

Catholic Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Education

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS GUIDELINES



Annette Z. Parsons
Chief School Administrator
Office of Catholic Education

Francine Conway
Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Office of Catholic Education

Dana P. Erby
Administrative Assistant
Designated School Official (DSO)
Office of Catholic Education

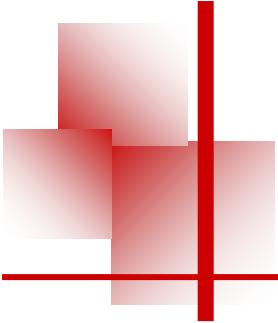
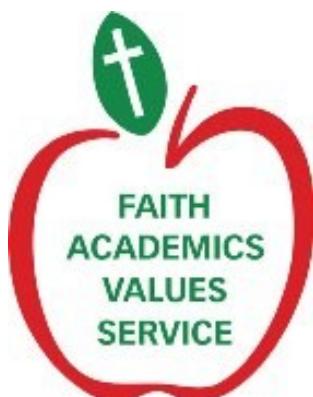
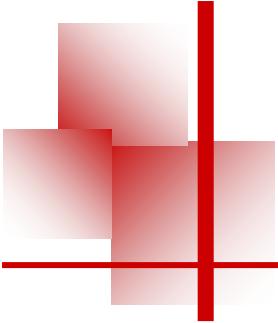


Table of Contents

• Introduction.....	3
• Students Entering the United States.....	4
• Application to a U.S. School.....	5
• Applying for a Change of Status.....	7
• Sample Documents.....	8
• Arrival of First Time Students/Continuing Students.....	10
• Student Transfers.....	11
• Transfer - Out Students.....	14
• Transferring TO a SEVP-Certified College.....	15
• Transfer - In Students.....	17
• Change of Education Level with the Diocese of Richmond.....	18
• Change of Education Level to A SEVP-Certified High School.....	19
• The School and The Student.....	20
• Internet Resources.....	21
• Contact Information.....	22



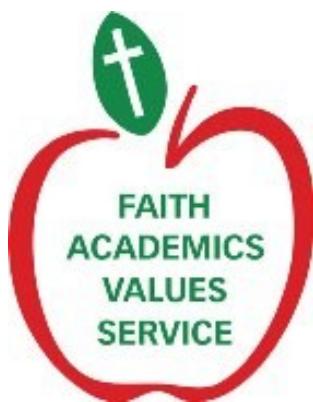


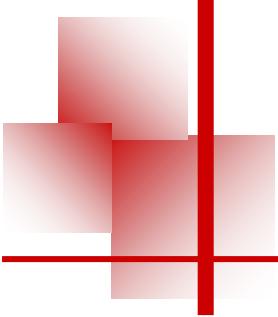
Guidelines and Procedures for Nonimmigrant Students in the Catholic Diocese Richmond

PDSO - Principal Designated School Official - Annette Parson
DSO - Designated School Official - Dana Erby

The reporting and tracking of nonimmigrant students is:

- Mandated by U.S. law
- An important part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) mission
- A way for U.S. authorities to differentiate between individuals who are in the United States for legitimate academic pursuits and those who may not be





Students Entering the United States

To legally enter the United States as a nonimmigrant visitor, most foreign nationals must obtain a visa from the Bureau of Consular Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (DOS). DOS issues different types of visas according to the purpose of the person's visit. SEVIS tracks nonimmigrants in three classes of admission (visa types):

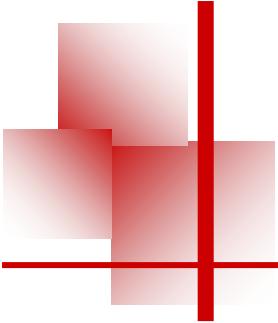
- **F-1** – individual is temporarily in the United States to study full-time at an academic or language institute
- **M-1** – Individual is temporarily in the United States to study full-time at a vocational or technical institute
- **J-1** – Individual is temporarily in the United States to participate in an exchange visitor program

A visa allows the foreign national to apply for admission to the United States at a Port of Entry (POE). The school may want to provide to the parent/guardian a copy of ***What to Expect Upon Arrival at The POE***. This is a helpful tool for the parent/guardian. The Customs and Border Protection Officer at the POE will issue an I-94 Form. The I-94 Form is an extremely important document – it shows that the foreign national entered the United States legally; the class of admission (F, M, J, etc.) and the length of time the foreign national is allowed to remain the United States.

