

December 2017
Volume 7, Issue 4

1

Director's Corner

2

SEVIS Update
FRU Update

3

School Certification
Update

4

Contact Us

K-12 Best Practices

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Working with Campus Law Enforcement to Enhance Emergency Planning

Back in July, I traveled to New Orleans to speak at the Law Enforcement Executives and Administrators Conference. The event reminded me that members of law enforcement have a difficult job on the best of days, but during emergencies, their job becomes even harder. It's no surprise that the responsibility of managing emergency preparedness and response on college campuses usually falls on campus law enforcement.

During the conference, I emphasized the importance of considering the needs of international students in emergency planning and how campus law enforcement can work with designated school officials (DSOs) to do so effectively. I wanted campus law enforcement officers to understand that, as DSOs, you are experts on the international student process and can offer crucial insight for how emergencies impact these students. Your input can help campus law enforcement by ensuring preparedness efforts take into account the specific Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) reporting requirements

schools and students must comply with during these events.

It's also important that campus law enforcement realize that you are a key liaison to international students and recognize how this relationship can be vital during emergency events. As a DSO, you know the best way to contact international students on campus and are prepared to handle language and other communication barriers with these students. By participating in emergency planning procedures and educating campus law enforcement personnel about this unique population, you can help ensure more people have access to timely, critical information during disasters and other unforeseen events.

On the flip side, you can also help international students understand the role campus law enforcement plays during emergency events. Some international students may come from cultures where they do not trust law enforcement for help and may not understand that in the United States, local law enforcement agencies have the most reliable information to keep

them safe. As a trusted adviser to these students, you can help them comprehend the "here to help" culture of U.S. law enforcement. Helping cultivate this understanding is an important piece to preparedness efforts because this trust leads to greater cooperation during emergency events and their aftermath.

I hope you feel empowered to work with campus law enforcement officials to build a strong culture of emergency preparedness and resilience at your school. By working together, we can better prepare and keep more people safe when disasters strike. Please work with your territory's SEVP field representative to answer questions about campus safety and watch the [SEVP Ask the Experts Webinar: Campus Emergency Planning and the International Student Community](#) for more information about special considerations when working with international students and the resources available.

Thanks for doing your part to enhance national and campus security.

—Rachel Canty



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

Upload Evidence in SEVIS

On Jan. 8, 2018, the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) will enable functionality that allows school officials to [upload evidence](#) directly into the system. School officials must use this functionality to send the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) supporting evidence for:

- [Initial, update and recertification requests](#) for the Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student."
- [Correction requests](#) sent to the SEVP Response Center.

Currently, SEVP collects evidence for these requests via email; after the upload functionality is live, school officials must upload their evidence in SEVIS. SEVP will institute a [60-day transition period](#) for stakeholders. After the transition period ends on March 8, 2018, SEVP will no longer accept emailed evidence.

To ensure SEVP retains access to submitted documentation, do not upload encrypted or password-protected documents. SEVIS is a secure environment.

For more information about this process change and how to upload evidence, please watch the [SEVIS Upload Evidence Webinar](#) on Study in the States.

FIELD REPRESENTATIVE UNIT UPDATE

Meet SEVP's New Field Representatives

In early 2018, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) will deploy four new [field representatives](#) in Territories 19, 22, 32 and 48. Field representatives serve as liaisons between SEVP and SEVP-certified schools. Learn more about the newest members of the Field Representative Unit below.

JEFF HASHMAN

Jeff Hashman joins SEVP as the field representative for Territory 19, which spans across Kansas and northwest Missouri. He has 25 years of experience working with international students and exchange visitors at the university level, including as an intensive English instructor and principal designated school official (PDSO), among other roles. Most recently, Hashman was a regulatory ombudsperson for NAFSA Region II. As the first field representative to serve Territory 19, his goal is to establish positive relationships between school officials and SEVP. He looks forward to getting to know the needs of each school and assisting school officials with their regulatory compliance.

DANIELLA DIROMA SKIRSKY

Daniella DiRoma Skirsky joins SEVP as the field representative in San Antonio, Texas, and will support certified schools in Territory 22. Previously, she was a PDSO and worked as a passport/visa specialist for U.S. citizens traveling abroad. In her new role at SEVP, she hopes to successfully bridge the gap between school officials and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security by serving as a resource and interpreter of federal regulations. DiRoma Skirsky wants to help school officials understand how vital they are to national security and

empower them to enforce the regulations in their schools with complete confidence.

