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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Partnering with HSI Programs to Increase Campus Resilience



A message from
Rachel Canty,
Director of the
Student and Exchange
Visitor Program

Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)-certified schools must balance several concerns in building and maintaining a resilient campus. SEVP recognizes that a sustainable, well-supported, and secure institution furthers school compliance, student monitoring and data integrity.

Knowing the challenges that schools may face in promoting campus resilience while considering the unique needs of the international student population, there are several ways for designated school officials (DSOs) to interact with other Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) programs in their local communities.

SEVP is only one of several programs that fall under the National Security Investigations Division (NSID) within HSI. Tapping into the pool of resources close to you, whether through your role

as a DSO or by making a connection between HSI and campus or local law enforcement, can help strengthen your school's response should a natural or man-made disaster strike or urgent law enforcement questions arise.

Knowing how to recognize suspicious activity, and when and to whom to report it, is a crucial step in protecting your campus community. One resource available to help is [Project Campus Sentinel \(PCS\)](#). PCS falls under NSID's Counterterrorism and Criminal Exploitation Unit. As an agent-led outreach program, PCS partners with educational institutions to improve communications between DSOs and HSI agents. Specifically, it provides training that can help identify criminal activity on college campuses and gives DSOs a mechanism to report Student and Exchange Visitor Information System exploitation and fraud schemes that may compromise national security.

Another opportunity for partnership with HSI and NSID pertains to academic institutions ensuring compliance with U.S. export control laws. [Project Shield](#)

[America \(PSA\)](#) partners with academic research offices to prevent the export-controlled technology that institutions produce from falling into the wrong hands. With an understanding of the unique compliance and enforcement challenges the academic community faces, PSA provides outreach that helps institutions recognize the indicators of export control violation and understand potential vulnerabilities in academia. PSA also provides recommendations and guidance on how institutions should respond to violations and where they should report suspicious activity.

PCS and PSA are two examples of how your campus can use HSI outreach to improve its resilience posture.

I encourage you to learn more about and consider these partnerships before they are needed in a crisis moment.

As always, thanks for doing your part to enhance national and campus security.

Respectfully,
Rachel Canty



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

Compliance Tips for the Summer Months

Ms. Janet Willems is the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) field representative in Territory 25, which spans the entire state of Iowa and includes more than 240 schools. In the following section, Ms. Willems shares tips to help answer common questions she receives from schools during the summer months.

As summer annual vacation begins for many F-1 international students, SEVP field representatives—myself included—are working closely with designated school officials (DSOs) in our territories to ensure their students know how to remain compliant while they are not in school.

Keep the following information in mind to help both you and your students comply with applicable federal regulations and reporting obligations during the summer.

CLASSES AND EMPLOYMENT

Your students may have questions about summer term, particularly whether they must enroll in a full course of study or if they can continue their approved employment.

Remind students that they must enroll in a full course of study if they are in initial status beginning in the summer term. However, continuing students who choose to take classes in the summer are not required to enroll full time.

Additionally, if students plan to transfer to a new school for the upcoming academic year and want to pursue approved off-campus employment in the summer, they must request a recommendation from the DSO at their transfer-in school and file a new application with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

STUDENT TRAVEL

Ensure that student records are accurate and students know the rules for traveling abroad during their summer annual vacation. Students who do not follow the rules risk being issued a Form I-515A, “Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor,” upon their return to the United States.

Two common reasons a student may receive a Form I-515A include:

- Lack of travel endorsement from a DSO or responsible officer.
- Lack of evidence of an I-901 SEVIS Fee payment tied to the student’s Form I-20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.”

Before students leave for summer trips, remind them to keep certain documents, including but not limited to DSO emergency contact information, their valid visa and passport, their signed and up-to-date Form I-20, and their I-901 SEVIS Fee receipt, in their carry-on luggage.

There are helpful resources on [Study in the States](#) that you can read and share with your students via email or text so that you both stay up to date on the rules for travel. These resources include:

- [What is a Form I-515A?](#)
- [Avoiding a Form I-515A.](#)
- [Handling a Form I-515A.](#)

SEVIS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Summer provides an excellent opportunity to review Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) reporting, record keeping and advising responsibilities. Write down important dates to remind yourself about reporting requirements during the upcoming school year.

Remember that, even during the summer when many students are not on campus, you must continue to log into SEVIS at least once every 30 days to review alerts, student and school records, and SEVIS Broadcast Messages.

Read more about SEVIS reporting requirements and find information about international student-related matters that may arise over the summer on the [SEVIS Reporting Requirements for DSOs](#) section of [ICE.gov/SEVP](#). You can also [contact the SEVP Response Center](#) or your territory’s SEVP field representative if you have questions.

Learn About the SEVP Portal

The SEVP Portal, which launched on March 23, 2018, is a free tool for F-1 students on post-completion optional practical training (OPT), including the [science, technology, engineering and mathematics OPT extension](#), and M-1 students on practical training. The portal allows these students to report their home address, telephone number and employer information directly to the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP).

One of SEVP's goals for the portal is to reduce reporting burdens on some school officials by empowering students to be directly responsible for the accuracy of their Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) records. While use of the portal is voluntary, it is highly encouraged by SEVP. Since the March launch, more than 116,381 post-completion practical training students have created an SEVP Portal account.