F-1 nonimmigrants are admitted for duration of status (for as long as the nonimmigrant student remains enrolled in a SEVIS approved school full-time and otherwise maintains status).

A nonimmigrant student may remain in the United States with an expired visa, but, in most cases, must have a valid visa to re-enter the country after traveling abroad.



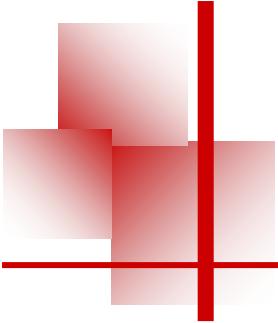


Application to a U.S. School

Several events must take place before a foreign student may attend a U.S. school. These events start before the student arrives in the United States. Application steps include:

- The potential nonimmigrant student applies to one or more SEVIS approved schools.
- The school will determine if the student fully meets their admission requirements and has the financial ability to pay for the education and living expenses
- Once the student is accepted, the school will request an initial SEVIS record (I-20) for the student and the signed copy of the I-20 will be sent directly to the person responsible for registering the student along with a draft copy of the I-20 Form for the school's file.
- The student must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee using the I-20 form prior to applying for a visa. Visit the SEVP website at www.ice.gov/sevis for a full list of questions and answers about the SEVIS I-901 fee.
- The prospective student who is not in the U.S. must apply to either:
 - ◊ The local U.S. consulate for a visa if not in the United States (see the State Department website at: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1268.html for more information)
 - ◊ USCIS for a change of status to F-1 (see the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov) if a current nonimmigrant in the United States.

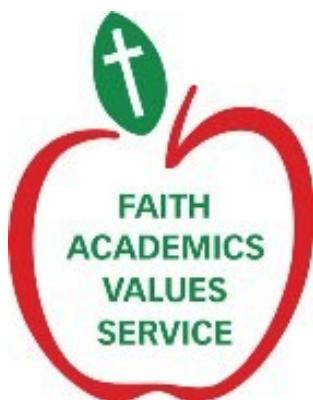


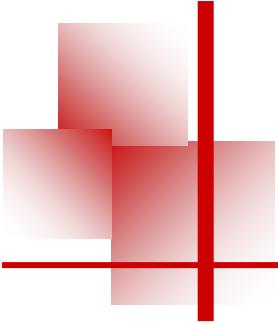


Application to a U.S. School

A visa interview is required. The student must bring several items to the interview:

- The signed I-20 Form from the school that they will be attending
- Evidence that the SEVIS I-901 fee has been paid
- A signed passport, valid for at least six months after the date of entry into the United States
- A DS-156 Form, Nonimmigrant Visa Application with photo
- A DS- 157A Form, Supplemental Nonimmigrant Visa Application
- Scores from standardized tests, such as the TOEFL, SAT, GRE, and GMAT
- Financial evidence of sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses for at least the first year of study

