

Administering Youth Exchange Guide

3rd Edition

The U.S. High Schools' Guide
on International Student Exchange



STANDARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT EXCHANGE

International Youth Exchange – An Effective Tool for Globalizing Education at Your School

The Need for an Authentic Global Perspective

Today parents, government, business, and industry depend upon America's high schools to ensure that graduates are internationally aware and interculturally competent. The stakes are high, as our nation's security and standing in the world are riding upon our schools' ability to prepare students to be citizens of the world. These demands are pervasive in every sector of society, and international youth exchange can help your school meet these challenges.

Many U.S. leader are emphasizing, the need for intercultural competency among our citizens for the national interest:

"I just think we can't do enough of this [student exchanges]... And when you get young children traveling internationally, I think they come back different people. And you can't put a price tag -- you can't put a value on that."¹

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

"Simple exchanges can break down walls between us, for when people come together and speak to one another and share a common experience, then their common humanity is revealed."²

President Barack Obama

"Facilitating exchanges and face-to-face interactions between individuals is the bread and butter of our public diplomacy work. Our Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs works around the clock to maintain a wide range of high-quality exchanges between youth, students, educators, artists, athletes, and emerging leaders in the United States and more than 160 countries. Exchange participants quickly become citizen ambassadors. They create spaces for conversation and opportunities for cooperation while traveling abroad. And they build even larger communities of understanding when they return home."³

Judith McHale

Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

"All sectors of American society and government are focused on the profound challenge of finding common ground and I believe exchanges are a key element. In exchanges, we rely on and engage our single greatest asset – the American citizen."⁴

Ann Stock

Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs nominee

¹Duncan, Arne. "International Competitiveness and Education: A Conversation with Arne Duncan." *Georgetown University*, 26 May 2010. Accessed 9 August 2011 <http://www.cfr.org/education/international-competitiveness-education-conversation-arne-duncan/p22231?cid=rsrs-transcripts-international-competitiveness_090910>

²"Remarks of President Barack Obama at Student Roundtable." *Tophane Cultural Center Istanbul, Turkey*, 7 April 2009. Accessed 19 July 2011 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-Of-President-Barack-Obama-At-Student-Roundtable-In-Istanbul/>

³McHale, Judith. "Remarks of Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Judith McHale at the Exchange 2.0 Summit." *U.S. Institute of Peace, Washington, DC*, 27 April 2011. Accessed 9 August 2011 <<http://www.state.gov/r/remarks/2011/161854.htm>>

⁴"Opening Statement of Ann Stock, Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs." *The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State*. Accessed 9 August 2011 <<http://foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/StockTestimony100202p.pdf>>

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“I want to see more exchanges. So the exchange programs should be accelerated, in my view, to include many more opportunities, and we’re going to do that.”⁵

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

“The importance of international exchanges in today’s global marketplace of ideas and business cannot be understated. Having the opportunity to live and study in another country, or hosting someone from another country has the profound effect of reminding us that America is not the only country out there.”⁶

Indiana Senator Richard G. Lugar

“Our nation must engage with the rest of the world. But to be successful, we must listen. Our interaction with the world must be a conversation, not a monologue. Many of these conversations begin with exchange programs run by the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). These exchanges are a strategic pillar of our nation’s public diplomacy.”⁷

Dina Habib Powell

Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs
United States Department of State

“As September 11 showed us, when the State Department issued urgent calls for speakers of Arabic, we don’t have enough national capacity in the major world languages to meet the need of our intelligence and counter-terrorism communities, of our military, for effective partnership with our allies, or for homeland security. Police, public health and law enforcement officials will increasingly need to be able to deal with many different language groups... And they are not simply looking for translators, but for analysts and experts in many fields who can interpret the cultural context, too.”⁸

Ambassador Nicholas Platt

“America needs people who understand foreign cultures and who are fluent in locally-spoken languages...The stability and economic vitality of the United States and our national security depend on American citizens who are knowledgeable about the world. We need civil servants, including law enforcement officers, teachers, area experts, diplomats, and business people with the ability to communicate at an advanced level in the languages and understand the cultures of the people with whom they interact.”⁹

U.S. Senator Daniel Akaka of Hawaii

⁵Remarks of Hilary Rodham Clinton at Town Hall at Delhi University.” *Delhi University in New Delhi, India*. 20 July 2009. Accessed 20 July 2011 <<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/july/126245.htm>>

⁶Lugar, Richard G. “Correspondence to Global Indiana Board of Directors, 2009.” Accessed 9 August 2011 <<http://www.globalindianainc.org/>>

⁷“Opening Statement of Dina Habib Powell, Nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.” *The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State*. 26 May 2005. Accessed 18 January 2007 <<http://exchanges.state.gov/news/2005/052605.htm>>.

⁸“Why does international education matter?” *Asia Society*. Accessed 7 February 2007 <<http://www.internationaled.org/why.htm>>.

⁹Akaka, Daniel. “Introduction of the Homeland Security Education Act.” *Daniel Kahikina Akaka, U.S. Senator for Hawaii*. 7 April 2004. Accessed 18 January 2007 <<http://www.akaka.senate.gov/public>>.

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The private and business sectors are also demanding internationally skilled citizenry. In order to be competitive, business and industry leaders are turning to workers with international knowledge and skills, who speak the languages and understand the cultures of the countries with which they do business.

