

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Office of Private Sector Exchange

North American Youth Exchange Network NAYEN Conference – **For Beginners**

Thursday, March 8, 2017



ECA Mission Statement

To increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations.

Fourth Object of Rotary

The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a worldwide fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service



Our Public Diplomacy Mission: Opening America to the World

- Establishing Programs (15 categories)
 - Public-Private Partnership
- Gatekeeper & Overseer
 - Designate, Monitor, Sanction
 - Apply federal regulations
- Stakeholder Engagement
 - Health, Safety, and welfare
 - Incidents/complaints, hotline
 - Outreach and Monitoring
 - Conferences, site visits



Regulatory Authorities

- Post WWII
 - U.S. Information & Educational Exchange Act (1948), also known as the Smith-Mundt Act
 - Authorizes recognition of need for people-to-people exchange
 - Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act (1961), also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act
 - Authorizes the J visa



The J Visa

- Purpose
 - Cultural exchange through Private Sector and Academic and Government programs
- EC Oversight
 - EC designates sponsors to administer programs for nonimmigrant participants
 - Key Public-Private Partnership
 - EC monitors sponsors, participants, and host entities through direct contact, using SEVIS data, incidents and complaint response, monitoring visits, site visits and more
 - Participant monitoring focuses on health, safety, and welfare
 - EC can levy sanctions on Sponsors



Regulatory Authorities for Secondary School Programs

- 22 CFR 62
 - Subpart A – Establishes the general regulations that apply to all EVPs
 - Subpart B – Establishes the regulations for the individual exchange visitor programs
 - 62.25 – Establishes the specific regulations for the Secondary School Student Program



ECA/EC

Office of Private Sector Exchange

Secondary
School
Student
Program

Advance public diplomacy

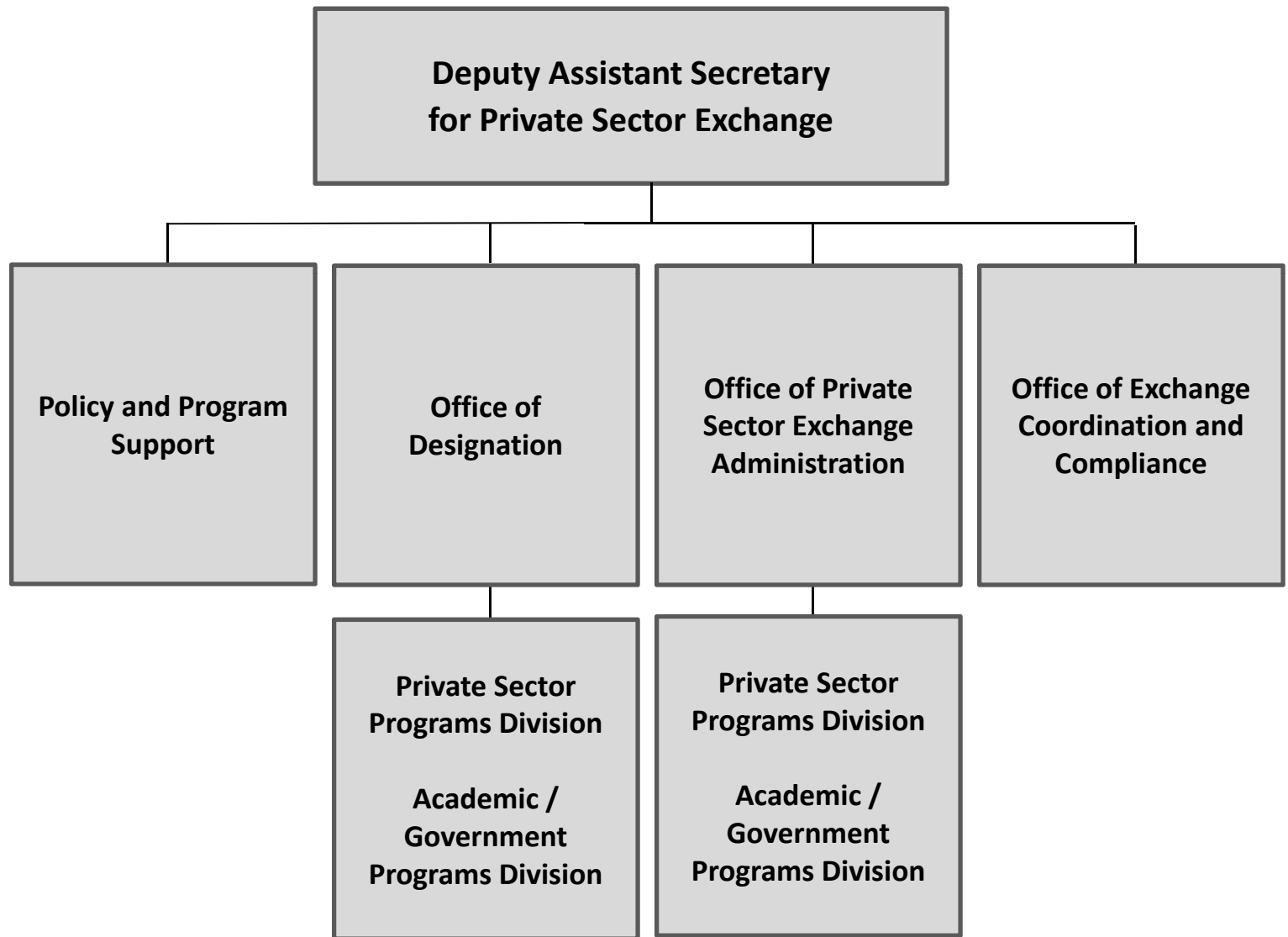
Monitor the health, safety, and welfare of
program participants

