

Comparative and International Education Society

Guiding Principles on Taking a Public Stance

Last Revised and approved by the Board of Directors April 1, 2026

The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) was established in 1956 for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes. The current CIES constitution recognizes that the purpose of the Society is to contribute to an understanding of education through the encouragement and promotion of comparative education and related areas of inquiry and activity. These goals are enacted through (a) promoting teaching and research in comparative and international education in institutions of higher learning in both national and international contexts; (b) fostering the application of comparative theories and research in applied settings; (c) facilitating the publication and dissemination of comparative, cross-cultural, interdisciplinary, and international studies contributing to interpretation of developments in the field of education in their broad and interrelated political, economic, and social context; (d) encouraging educational and cultural exchanges; and (e) promoting and fostering understanding of how educational policies and programs can improve social and economic development.

These goals have at times inspired CIES to engage in multiple types of social, political and policy engagement. One of those many forms of engagement is taking a public stance on social and policy issues. This document is intended to specify guiding principles on taking a public stance, recognizing a range of situations and issues may prompt the Society to do so. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, CIES does not participate in, intervene in and publish or distribute statements in support of or in opposition to any candidates for public office.

In order to align with the best practices of other academic societies, CIES recognizes two types of public stances, 1) statements written by and approved by the Board; 2) membership-initiated statements that are both debated and voted on by CIES members.

1) Statements written and approved by the Board:

The CIES Board can issue public statements on an issue related to the society's core mission with the approval of two-thirds of its members. These statements may be written by individual Board Members, by their own initiative or due to a collective board decision through an ad hoc committee. In all cases, these statements must be submitted at least a week before the Board meets and sufficient time must be allotted to discuss the statement at the meeting.

2) Membership initiated statements:

Members are allowed to draft proposals for CIES statements. Members are welcome but not required to consult with the CIES Board about their proposed statements. CIES statements must be sponsored by at least 5 percent of the membership in good standing and received by the CIES Board of Directors. Signatories must provide electronic signatures as well as emails and

affiliations and those names will be verified by OED to ensure current membership. Proponents must provide data to substantiate the necessary link to international and comparative education, educational rights, or access to educational opportunity. The Executive Committee, advised by the Parliamentarian, will determine whether the submission meets this criterion.

All proposed statements with 100 members endorsing are deemed to have met these requirements by the Executive Committee shall be discussed either 1) at the State of the Society annual CIES Conference in a hybrid forum to allow for maximum participation; or 2) in an entirely online forum. Sponsors of statements, who may be one member or a group of members, may choose their preferred forum. At the forum sponsors will be given the opportunity to present their arguments in favor of the statement and members will be able to respond in favor or in disagreement. During these forums, amendments to statements may also be proposed and if accepted as a friendly amendment by sponsors, the statement as amended will be sent out for a vote to the membership. If amendments are not accepted, the statement will be sent out for vote in its original form. The CIES Executive Committee, which may seek advice from the OED and/or legal counsel, also retains the right to redact or veto language in a membership statement that creates legal and/or fiduciary risk.

All proposed statements that pass through this deliberative process will be emailed for electronic voting to CIES members, no later than fifteen days after the close of the State of the Society meeting or the online forum. Votes must be received within thirty days of receipt of the email transmission. Twenty percent of the current CIES membership must vote regarding a proposed statement, and the majority of those voting must vote in favor for the statement to pass. If the statement is approved, it will be posted on the CIES website.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The purpose of this FAQ is to provide explanatory information and clarity on the purpose, reasons, and circumstances in which CIES releases public statements in support of certain educational causes. As such, this FAQ is intended to accompany CIES's Guiding Principles on Taking a Public Stance.

1. When is it appropriate for the CIES Board or members to write public statements?

CIES focuses on issues that support its purpose and mission as stated in its Constitution. That is, it embraces causes that protect individual or group rights to education around the world and it speaks out against policies or efforts that encroach on the freedom of individuals or groups to seek access to or move for educational services in various global locales. Although it is not feasible for CIES to make statements on all geopolitical conflicts, there have been multiple instances of mission-aligned public stances that CIES has taken, including for example a

statement in solidarity with [Sri Lankan Student Activists](#), a statement in [Solidarity with the Iranian People](#), a statement in [Solidarity with the People of Ukraine](#), a statement on [Racist Violence and Injustice Against Black People](#), among others that can be reviewed on the [CIES Social and Policy Engagement webpage](#).

2. What is the purpose and mission of CIES?

According to Article I, Section 3, of the CIES Constitution, “The Society is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes, to contribute to an understanding of education through encouragement and promotion of comparative education and related areas of inquiry and activity.” Consequently, CIES is primarily concerned with supporting comparative education initiatives, programs, and curricula around the world that approach the teaching of educational systems from cross-cultural perspectives and illuminate the understanding of how educational policies influence socio-economic development in various global contexts.

3. Is CIES required to release public statements?

No. CIES has no express obligation to release public statements, and in general CIES does not issue a public stance. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the central focus of CIES concerns dedicating space, time, and energy in our scholarly forums for the exchange of informed perspectives that brings our community members together in facilitating a deeper understanding of related issues..

4. Where should draft statements be sent?

Statements initiated by members should be sent to the OED with the list of supporting signatures. Signatories must provide electronic signatures as well as emails and affiliations and those names will be verified by OED to ensure current membership. The OED will forward the statement to the Executive Committee for further action within one week if enough eligible signatures were obtained.

5. What are some general criteria for the composition of public statements?

Generally speaking, draft statements should concisely identify the issue(s) being addressed and explain in clear terms the circumstances and conditions of that issue, and the position taken related to the matter. Ensure that statements:

- a. promote civic engagement, scholarly discourse on the issue, and foster solidarity around issues that are aligned with the mission and vision of CIES;
- b. clearly indicate how the issues relates to the mission and purpose of CIES;
- c. refrain from making unsubstantiated allegations and accusations or frivolous assertions about the issues presented;
- d. engage with the issue(s) in an appropriate tone;

- e. include appropriate references to verifiable sources of information that are credible and impactful;
- f. include, when possible, links to opportunities to learn more about and get involved with the issue being addressed;
- g. not exceed 1,000 words.