The organization is accountable for the full scope of the programs it administers, including actions taken and representations made by its agents, and maintains responsibility for its students both within the US and abroad.
 2. The organization shall maintain direct, hands-on control of the placement and supervision of inbound students and the hiring, firing and remuneration of local representatives. It may not enter into a relationship with another entity that appears to exercise such control.
- C. The organization shall be organized under the laws of one of the 50 states of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- D. The organization shall demonstrate success in international educational travel through at least one full year since its incorporation.

STANDARD 3: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The organization shall be capable of discharging its financial responsibilities to all participants.

- B. The organization shall have sufficient financial backing to protect all monies paid by participants and to ensure fulfillment of all responsibilities to participants.
- C. The organization shall have an independent Certified Public Accountant annually prepare an audited or review financial statement.

STANDARD 4: PROMOTION

- A. The organization's promotional materials shall professionally, ethically and accurately reflect its purposes, activities and sponsorship.
- B. The organization shall not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc, that:
 1. are not sufficiently in advance of the student's arrival
 2. appeal to public pity or guilt
 3. imply in any way that a student will be denied participation if a host family is not
 4. identify photos of individual students and include an appeal for an immediate family.

Following are guidelines for public media advertisements:

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be unacceptable: Urgently Needed, Don't let me be homeless, This is an emergency...

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be acceptable: Open your hearts and homes, Host a foreign Exchange Student...

It is permissible to use a picture of a student, a first name, age, country of origin and a composite or generic listing of interests in an advertisement in order to demonstrate the personal nature of the program and the types of interests that students have. It is not permissible to identify that specific student as needing a home, nor is it permissible to refer to a student's athletic ability or accomplishments. Written waivers must be obtained for the use of any student photographs

- C. The organization shall not promote or recruit for its programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families or schools.
- D. All promotional materials/activities shall distinguish the program and the sponsoring organization from others operating under:
 1. affiliated or related corporate structures
 2. the same or similar names or symbols.
- E. The organization shall fully disclose all fees, including school tuition, host family reimbursements, and other required or optional costs to prospective students and their natural families before enrollment. *(If host families provide room and board gratis to the students, publicity should state that fees cover "selection and placement in host families" and not imply in any way that the fees paid by the students cover "room and board.")*
- F. Neither the organization nor its agents shall promote its programs as providing opportunities for school athletic participation, high school graduation, driver's education instruction, household domestic service, child care, employment, or other activities that might compromise the student, program, or school. *(Standard 4F specifically prohibits the organization and its agents (this includes foreign partners) from promoting its programs as providing any of the aforementioned activities. The word "promote" as it is used in Standard 4F includes any specific focus on or prominence of pictures and/or text depicting these activities. No prominent pictures and/or text will be considered to be in compliance.)*
- G. The organization shall not state or imply in its promotional materials/activities that persons who are compensated other than out-of-pocket expenses are volunteers.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

- A. The organization shall screen and select student participants on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.
- B. Screening procedures for homestay programs shall include personal interviews with student applicants.
- C. Selection shall be completed sufficiently in advance of the student's departure to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation.
- D. Students shall be given a suitable orientation before departure and after arrival in the host country.
- E. All inbound students enrolled in a U.S. high school must have adequate English language proficiency to function successfully.
- F. All inbound and outbound students enrolled in school must have adequate academic preparation to function successfully.

STANDARD 6: STUDENT PLACEMENT

- A. For programs that include a homestay, the organization shall:
 1. select host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.
 2. personally interview all prospective host families in their home.
 3. match students and host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program

4. complete placement arrangements sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation of the host family (*Whenever possible, a student should be placed with a host family who has made a long-term commitment to host the student prior to the student's departure from his/her home country. In cases where this is not possible, a student may be placed with a short-term host family until long-term arrangements can be made. All short-term families must be selected and oriented according to the same criteria as are long-term families. The short-term nature of the host family placement must be fully disclosed in advance to the student, his/her natural parents, and the school principal, and be acceptable to them. Short-term families may, of course, also be utilized when a host family placement has not worked out and a new family must be found.*)
5. provide suitable orientation and training to the host family. (*When a family expresses an interest in hosting a student and a representative makes the initial home visit to explain the program, this is not to be considered the "host family orientation." CSJET suggests that host family orientation include information on the student's expectations about family and school life, customs, religion and mores of the student's native country, the academic program in which the student will be enrolled, potential problems in hosting exchange students and suggestions on how to cope with such problems.*)
- B. Organizations shall not knowingly be party to a placement based on athletic abilities, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host family, a school or any other interested party.
- C. For programs that include accommodations other than a homestay, the organization shall:
1. arrange accommodations on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 2. ensure the adequacy of the accommodations with respect to location, cleanliness, safety, nutrition, and supervision
 3. confirm the accommodations sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home.
- D. For programs that include enrollment in US high schools, the organization shall:
- a. secure written acceptance from the school principal or other designated responsible school administrator prior to the exchange student's departure from his or her home country.
 - b. provide the school with the following information about the student:
 - 1) academic history, including
 - a) academic records, translated into English or other language as appropriate
 - b) number of years of school completed prior to arrival, and number of years required in home country for the completion of secondary school
 - 2) level of English language proficiency (for inbound students only)
 - 3) appropriate background information
 - 4) expectations regarding school experience

