



**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Private Sector Exchange**

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Guidance Directive 2010-09

Identified Program Management Weaknesses in Secondary School Student Program

This Guidance Directive is issued to all designated sponsors conducting Secondary School Student programs. In light of the results of 40 on-site inspections of sponsors conducting this activity, the Department concludes that all designated secondary school sponsors share a weakness in four areas of program management. Areas that merit the immediate attention of all sponsors include program administration, host family selection, student placement, and SEVIS reporting requirements:

22 CFR 62.25(d) Program administration. Sponsors must ensure that all officers, employees, representatives, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf:

- (2) Make no student placement beyond 120 miles of the home of a local organizational representative authorized to act on the sponsor's behalf in both routine and emergency matters arising from an exchange student's participation in the exchange visitor program;
- (3) Ensure that no organizational representative act as both host family and area supervisor for any exchange student participant;
- (4) Maintain, at minimum, a monthly schedule of personal contact with the student and host family, and ensure that the school has contact information for the local organizational representative and the program sponsor's main office;

22 CFR 62.25(j)(7) Host family selection. Sponsors must adequately screen and select all potential host families and at a minimum:

- Verify that each member of the host family eighteen years of age and older has undergone a criminal background check;

22 CFR 62.25(l)(1)(ii) Host family placement. Sponsors must secure, prior to the student's departure from his or her home country, a permanent or arrival host family placement for each exchange student participant. Sponsors may not:

- Place more than one exchange student with a host family without the express prior written consent of the Department of State. Under no circumstance may more than two exchange students may be placed with one host family.

22 CFR 62.70(b) SEVIS Reporting Requirements. Current U.S. address. Sponsors shall ensure that the actual and current U.S. address of all sponsored participants is reported to SEVIS. Sponsors shall update the actual and current U.S. address information for participants within 21 days of being notified by a participant of a change in his or her address. A sponsor's failure to update the actual and current U.S. address information within 21 days of receipt may be grounds for revocation of their Exchange Visitor Program status. Sponsors shall report a U.S. mailing address, i.e., P.O. Box address, in those limited circumstances where mail cannot be delivered to the current and actual U.S. address. If a U.S. mailing address is reported to SEVIS, sponsors shall also maintain a record of the actual and current U.S. address, e.g., dorm, building and room number, for that exchange visitor.

Sponsors are encouraged to review thoroughly their internal processes and standard operating procedures to ensure full compliance with these regulatory requirements. We encourage sponsors to place this matter before their organizational Boards of Directors and to consider utilizing outside consultants if the necessary expertise to conduct risk analysis or the evaluation of internal controls is not available in-house.

The Department is anticipating the publication of a Final Rule regarding the Secondary School Student Program shortly. Upon its publication, sponsors must immediately integrate into their program operations all new requirements set forth in this rule. To assist your organization's transition to these changes, the Department will publish a supplemental Directive providing interpretation and guidance.

The Department and members of the exchange community share a common goal of ensuring a safe and positive exchange experience for every foreign student participating in this exchange program. The Department appreciates your continued participation in international exchange and its contribution to American public policy.

Stanley S. Colvin
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Private Sector Exchange

