CSIET Advisory Board for International Student Recruitment

AIRC: The American International Recruitment Council
AISAP: Association of Independent School Admission Professionals
CSIET: The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel
EMA: The Enrollment Management Association
GEBG: Global Education Benchmark Group
NACAC: National Association for College Admission Counseling
NAIS: National Association of Independent Schools
(Loana Wheeler, Director of Global Initiatives, Ex-Officio)
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
TABS: The Association of Boarding Schools

CSIET: Improving International Student Recruitment

The lack of regulation and consistency around the recruitment and enrollment of F-1 international students at U.S. secondary schools raises ethical concerns, and also opens the door for misaligned expectations among the various parties involved in the administration of the enrollment process.

As hosts of international students, US secondary schools may partner with agencies both within the United States and abroad to recruit and enroll new international students. However, without guidance on best practice for collaborating with third-party recruitment agencies, expectations around this complex process, particularly from a student perspective, can be unclear; risk can be high. At the higher education level, colleges and universities are expected to act with transparency, integrity, and accountability; secondary-level practices should align with these standards.

In response to these issues, the CSIET Advisory Board has developed comprehensive Model Standards for international student recruitment at the secondary level.

CSIET Model Standards for Non-US Based International Student Recruitment Agencies

1. Stewardship:
   a. Agencies must commit to a training process, as determined by the partner school, for initial and continued education about the school and admission process;
   b. Agencies demonstrate the ability to carry out fiduciary responsibility to all program participants;
c. Agencies act ethically, honestly, professionally, responsibly and in the interest of students and natural parents at all times;
d. Agencies have a clear process for the submission and adjudication of complaints;
e. Agencies adhere to local and international law wherever and whenever applicable.

2. Transparency:
   a. Agencies accurately disclose U.S partner agencies, sub-agents and educational institutions with whom they have a documented business relationship. Specifically, agencies must disclose to students/natural families the names of their partner agencies, sub-agents and schools;
b. Agencies disclose their ownership, governance and organizational structure in an accurate and detailed manner;
c. The nature of the partnership between the agency and US partner institution is clearly stated in the form of a contract or written agreement;
d. Written agreements/contracts between the agency and school are signed by both parties; agreements/contracts display all itemized fee schedules, refund policies and other policies as applicable by law; such contracts/agreements avoid any misrepresentation and do not make promises or guarantees that cannot be met;
e. Written agreements/contracts between the agency and student/natural parents must clarify that the agency does not collect any commissions based on financial aid or scholarship; also, contracts with students/natural parents stipulate confidentiality and the limits therein, as guaranteed by privacy laws; these contracts/agreements display all itemized fee schedules, refund policies and other policies as applicable by law; such contracts/agreements avoid any misrepresentation and do not make promises or guarantees that cannot be met;
f. Agencies stand by the veracity of documentation, including: financial capability, grades, transcripts, teacher recommendations, English language capability and any other documentation/scores used for the purpose of admissions;
g. Agencies fully disclose the practice of collecting payments/fees/commissions:
   i. If agencies receive payments from students/natural families, this practice must be disclosed to partner schools;
   ii. If agencies receive commissions from partner schools, this practice must be disclosed to students/natural parents;
   iii. If agencies compensate sub-agents, independent contractors, consultants and/or franchisees, this practice must be disclosed to students/natural parents and partner schools.
h. Agencies shall not knowingly be a party to a placement based solely on athletic skill and ability, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host family, a school, or any other interested party. Agencies should provide transparency and report to
partners/schools any F-1 student for whom participation in interscholastic varsity athletics was the sole motivating factor at the time of application.

i. Agencies shall secure written, student-specific acceptance from the DSO (Designated School Official), PDSO (Principal Designated School Official), school principal or other designated responsible school administrator prior to the international student’s departure from his or her home country.

3. Engagement:
   a. Agencies train their recruitment personnel (including, but not limited to, employees, sub-agents, independent contractors, consultants and franchisees) annually in relevant standards, practices, procedures and content areas. Recommended resources include:
      i. The US secondary school education system;
         1. Principles of Good Practice (NAIS, NAFSA, TABS);
         2. Enrollment Management Practices (EMA, AISAP);
         3. CSIEt Standards for Long Term International Student Exchange Programs;
      ii. US Regulatory Requirements (SEVP);
   b. The agency shall respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to complaints received from international students, natural parents, schools or others concerned with the program and its quality.

4. Partnership:
   a. The agency is accountable for actions taken and representations made by partners (including, but not limited to sub-agents, independent contractors, consultants and franchisees). All partners must adhere to CSIEt’s Model Standards on International Student Recruitment.
   b. The agency collaborates with US-based agencies and schools that operate in a manner consistent with CSIEt Standards for Long Term International Student Exchange Programs.
   c. The agency partners with US schools on the basis of criteria consistent with CSIEt’s Model School Policy (Section 4, School Expectations of International Student Exchange Programs).

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