STANDARD 7: OPERATIONS

- A. The organization shall ensure adequate care and supervision of students.
- B. Local representatives of the organization shall maintain regular personal contact with students and host families. (*Contact should be initiated by the organization's representative at least once a month be it by telephone, a visit to the home, personal contact at a gathering or other means. E-mail alone is not considered sufficient personal contact. Regular monthly contact is to include separate communication with the student and the host family in order to provide each with the opportunity to discuss issues they might not raise in the presence of the other. CSJET expects that there be formal documentation of this contact such as a monthly form, written journal, written log, etc. This is not to imply that representatives have to record every interaction. Rather it is to provide a record for the organization's office of the pattern of student and host family adjustments, activities, and relationships through at least monthly contact with each student and host family.*)
- C. The organization shall notify the student, host family, and/or other supervisor of accommodations regarding the travel itinerary sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from the home country.
- D. The organization shall provide adequate support services at the local level to assist with program-related needs and problems, for example, counseling services, travel, medical care, language problems, changes in host family, emergencies.
- E. The organization shall maintain an effective system of screening, selecting, training, and supervising program representatives and group leaders.
- F. The organization shall provide all students with an identification card that includes the student's name; the host family's name, address, and telephone; the local representative's name, address, and telephone; the address and telephone of the organization's appropriate national office.
- G. For programs involving school enrollment, the organization shall maintain regular communication with school authorities.
- H. The organization shall provide an opportunity to the student, host family, and school to participate in a post-exchange evaluation.

- I. The organization shall have in place adequate plans and procedures for dealing with emergency situations that may arise during the program.
- J. The organization shall respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to complaints received from students, families, schools or others concerned with the program and its quality.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT INSURANCE

- A. The organization shall guarantee that every student is covered with adequate health and accident insurance. Such insurance shall:
 - a. Protect students for the duration of their program
 - b. Provide for the return of the student to his/her home in the event of serious illness, accident, or death during the program.
- B. The organization shall provide students, host families, and appropriate supervisor(s) with detailed printed information regarding terms and limits of insurance coverage and procedures for filing a claim.
- C. Compensated officials and employees of the organization shall not receive compensation from the sale of insurance to its participants.

STANDARD 9: ADHERENCE TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

- A. The organization shall comply with all appropriate government regulations regarding international exchange or any other activity under its auspices.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the organization to notify the Council of any change in status with respect to government designation, acknowledgment, acceptance, endorsement and/or sanction.

United States Department of State Regulations

From the:

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The following are the United States Department of State Exchange Visitor Program regulations, Code of Federal Regulations, 22 C.F.R. Part 514, as revised March 19, 1993.

§514.25 Secondary School Students

(a) *Introduction.* These regulations govern Agency designated exchange visitor programs under which foreign national secondary students are afforded the opportunity for up to one year of study in a United States public or private secondary school, while living with an American host family or residing at an accredited U.S. boarding school.

(b) *Program sponsor eligibility.* Eligibility for designation as a secondary school student exchange program sponsor shall be limited to:

- (1) Organizations with tax-exempt status as conferred by the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to section 501(c)(3); and
- (2) Organizations which are United States citizens as such terms is defined §514.2.

(c) *Program eligibility.* Secondary school students exchange programs designated by the Agency shall:

- (1) Require all participants to pursue a full course of study at an accredited educational institution as such terms are defined in the Part of not less than one academic semester (or quarter equivalency) nor more than two academic semesters (or quarter equivalency) duration; and
- (2) Be conducted on an academic calendar year basis provided, however, participants may begin in the second semester of an academic year if specifically permitted to do so, in writing, by the school in which the exchange visitor is enrolled.

(d) *Program administration.* Sponsors shall ensure that all officers, employees, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf:

- (1) Are adequately trained and supervised;
- (2) Make no student placement outside a 120 mile radius of the home of an organizational representative authorized to act on the sponsor's behalf in both routine and emergency matters arising from a student's participation in their exchange program;
- (3) Ensure that no organizational representative act as both host family and area supervisor for any student participant whom that organizational representative may host;
- (4) Maintain a regular schedule of personal contact with the student and host family, and ensure that the school has contact information for the local organizational representative and U.S. offices of the sponsor; and
- (5) Adhere to all regulatory provisions set forth in this Part and all additional terms and conditions governing program administration that the Agency may from time to time impose.