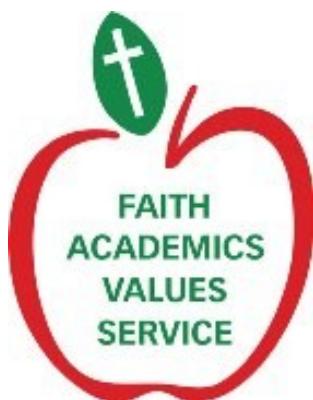




Applying for a Change of Status from Another Nonimmigrant Status to F-1

Prospective nonimmigrant students who are already in the United States must file an I-539 Form with USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) to change from their current nonimmigrant status to an **F-1 student**. Most classes of nonimmigrants can begin studying at your school while their application is pending. **The exceptions are nonimmigrants that are currently in B-1, B-2, or F-2 status.** These nonimmigrants **cannot** begin a program of study prior to approval of their change of status. If they do, their application will be denied and SEVIS will terminate the record for *Termination - Violation of Change of Status Requirements*. (**Normal time frame for approval can range from 3 to 6 months.**)

If the change of status is denied, SEVIS will automatically terminate the initial record for *Change of Status Denied*.



Sample Documents: Visa



Issuing Post Name: The US Embassy/Consulate that issued the visa.

Surname: Same as last name in US or family name

Given Name: Same as first name in US

Passport Number: Visa holder's passport number

Entries: M or S = M= you can enter the US multiple times until the visa expires; S= you can enter US only a single time until the visa expires

Annotation: Any notes that the consulate would like to put such as employer name, petitioner name, any restrictions, special circumstances etc.

Control Number: Visa control number used to track the visas

Visa Type / Class: Type of non-immigrant visa

Sex: M/F (for Male or Female)

Birth Date: Date of birth of the visa holder

Nationality: Visa holder's country or citizenship

Issue Date: The date (in DD/MM/YYYY format) when visa was issued

Expiration Date: The date (in DD/MM/YYYY format) until which the visa holder can apply for entry into the United States. Actual duration of stay in the US is determined at the port of entry per the date stamped on I-94 form

Number in Red Color: Another visa number



Sample Documents: I-94 Card

Sample I-94 Card



FRONT OF CARD

Admission Number

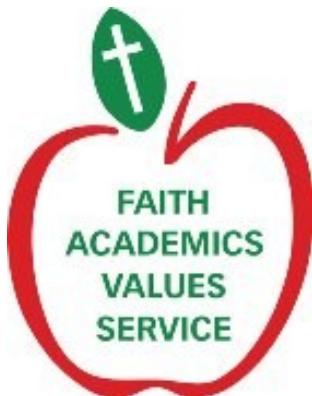
Nonimmigrant Classification
(in this case tourist)

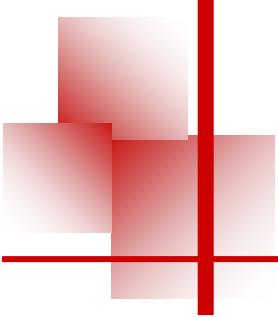
Last day of Authorized stay in U.S.
(For F or J status, should read "D/S")

BACK OF CARD

If applicable, any special Annotations
indicating sponsor, SEVIS #, etc.

Form I-94





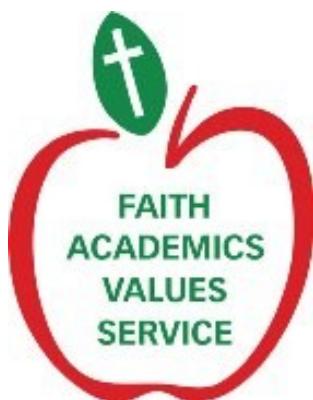
First Time Student Arrives on Campus

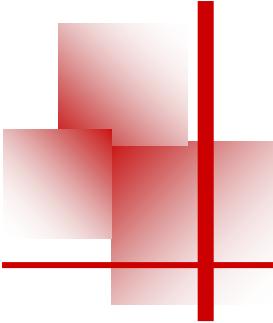
When the student(s) arrive at the school, it is the schools responsibility to notify the DSO (Dana Erby) of their arrival. **The school will need to send a copy of the student's visa and I-94 card to the DSO (Dana Erby) upon arrival at the school.**

The DSO must register the student(s) in SEVIS which changes their SEVIS status from *initial* to **active**. Registering the student indicates that the student is physically present and intends to enroll for a full course load.