“The U.S. will be less competitive and less secure if our schools do not urgently expand instruction in world languages, economics, and cultures... Knowledge of the world is no longer a luxury for the few, it is a necessity for all.”¹⁰

Vivien Stewart

Executive Director, National Coalition on Asia and International Studies in the Schools

“As a nation, we are losing our edge. In the lab, in the classroom, and in the marketplace, the United States is seeing its competitive advantage dwindle...There is no doubt that America’s economic well-being hinges on our preeminence in science and technology, which provides the foundation for our historical leadership in producing goods and services and creating personal and national wealth. But, in a globalized economy, our national well-being also hinges on future CEOs, managers, professionals, and entrepreneurs who are competent to conduct business in a global environment.”¹¹

Henry Kaufman and Thomas S. Johnson

Institute for International Education, Board Members

“Toyota’s investment in international exchange is one way to enable young people to see, hear, discuss and feel, first-hand, the impact of living in a country where customs, traditions and ways of thinking are different from their own. The skills that these future leaders develop, in relating to different peoples and different cultures, are critical in today’s global workplace.”¹²

Jana Martin Kemp, Assistant Project Manager

External Affairs, Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc.

University admissions officers may be best qualified to articulate the impact of a high school exchange experience on individual students fortunate enough to participate in these programs.

“Over the years I have found that students who have returned from a significant international experience tend to have a broader outlook on the world and other cultures. They are usually risk-takers in the classroom and more engaged in the campus community. International experience seems to lead to very positive personal growth.”¹³

David Borus

Dean of Admission and Financial Aid at Vassar College

¹⁰“Testimony of Vivien Stewart before the Subcommittee on Select Education, House Committee on Education and the Workforce.” *Asia Society*. 2003. Accessed 18 January 2007 <<http://www.internationalead.org/congressionaltestimony.htm>>.

¹¹ Kaufman, Henry, and Thomas Johnson. “Send future US business leaders abroad.” *The Christian Science Monitor*. 8 December 2005. Accessed 18 January 2007 <<http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1208/p09s01-coop.html>>.

¹² Kemp, Jana Martin. Personal Interview with YFU staff. 16 October 2006

¹³ AFS-USA. *College Advantage*. New York: 2001.

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Implications for U.S. Education

Deep and authentic linguistic and cultural expertise cannot be developed in a brief language immersion course. State Departments of Education and American universities are responding. Almost half of the State Departments of Education have joined the Asia Society's "*States Institute*" and many American universities are now encouraging, if not requiring, international exchange experiences of their American undergraduates.

If students can begin their intercultural education while still in high school, it will be even deeper and more meaningful.

Many groups have, in recent years, begun to define some of the international and cultural competencies that should become the basis for State Education standards. These often include such skills as:

- ◇ understanding foreign cultures,
- ◇ recognizing cultural differences and avoiding stereotypes,
- ◇ understanding the interrelationships between local and global issues,
- ◇ communicating in a second language,
- ◇ solving problems collaboratively with individuals from diverse backgrounds,
- ◇ respecting differences,
- ◇ critically evaluating world events from different perspectives
- ◇ recognizing the interdependence of the world.

How International Youth Exchange Will Globalize Your School

Recent studies have also shown that the bonds of friendship that develop during hosting experiences help students grow in their understanding and appreciation of diversity and lead to an increase in tolerance. As students discuss different issues, they develop an appreciation for diverse perspectives.

Hosting exchange students and encouraging American students to study abroad brings international and intercultural learning alive in your classrooms. International students and newly returned American students bring new perspectives to classroom discussions that were previously limited to American teachers and students trying to think beyond their own cultural biases and experience. World events take on a new significance when we have personal relationships with people from the places in the news. Indeed, many of the issues that we will face in this century are issues which will have to be addressed by a global citizenry—hunger, resource sharing, protecting our environment, and achieving peace. Discussions with exchange students can help your students to appreciate the need to engage people from other countries in addressing such universal issues. In short, authentic multicultural discussions model the types of interactions students can expect to experience beyond their careers as students.

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Youth exchange enhances study of a modern language and culture as well. American students who study abroad achieve greater fluency in the target language, while language classes in U.S. schools take on an added dimension when native speakers – inbound exchange students – share their linguistic and cultural backgrounds with the class.

Exchange students are ready and willing to engage with your teachers and students to provide an international perspective to any type of class or activity. They have come to the United States to learn about our people and our culture and want to share information about their own. American students who have studied abroad are also eager to share their stories and experiences. The more a school plans to engage exchange students—whether hosted students or Americans returned from programs abroad—the greater the benefit to both student and school community.

In fact, it is high school teachers and administrators who speak most eloquently about the impact of hosting students from abroad on American high schools and their students.

“We have found that welcoming foreign exchange students into our school provides not only a life-changing experience for the international student, but an even greater impact on our American students. Our school community has become more cognizant of the world around us and the interdependence of our global society.”¹⁴

Dr. David Waters
Principal, Timberland High School
Wentzville, Missouri

To take advantage of the benefits of having international exchange students contribute to your school community, you only need to open your doors to hosting international students and consider how you can support and accredit the experiences of young Americans who go abroad. If you have any questions, CSJET is here to help.

¹⁴Waters, David. Personal Interview with CSJET staff. 25 January 2007.