BETH TINKHAM

Beth Tinkham joins SEVP as the field representative in Territory 32 and will support certified schools in the eastern half of Michigan and parts of northwestern Ohio. She has 15 years of experience working in higher education, including working as a school official in Alabama, Illinois and Wisconsin. As a new field representative, she hopes to establish a good rapport with school officials in her territory and help them properly apply federal regulations to their international programs, handle student records and maintain their SEVP certification. Tinkham wants to keep open lines of communication with her schools and looks forward to answering designated school officials' (DSOs) questions.

ANDREW JANUSZ

Andrew Janusz joins SEVP as the Territory 48 field representative and will support certified schools in Maryland and Delaware. His career has taken him across the entire spectrum of international education. Janusz has over 10 years of experience from working at an embassy to being a DSO. Eager to fully understand the needs of his territory, Janusz plans to immerse himself in Territory 48's academic community by setting up regular communications with schools, having productive conversations during visits and attending local professional conferences. He hopes schools will use him as a resource to stay up to date on relevant initiatives and reporting requirements.

Recertification vs. Petition Updates: Know the Difference

School officials must understand that recertification and filing updates to the Form I-17, “Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student,” serve two distinct purposes:

- Schools go through the [recertification process](#) every two years to ensure they remain eligible for certification and have complied with all record keeping, retention and reporting requirements, and all other requirements, in accordance with the regulations.
- Schools are also required to keep all Form I-17 sections up to date in order to ensure the petition reflects the institution’s current operating status. Schools have 21 days after a material change occurs to file an update to their Form I-17 in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

Important Reminder: The adjudication of your school’s update petition is not considered recertification. You must apply for recertification when your school is notified of its certification end date. Only in instances when an update is made on a recertification filing, will that be adjudicated as a recertification. For more information about these two processes, please visit the SEVIS Help Hub’s [Form I-17 Recertification](#) page and [Update School Information](#) page.

Since these processes serve two different purposes, each has a separate action and process in SEVIS. However, in some

K-12 BEST PRACTICES

Travel Reminders for Minors

The kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) international student population is the fastest growing user group in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. This section of SEVP Spotlight helps K-12 schools understand how to properly comply with federal regulations and navigate the international student life cycle.

As young international students prepare to travel for the winter school breaks, please remember to prepare them for their re-entry into the United States:

- Ensure the student has their passport, their Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student

instances, a school may wish to file an update to their Form I-17 at the same time they file for recertification. If you wish to do this, please remember to:

- Log into SEVIS to apply for recertification from the School Information page.
- Edit the Form I-17 to reflect any changes to the petition if necessary; however, changes to the ownership or any instructional site must be submitted via the updates process and not on the recertification filing. SEVP will cancel any recertification filing with edits to those sections.
- Upload a complete recertification package through SEVIS to SEVP at the same time you apply for recertification.

To ensure you submit the correct evidence in the above instance, please refer to the filing evidence guides found in the drop-down menus on the ICE.gov [Petition Updates](#) tab. If you do not file the correct supporting evidence, SEVP will issue a Notice of Rejection.

Again, if you change instructional sites, you must file that update outside of the recertification process, meaning you must submit that change in SEVIS through the updates action. If you submit an update to your instructional site through recertification, SEVP will issue a Notice of Rejection.

If you have questions about filing for recertification or updating your Form I-17, please [contact the SEVP Response Center](#).

Status,” their valid student visa and your contact information when they arrive at the U.S. port of entry.

- If the student is traveling alone, work with the airline to ensure the flight crew makes the necessary accommodations for an unaccompanied minor.
- Educate the student about Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) [standard screening procedures](#).

Please note that TSA allows children 12 and under to leave their shoes, light jackets and headwear on during screening. To learn more, please visit the [Traveling with Children](#) page on TSA.gov.

CONTACT US

SEVP Contacts

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) is dedicated to maintaining open communication with international students and academic officials. SEVP has multiple contact options:

Our offices are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, except holidays

Phone: 703-603-3400 or 1-800-892-4829

Email: SEVP@ice.dhs.gov

Find us on the web:

www.ice.gov/sevp

<http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>

Follow us on Twitter [@StudyinStates](https://twitter.com/StudyinStates)

Like Study in the States on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/StudyinStates)

Follow SEVP on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/studyinthestates)

If you need assistance with passwords or Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) technical help, email SEVISHelpDesk@ice.dhs.gov

ICE CONTACTS

To report national vulnerabilities or national security concerns, contact ICE's Counterterrorism and Criminal Exploitation Unit at CTCEU@ice.dhs.gov

To report exploitation of student visa programs, contact your local HSI special agent by calling 1-866-DHS-2ICE (1-866-347-2423) or visit www.ice.gov.

Disclaimer: The information presented in the SEVP Spotlight is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.

