

Canadian Educational Standards Institute Launches New Accreditation Guidelines

(Toronto, January 29, 2008) As it prepares to become an international standards accreditation body, the Canadian Educational Standards Institute (CESI) announced revised Accreditation Guidelines for Canadian Independent Schools. These include new indicators of effective practice in the areas of global education, student assessment, sustainability, student wellness, transportation of students, risk management, travel policies, and a new standard of commitment to school improvement.

CESI evaluates school performance based on rigorous educational and operational standards. The revised guidelines are the outcome of a major review of overall procedures, as well as specific areas such as global education, environmental sustainability, and risk management. This year, CESI will attain international recognition for its criteria for effective accreditation standards, establishing it as an international standards accreditation body.

The revised guidelines stipulate that member schools are implementing best practices in all areas of program and operations, ranging from tracking graduate success in university, to global and environmental consciousness. “By offering an arm’s length review process, member schools are obliged to constantly upgrade the quality of education they deliver, and demonstrate a commitment to excellence and improvement,” says Anne-Marie Kee, Executive Director of CESI. “We are constantly reviewing our criteria to ensure that member schools are maintaining the highest standards. In preparation to become an international standards accreditation body, we felt a major review was necessary.”

Says Kim Gordon, Head of the Bishop Strachan School and CESI Board member, “parents and students thinking about private school education can be assured that if a school has received CESI accreditation, it has achieved a level of excellence in many areas, including academic and co-curricular programs, governance, finance, facilities, and risk management. Many hours of evaluation go into a school’s CESI review, and often the reviewers are from ‘competing’ schools. The evaluation process is thorough and demanding, and positive endorsement is not bestowed lightly. However, we all sleep better knowing that CESI accreditation means an excellent school delivering a world-class education to students.”

The CESI Standards Council, comprised primarily of Heads of School from across Canada, develops appraisal criteria and fosters and promotes quality in education in its member schools. A not-for-profit organization, CESI has conducted over 150 reviews and accredited 60 independent schools since 1986. CESI is the only Canadian accreditation body recognized by the Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS).

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