Regulations allow F-1 students in good status to travel outside of the United States, and to re-enter the country without jeopardizing their nonimmigrant status. The only restrictions on such travel are as follow:

- Inform school advisor of intent to travel (i.e. summer or winter breaks).
- The student will need his or her I-20 Form with current information that is signed by the DSO (Dana Erby) on pages one and three allowing travel outside of the United States. **Each certification is valid for one year.** Remind students to keep his or her I-20 somewhere safe for travel purposes.
- The student's visa and passport must still be valid at the time the student reenters the United States (this means that the expiration date on the student's visa has not passed at the time of entry).





Student Transfers

There are two schools involved in an F student's transfer from one SEVIS approved school to another:

- Transfer - out school - The school that the student is leaving
- Transfer - in school - The school where the student is going

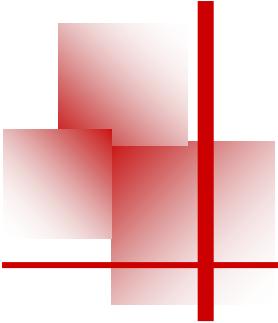
The Transfer Release Date is the date on which the student's SEVIS record is made available to the transfer-in school.

- After this date, the transfer-out school cannot make any changes to the record
- The transfer-out school will be able to see a historical record, in de-active status, for the student at their school
- The transfer-out school cannot see a copy of the record at the transfer-in school
- The transfer-in school will be able to access the student's SEVIS record in draft status and use it to create a SEVIS record for their school

The release date is the date that access to the student's SEVIS record will shift from the transfer-out school to the transfer-in school. Usually the release date is set to be the completion date of the current semester or session, or the date of expected transfer if earlier than the established academic cycle. Among other considerations in setting the date are:

- The student needs time to complete all study at the transfer-out school
- Allowing time for travel outside the United States
- Allow for working during school vacation, if applicable.





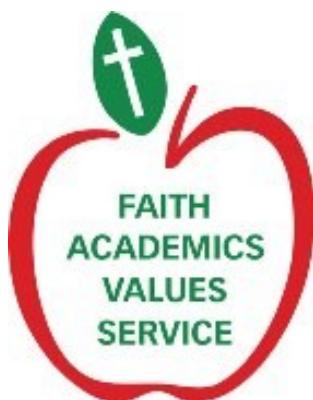
Student Transfers

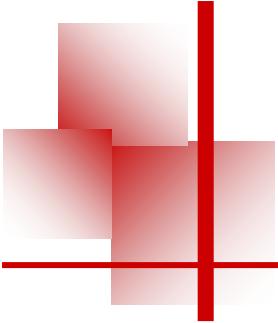
The transfer process is a way to transfer SEVIS records. It allows retention of the same SEVIS identification number for the student. The transfer process is done electronically by the DSO (Dana Erby).

The SEVIS transfer helps to set a date for which responsibility for the student record transfers is both the DSO and the school from which the student is attending and a process to update and activate the student's record at the transfer-in school. The school must complete either an I-20 Form or the **I-20 Non-Immigrant Student Status Form**, indicating the following on the (INISS):

- School
- Person completing Form
- Date
- Phone Number
- Student's Full Name
- Name or School/College
- Transfer Date
- Contact Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address (if available)
- Fax Number (if available)

Submit the completed form if you are the transfer-out school to the DSO (Dana Erby).