WHAT'S NEW ON STUDY IN THE STATES

Watch the Latest Government Voices Webinar

Do you have questions about what your F and M international students can expect at a U.S. international airport, seaport or land border crossing? Listen to the recording of the [Government Voices Webinar: What to Expect at a U.S. Port of Entry](#) on Study in the States.

During the May 16 webinar, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers and Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) subject matter experts discussed the U.S. port of entry processes that international students encounter

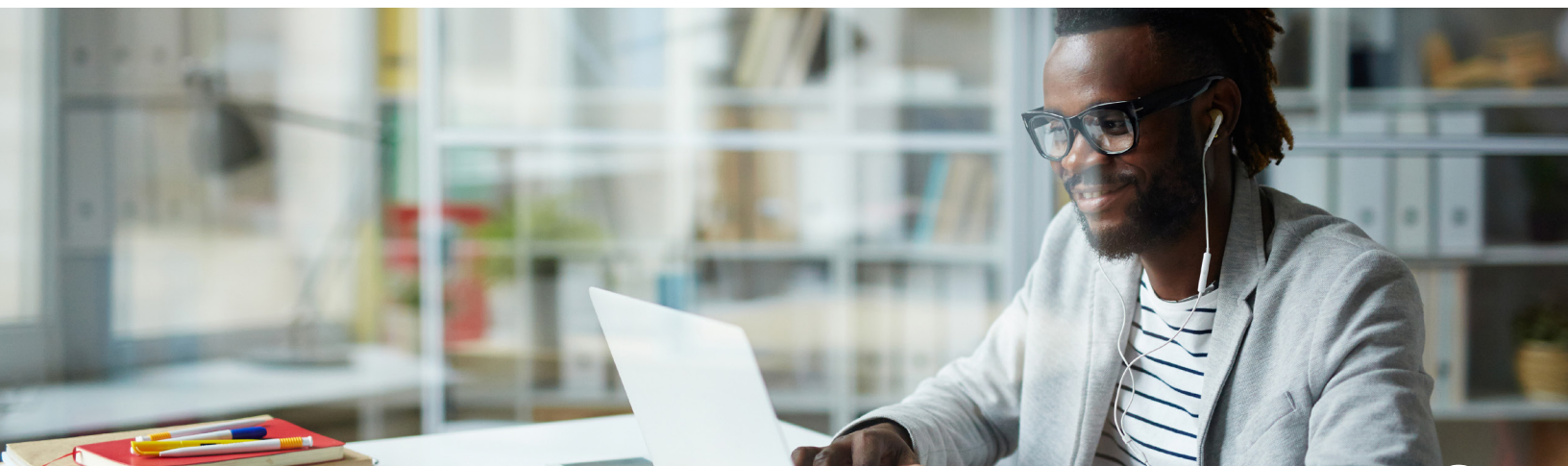
To learn more about the eligibility requirements and benefits of using the SEVP Portal, visit the following [Study in the States](#) resources:

- [SEVP Portal Help section](#).
- [SEVIS and the SEVP Portal page](#) on the [SEVIS Help Hub](#).
- [SEVP Special Report Webinar: SEVP Portal page](#), where you can watch the webinar recording and download presentation materials.

For general or case-specific questions about the portal, please contact the SEVP Response Center at sevp@ice.dhs.gov and include SEVP Portal in the subject line.

throughout the student life cycle. Presenters discussed primary versus secondary inspection, documentation, and how entry processes may differ at land, air and sea ports of entry, along with other topics related to student entry into the United States.

To access the materials from the [Government Voices Webinar: What to Expect at a U.S. Port of Entry](#) and other past webinars, visit the [Stakeholder Webinars page](#) on Study in the States.



End-of-Year Reminders

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

As the academic year ends, many K-12 international students may leave the United States for their annual summer vacation, while others will graduate.

If your K-12 international students plan to leave the United States for annual vacation, ensure they have your office's emergency contact information before they go. Students may need to contact you as they arrive at a U.S. port of entry (international airport, seaport or land border crossing) upon their return.

You should also check with students before they leave to make sure they have all necessary documents. When returning to a U.S. port of entry, students must have the following items in hand to present to

U.S. Customs and Border Protection:

- Signed and up-to-date Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status."
- Valid visa and passport.
- Evidence of financial support.
- Evidence of acceptance or enrollment at an SEVP-certified school.
- I-901 SEVIS Fee payment receipt.

K-12 international students who leave the country because they have completed their program of study must depart no later than 60 days after their program end date. If a student plans to attend an SEVP-certified college or university after graduation, you must [transfer the student's SEVIS record](#) from your school to the new school.

For more resources and best practices for K-12 schools, visit the [Kindergarten to Grade 12 Schools](#) page on Study in the States.

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 federal holidays

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

Email: SEVP@ice.dhs.gov

Find us on the web:

<http://www.ice.gov/sevp>

<http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov>

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

Like Study in the States on [Facebook](#)

Follow SEVP on [LinkedIn](#)

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 SEVP Spotlight is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal advice.