(e) *Student selection.* In addition to satisfying the requirements of §514.10(a), sponsors shall ensure that all participants in a designated secondary school student exchange program:

- (1) Are *bone fide* students who:
 - (i) Are secondary students in their home country who have not completed more than eleven years of primary and secondary study, exclusive of kindergarten; or
 - (ii) Are at least 15 years of age but not more than 18 and six months years of age at the time of initial enrollment;
- (2) Demonstrate maturity, good character, and scholastic aptitude; and
- (3) Have not previously participated in an academic year or semester secondary school student exchange program in the United States.

(f) *Student enrollment.*

- (1) Sponsors shall secure prior written acceptance for the enrollment of any student participant in a United States public or private secondary school. Such prior acceptance shall:
 - (i) Be secured from the school principal or other authorized school administrator of the school or school system that the student participant will attend; and
 - (ii) Include written arrangements concerning the payment of tuition or waiver thereof if applicable.
- (2) Sponsors shall maintain copies of all written acceptances and make such documents available for Agency inspection upon request.

(3) Sponsors shall submit to the school a written English language summary of the student's complete academic course work prior to commencement of school.

(4) Under no circumstance shall a sponsor facilitate the entry into the United States of a student for whom a school placement has not been secured.

(5) Sponsors shall not facilitate the enrollment of more than five students in one school unless the school itself has requested, in writing, the placement of more than five students.

(g) *Student Orientation.* In addition to the orientation requirements set forth herein at §514.10, all sponsors shall provide students, prior to their departure from the home country, with the following information:

(1) A summary of all operating procedures, rules, and regulations governing student participation in the exchange program;

(2) A detailed profile of the school, family, and community in which the student is placed;

(3) A detailed summary of travel arrangements;

(4) An identification card which lists the student's name, United States home placement address and telephone number, and a telephone number which affords immediate contact with both the Agency and sponsor in case of emergency. Such cards may be provided in advance of home country departure or immediately upon entry into the United States.

(h) *Student extra-curricular activities.* Students may participate in school sanctioned and sponsored extra-curricular activities, including athletics, if such participation is:

(1) Authorized by the local school district in which the student is enrolled; and

(2) Authorized by the state authority responsible for determination of athletic eligibility, if applicable.

(i) *Student employment.* Students may not be employed on either a full or part-time basis but may accept sporadic or intermittent employment such as babysitting or yard work.

(j) *Host family selection.* Sponsors shall adequately screen all potential host families and at a minimum shall:

(1) Provide potential host families with a detailed summary of the exchange program and the parameters of their participation, duties, and obligations;

(2) Utilize a standard application form for all host family applicants which provides a detailed summary and profile of the host family, the physical home environment, family composition, and community environment;

(3) Conduct an in-person interview with all family members residing in the home;

(4) Ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment;

(5) Ensure that the host family is of good reputation and character by securing two personal references for each host family from the school or community, attesting to the host family's good reputation and character;

(6) Ensure that the host family has adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations; and

(7) Maintain a record of application forms, evaluations and interviews for all selected host families for a period of three years.

(k) *Host family orientation.* In addition to the orientation requirements set forth in § 514.10, sponsors shall:

(1) Inform all families of the philosophy, rules, and regulations governing the sponsor's exchange program;

(2) Provide all selected host families with a copy of Agency-promulgated Exchange Visitor Program regulations; and

(3) Advise all selected host families of strategies governing cross-cultural interaction and conduct workshops which will familiarize the host family with cultural differences and practices.

(l) *Host family placement.*

(1) Sponsors shall secure, prior to the student's departure from the home country, a host family placement for each student participant. Sponsors shall not:

(i) Facilitate the entry into the United States for a student for whom a host family placement has not been secured; and

(ii) Place more than one student with a host family without the express prior written consent of the Agency.

(2) Sponsors shall advise both the student and host family, in writing, of the respective family compositions and backgrounds of each and shall facilitate and encourage the exchange of correspondence between the two prior to the student's departure from the home country.

(3) In the event of unforeseen circumstances which necessitate a change of host family placement, the sponsor shall document the reasons necessitating such change and provide the Agency with an annual statistical summary reflecting the number and the reason for such change in host family placement.

(m) *Placement report.* In lieu of listing the name and address of the host family and school placement on a participant's Form IAP-66, sponsors must, no later than August 31st of each academic year, submit to the Agency a report of all academic year program participants. Such report shall set forth the participant's name, school, and host

family placements. A report of semester participants entering United States Schools during the January to June term shall be submitted to the Agency by January 15th.

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