

BC COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION YEAR IN REVIEW

One Year In

I have learned over this last year – and vicariously, the entire team has learned – that launching an enterprise of the magnitude of BCCIE is not unlike hanging on for dear life as an infant bursts into toddlerhood: your time will never again belong to you, your place will never be clean again, there is always something to do, always, and you are beset by endless advice, from good parents and from bad, assuring you of doom and happiness, all of which must be listened to attentively. You rely on others which thanks and trust. On every countertop and doorknob is some new virus, policy, issue or rumour that threatens to slow everyone and everything down to a grinding halt. There are sleepless nights and countless worries about things you can control and things you can't. There is grumbling and whispering and tantrums and hysterics. You pass along your charge to the care of others, and it will let you know directly and indirectly but in no uncertain terms that it is feeling neglected. It needs constant feeding, attention, massaging, assurance and calming. One tries to remain passionate about all tasks involved. There is food on the floor and much else to clean-up on a daily basis.

We have a novel and broad mandate to support the coordination of historically disparate sectors, and we have been met largely with abundant good will as our goals are communicated and embraced or refined in the field. Our first full year of operation has seen the formation and consolidation of a BCCIE team that is professional and committed to the sector and to the great diversity of international education in BC. I am so proud of the achievements of our team and of their passion for the enterprise. Our Board has been sage, committed and diligent.

It has been a start-up year in many ways, but the mundane necessity and time-consuming drudgery of office moves and data base development, of installing furnishings and negotiating benefits plans and equipment leases, etc, have been but secondary diversions as we have produced and delivered on promises of missions and professional development, collateral and web pages, EQA and outreach, coordination and advocacy, and importantly planning for the exciting year ahead.

Randall Martin, BCCIE Executive Director

Showcasing BC Education to the World

In our first year of operations, the BCCIE Marketing Team organized and arranged five major education missions. These missions – to Brazil, Japan, Korea, China, and Vietnam – combined recruitment, leadership and partnership-building opportunities for BC's K-12, post-secondary and language sectors. Major education fairs, targeted boutique showcasing opportunities, school and university visits, consular briefings, agent training workshops and networking events were all designed to ensure that BC international educators were able to connect with key influencers and students. In addition to our missions, BCCIE travelled on behalf of the sector to major education fairs and events in Saudi Arabia, Germany, Spain, Australia, Finland, the USA and even Ottawa to present the benefits of studying in BC and to connect with government and non-government agencies involved in international education.

Bringing the World to BC

BCCIE is also committed to ensuring that key influencers and prospective students have the opportunity to visit the province and experience the extraordinary nature of our education system first hand. During the Olympics, BCCIE partnered with the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (ALMD), the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development (STED) and colleagues from across the sector to offer daily 'Study in BC' information sessions. We also arranged and supported education delegations and media visitors from Russia, China, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Australia, Germany, Taiwan, Korea, India, Nigeria, and Thailand. Many of these delegations travelled outside the Lower Mainland to learn more about the advantages of studying in BC's regions. In addition, our staff meet on a weekly basis with government, non-government agencies, university and college officials, international education agents, and other international visitors interested in learning more about the BC education system.





The Best Place on Earth to Study

In partnership with Lonely Planet, BCCIE created a pocket-sized study guide for international students. Called **The Best Place on Earth to Study**, this guide was first distributed during the Olympics and features overviews of BC's regions, outlines our sectors, and offers interviews with current international students studying in BC. The guide has been extremely well received around the world and we are in the planning stages for the next iteration of the guide.

Launching Education Quality Assurance

BCCIE is proud to be a part of Canada's first and only provincial seal of quality for post-secondary education – the Education Quality Assurance (EQA) program.



EQA is a Government of British Columbia brand of quality for private and public post-secondary education in British Columbia, and is administered on Government's behalf by BCCIE. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development sets all EQA policies, including eligibility requirements for EQA.

Responding to Sector Needs

BCCIE has also engaged with the sector on a number of projects related to internationalization. In order to share dialogue on the benefits of internationalization and international education with our communities, BCCIE has launched the BCCIE Speakers' Series. Speakers this last year have included Dr Daniel Guhr, author the DFAIT report on the future of education marketing in Canada, as well as Mr David Mulroney, Canada's Ambassador to China.

BCCIE also worked with post-secondary mobility contacts to launch a province-wide Study Abroad Consortium (www.bccie.bc.ca/bcsac) designed to better market and support institutional study abroad and field school programs.

BCCIE has also been active in supporting pilot pathway initiatives, provincial e-learning strategies, supporting the Province's immigration annex with the federal government, and in playing a key advocacy role for the sector with government and other stakeholders.

Looking Ahead

In the upcoming year, BCCIE looks forward to continuing to tailor marketing, professional development and advocacy activities to respond to sector needs and interests. We look forward to continuing dialogue with you. Be sure to visit the events section of our website for our most up to date activities. We also encourage all BC practitioners to create an online BCCIE profile to access protected content on the website.

For more information, visit www.bccie.bc.ca.



A Commitment to Excellence

At BCCIE we recognize the need for high quality professional development and training across the sector. In the last year we were pleased to offer over ten professional development events to stakeholders across the sector, looking at everything from mental health issues for international students to pathway programs and recruiting in the USA. We've also begun to record some of our events for podcast and have held our first events outside the Lower Mainland. Our major international education conference, the BCCIE Summer Seminar, was held in Victoria in June of 2009 and attracted over 170 delegates. A major feature of the Seminar was a mentoring program designed to connect those new to the professional with more experienced colleagues for networking and skills sharing.

Engaging With the Sector

Your feedback and direction are critical to our mission. In order to maximize our engagement with the sector, BCCIE has launched a number of initiatives this year to enhance communication and collaboration among those working in the international education field. Our Sector Roundtables bring together colleagues in the same stakeholder community for dialogue and discussion. Our new website features a searchable news and events section and a password protected discussion forum for international educators in BC. We're active on Twitter and Facebook and look forward to further engagement with you in the coming year.