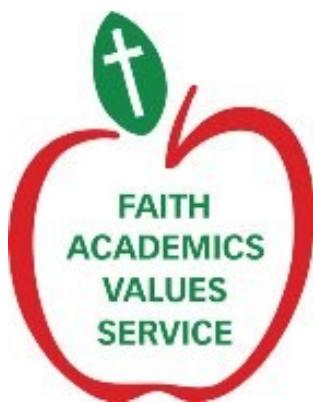


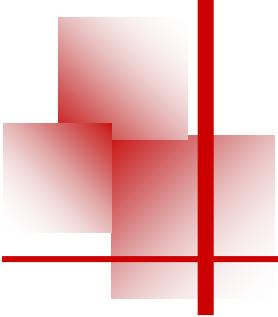


Student Transfers

F-1 students in good status may transfer if they follow the correct procedures. The transfer process is a transfer of SEVIS records. It does not necessarily mean that your school will transfer academic records. That is a matter for school policy. However, your school cannot refuse to transfer SEVIS records for any financial or business reasons.

An F-1 student is not permitted to remain in the United States when transferring between schools or programs unless the student will begin classes at the transfer-in school within 5 months of transferring from the transfer-out school; or in the case of a student who desires to advance to a higher education level; within 5 months of the program completion date on his or her current I-20 Form.



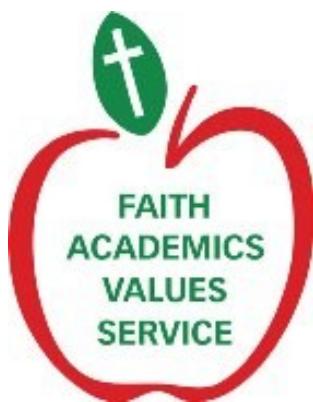


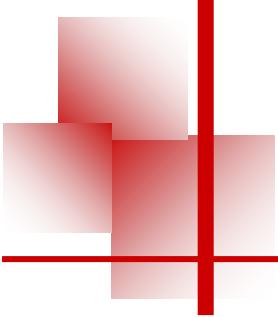
Student Responsibilities at Transfer-Out School

If an F-1 student wishes to change schools, he or she must:

Select a SEVIS approved school and apply for enrollment

- Have proof of acceptance at the other school
- Obtain contact information at the transfer-in school and submit to the DSO (Dana Erby)
- Once the student brings proof of acceptance from another SEVIS approved school, **submit a copy of approval to the DSO (Dana Erby)**. The DSO will need to coordinate with the DSO at the transfer-in school to establish a transfer release date. The school will need the exact school name as it appears in SEVIS, and the school code for the transfer-in school.





Transferring TO A SEVP-Certified College

In order to maintain status while transferring to a SEVP-certified college, F-1 students must be aware of their responsibilities. Prior to transferring, F-1 students must do the following:

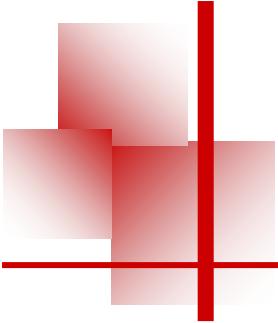
- Select an SEVP-certified college and apply for enrollment
- Obtain contact information for the DSO at the college or university
- Inform the DSO at the Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools of their intent to enroll at a SEVP-certified college
- The DSO at the college or university will need to send an acceptance letter on school letterhead to the DSO at the Diocese of Richmond, Office of Catholic Schools before a transfer in SEVIS can be completed.
- After receiving the acceptance letter on school letterhead, the DSO at the Diocese of Richmond will complete the transfer of the I-20 in SEVIS with a release date the accepting school agrees on.

The student should contact the transfer-in school shortly after the transfer release date and ensure that the DSO has the biographical and financial data needed to update the student's SEVIS record.

The student must also report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and enroll full time in the first required session/term at the school.

