

## **CSIET Position Statement on the Benefits of Youth Exchange**

The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) and its listed exchange organizations believe that safe and reputable Youth Exchange provides schools with a concrete means to increase diversity, strengthen instruction, and build programs that imbue students with global competence. Schools that leverage inbound and outbound Youth Exchange are not confined by traditional curricular constructs, but rather, they are empowered by their desire to teach students to navigate the challenges of an increasingly global society. These 21<sup>st</sup> century schools are well-equipped to sustain themselves as viable places of learning.

Teachers who include exchange students in their lessons often demonstrate compliance with state and local standards. These teachers are likely also to employ dynamic content such as geography, history, foreign language and comparative cultures.

Students who participate in Youth Exchange are called upon to demonstrate growth and maturity. They think critically about other cultures and their own. Whether hosting an exchange student or participating in a program of study abroad, those students who engage in Youth Exchange attain a 21<sup>st</sup> century skill set that includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Improved communication
- Improved problem solving capability
- Greater knowledge and awareness of other cultures, traditions and customs
- Improved sense of self and purpose
- Greater capacity to engage in shared projects
- Improved critical thinking

Further, CSIET and its listed organizations believe that students who participate in Youth Exchange are more inclined to continue their studies in college. Their level of maturity permits them to identify career goals earlier than their peers, thus bringing about improved learning environments, lower attrition and higher graduation rates.

Finally, host families are universally enriched by the presence of exchange students in their communities. These students share language, culture and common traditions over meals, vacations, holidays and special occasions. As a result, exchange students and their families often develop positive relationships that endure well into adult life.

**Approved by the CSIET Board of Directors, July 2011**

*For more information on Youth Exchange, please visit [www.csiet.org](http://www.csiet.org)*