

Diocese of Charleston International Student Acceptance Process

Homeland Security uses the Student Exchange Visitors Information System (SEVIS) online program to track international students while they are studying in the U.S. One component of this program allows an international student to be issued a Form I-20 to attend school in the U.S.

The Catholic Schools Office is approved to issue a Form I-20 to any international student who has been ACCEPTED to attend a school in the Diocese of Charleston. The only individuals in the Diocese of Charleston approved by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as the Primary Designated School Official (PDSO) and the Designated School Official (DSO) to issue I-20s are sanctioned employees of the CSO.

Information for the family on the process can be found at www.ice.gov/sevis/students.

WHEN A DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL ACCEPTS A NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

1. The family electronically completes the Diocesan SEVIS document available on the Principals website.
2. One SEVIS document must be completed for each student applying to attend a school in the Diocese of Charleston.
3. The school will need to confirm that all of the information on the SEVIS document is complete and signed.
4. The school is to send (fax, email, mail) the document to the CSO.
5. The CSO will electronically apply for a Form I-20 through the online SEVIS process.
6. Once an I-20 is generated, the CSO will sign on page 1. This is the only signature the CSO will have on the document at this time.
7. A copy of the I-20 will be mailed to the school to be included in the student's records. **NO ADDITIONAL SIGNATURES ARE NEEDED ON THIS COPY.**
8. The original I-20 will be mailed by the CSO to the foreign address listed on the SEVIS document received from the school, unless otherwise requested by the family or agency.
9. Once received, the student and parents are to sign their original I-20 at the bottom of the first page.
10. The original I-20 is taken by the family to the appropriate authorities in their home country to apply for an F-1 Student Visa.
11. The student will need to keep the original I-20 with them when they enter the country to attend school.
12. If the student is going back to their home country for breaks during the school year, the original I-20 will need to be sent to the CSO for signature on the bottom of page 3. This signature is valid for reentry into the U.S. for one year. When the year expires, the original I-20 will need to be resent to the CSO for another signature.
13. The Form I-20 is valid through the dates indicated on #5 of the I-20. Once their completion date is reached, the student has 60 days to leave the country unless their I-20 is transferred to another educational institution such as a college or university. At that time, you will follow the transfer out process.

When a student who is issued an I-20 to attend a school transfers to another school the I-20 is electronically transferred to the new school.

WHEN AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IN A DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL TRANSFERS OUT TO A NONE DIOCESAN SCHOOL

1. The student/family informs the Diocese of Charleston School that they will be transferring to another school OTHER THAN A DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL. This may be due to graduating or transferring prior to graduation.
2. The student provides official documentation of acceptance from the new school to the current Diocese of Charleston School.
3. The current school sends the full name of the student as indicated on their I-20 and the new school's official acceptance documentation to notify the CSO of the student's request to transfer their I-20 out of the Diocese.
4. Once the request is received, and the official acceptance documentation is confirmed, the CSO will electronically transfer the student's I-20 to the new school.

WHEN AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TRANSFERS INTO A DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL FROM A NONE DIOCESAN SCHOOL

Steps to follow:

1. The student applies to the new school and is admitted.
2. The student notifies their current school that they will be transferring and requests to have their I-20 transferred out to the new school.
3. The student will need to provide the current school information regarding the new school's SEVIS School Code and official name. You MUST contact the CSO to get this information.
4. The CSO will provide you the SEVIS School code and official school name to send to the current school in order to transfer the student's I-20 out of their school into our receiving school.
5. The current school will electronically transfer the student's I-20 to our School Code.
6. Once the CSO is electronically notified that the I-20 has been transferred, the student's I-20 will be electronically updated.
7. One copy is mailed to the new school for the student's file at the school. NO SIGNATURES NEEDED.
8. The second copy is mailed to the student who will need to sign at the bottom and have their parents sign also.
9. Follow steps 12 & 13 of "WHEN A DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL ACCEPTS A NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENT."

CONTACT THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE FOR OTHER SITUATIONS SUCH AS THOSE LISTED BELOW

- WHEN A STUDENT TRANSFERS FROM ONE DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL TO ANOTHER DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON SCHOOL
- WHEN A STUDENT LEAVES THE SCHOOL TO RETURN TO THEIR HOME COUNTRY

- WHEN A STUDENT NEEDS EXTENDED TIME BEYOND THEIR I-20 END DATE TO COMPLETE THEIR STUDIES