Continue on page 16

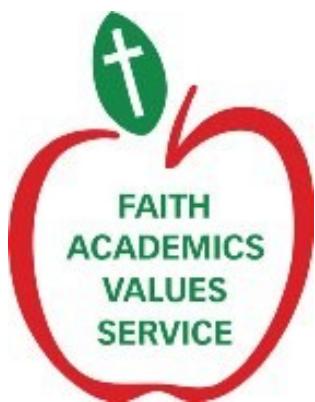


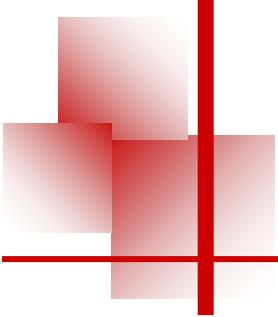


Transferring TO A SEVP-Certified College

If a nonimmigrant student plans to travel outside the United States, the timing of the transfer needs to take this into account. The student must return to the United States with a Form I-20 for the school that holds his or her Active or Initial SEVIS record. So travel must be either:

- Started and completed before the transfer release date with an Active Form I-20 from the transfer-out school
- Started and completed after the transfer release date with a Transfer Pending Form I-20 from the transfer-in school





Student Responsibilities at Transfer-In School

The student should contact the transfer-in school shortly after the transfer release date and ensure the DSO has the biographical and financial data needed to update his or her SEVIS record. Schools should submit an I-20 Form indicating a transfer and the school the student is transferring from.

The student must also report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and enroll full-time in the first required session at the school.

In addition the student must:

- Maintain his or her F-1 status
- Complete the transfer within five months of finishing classes at the transfer -out school

On the transfer release date the DSO can create an I-20 with the information from the transfer-out school. The DSO will:

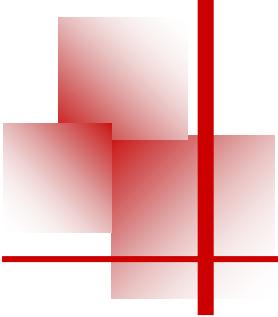
- Enter the new program information (including new program start date and program end date)
- Enter current financial information in SEVIS

The DSO at the transfer-in school will submit a new I-20 Form with a new school code to be given to the parent/guardian with a draft copy to the school. Once the student arrives at the transfer-in school, the student will need to provide a **copy of his or her I-94 Card and Visa**. The school will send a copy of both items (I-94 Card & Visa) to Catholic Schools Office to the attention of the DSO (Dana Erby).

Change of Record Status

The DSO will submit the form in SEVIS. The student's record will be in initial status. A new I-20 will be printed and sent to the school to the student's attention with a draft copy to the school.





Change of Education Level Within the Diocese of Richmond

F-1 students must be aware of their responsibilities in order to maintain status while changing education level from Primary (Elementary) to Secondary (High School). Prior to changing level, F-1 students must do the following:

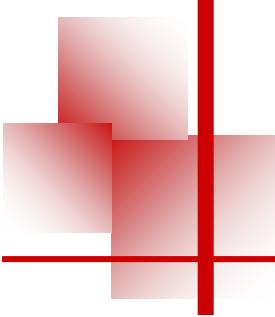
- ◊ Select a Diocese of Richmond high school and apply for enrollment
- ◊ Obtain admission packet from high school to include a Diocese of Richmond I-20 application form
- ◊ Complete the I-20 application form and return to the high school with a copy of the student's passport and visa

AN UPDATED I-20 WILL NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL THE COURSE OF STUDIES IS COMPLETE AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL, USUALLY THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL.

If a nonimmigrant student plans to travel outside the United States, the timing of the change of education level needs to be taken into account. The student must return to the United States with a Form I-20 at the education level for the school that holds his or her Active or Initial SEVIS record. So travel must be after the student has completed their course of studies at the Primary level with adequate time given for the DSO to complete the level change and reissue an updated I-20.

The student must report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and enroll full time in the first required session/term at the school.





Change of Education Level TO A SEVP-Certified High School

F-1 students must be aware of their responsibilities in order to maintain status while changing education level from Primary (Elementary) to Secondary (High School). Prior to changing level, F-1 students must do the following:

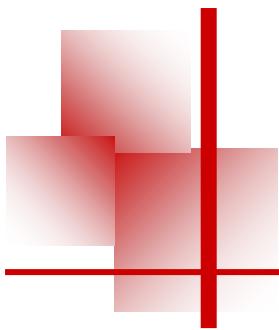
- ◊ Select a SEVP-approved high school and apply for enrollment
- ◊ Obtain contact information for the DSO at the a SEVP-certified high school
- ◊ Inform the DSO at the Diocese of Richmond Office of Catholic Schools of their intent to attend a SEVP-certified high school outside of the Diocese of Richmond school system
- ◊ Provide the DSO at the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools with proof of acceptance at the SEVP-certified high school

AN UPDATED I-20 WILL NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL THE COURSE OF STUDIES IS COMPLETE AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL, USUALLY THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL.

If a nonimmigrant student plans to travel outside the United States, the timing of the change of education level needs to be taken into account. The student must return to the United States with a Form I-20 at the education level for the school that holds his or her Active or Initial SEVIS record. So travel must be after the student has completed their course of studies at the Primary level with adequate time given for the DSO to complete the level change and reissue an updated I-20.

The student must report to the school within 15 days of the program start date and enroll full time in the first required session/term at the school.





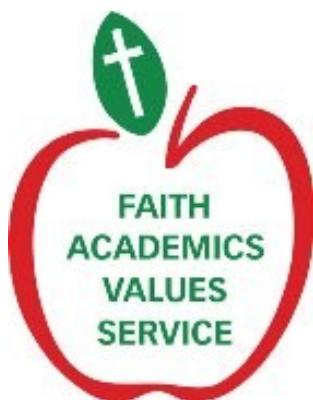
The School and the Student

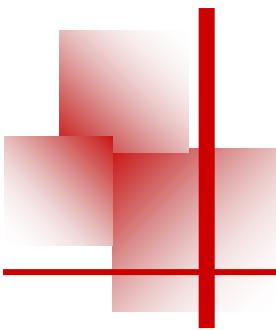
Students have two areas of responsibility:

1. Understanding and following the terms and conditions of his or her F-1 nonimmigrant status
2. Providing his or her school and the school providing the DSO (Dana Erby) with timely information needed to maintain their SEVIS record up to date

Schools need to report the following types of information to their DSO in a timely manner:

- Continuing to enroll as a full-time student each term
- Address changes within 10 days of the change
- Change of sources of financial support
- Change in course load
- Change in academic status
- Intent to travel outside the United States
- Application for change of immigration status
- Need to extend program
- Intent to transfer
- Change in dependent status





Internet Resources

DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PAGE

<http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/catholicschools/international.php>

U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT, STUDENT AND EXCHANGE VISITORS PROGRAM (SEVP)

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

SEVP STUDENTS

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/>

SEVIS I-901 FEE

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/>

SEVP FAQ (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)

<http://www.ice.gov/sevis/faq.htm>

I-539, APPLICATION TO EXTEND/CHANGE NONIMMIGRANT STATUS

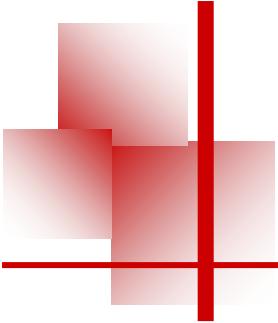
<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/>

[menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?](#)

[vgnex-](#)

[toid=94d12c1a6855d010VgnVCM10000048f3d6a1RCRD&vgnextchannel=db029c7755cb9010VgnVCM10000045f3d6a1RCRD](#)





Office Information

Questions regarding I-20's contact Dana Erby in the Office of Catholic Education

All completed documents should be sent to:

**Office of Catholic Education
Dana Erby (DSO)
7800 Carousel Lane
Richmond, VA 23294
804-622-5117 - Direct Line
804-358-9159 - Fax Number
derby@richmonddiocese.org**