Protect the public reputation of the program
and Department



Department of
State

Office of Private Sector Exchange



ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Office of Designation SSSP Category Updates

- Four New Sponsors
- DesignationsSSSP@state.gov
- Updated Welcome Letters
- Conference and Meeting Requests
- Students in D.C.
- DoS Road Trip
- Aligning stories with foreign policy



Office of Designation (ECA/EC/D)

Roles and Responsibilities

The Office of Designation continues to focus on the following in the management of the program:

- Designations and Redesignations
- Stakeholder Outreach
- Allotment/Expansion Requests
- Collecting and Analyzing Reports
- Updating SEVIS (Add Officials, Reinstatements, etc.)
- Four New Sponsors
- Questions regarding 22 CFR Part 62 and Guidance Directives
- DesignationSSSP@state.gov

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Annual Reports Guidelines

- Recommendations from sponsors
 - Secondary School Principals Conference
- Robust Reports
- J-1 Stories

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Reports Timeliness

- Annual Reports
- Placement Reports
- Redesignation
- Management Review



Management Reviews

- Purpose of Management Reviews
 - Informs sponsors of sufficiency of internal processes
 - Raises awareness of areas of potential non-compliance
 - Encourages sponsors to take proactive measures to improve program administration

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Category Review

- Previous Category Reviews
- Input from all stakeholders
 - Survey
 - Field Visits
- Aims to Strengthen Category
- Changes in Regulations?



Office of Private Sector Exchange Administration (OPA)

Roles and Responsibilities

Key functions include:

- Incidents and Complaints
 - Investigating incidents and complaints received
 - Working with sponsors to resolve issues
- Monitor the health, safety, and welfare of program participants
- Consult regarding health, safety and welfare regulations
- Trend Analysis
- Monitoring and site visits
 - Investigate incidents and complaints on-site
- Presenting at Conferences and Meetings
- Local Coordinator Certification



Incident Reporting

What to report to OPA:

- **Immediately:** Incidents involving actual or alleged abuse, neglect, or sexual exploitation.
- Sponsors must report allegations to the authorities as required by local/ state law.
- **On/before next business day:** Serious problem or controversy.

How to report:

- Incident Report
- Documentation
 - Applications
 - Background Check
 - References
 - Monthly Reports
- Email :
HighSchoolExchanges@State.gov

Keep your RO and AROs in the loop early!!!!

ECA/EC

Secondary School Student Program



Department of State

Secondary Student Category Incident Report

A. REPORTER INFORMATION			
Date:		Sponsor Name:	
From:		Program Number:	
Email:		Telephone #:	
B. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION			
EV Last Name:		EV First Name:	
SEVIS Number:		Country:	
DOB:		Program Dates:	
Overseas Partner:		Regional Manager:	
Host Family Name & Address:		Regional Director:	
Host Family Phone:			
Other Parties Involved: (contact information)			
C. SUMMARY			
Nature of Incident:			
Date of Occurrence:		Date 1 st Reported to Sponsor:	
D. ACTION TAKEN			
E. NEXT STEPS / PROPOSED SOLUTION			
F. UPDATE (please number and date each update submitted)			

Secondary School Student Program



Department of State

Incident Reporting Rubric

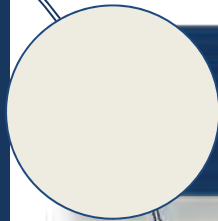
Nature of Incident or Allegation*	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexually Related Incidents or Abuse (incident or allegation involving actual or alleged sexual exploitation or any other allegations of abuse) • Incident Involving the Criminal Justice System (police, child protective services, law enforcement, etc.) • Exchange Visitor Death • Exchange Visitor Missing • Threat of Negative Press, Foreign Government, or Embassy Involvement (incident expected to bring DOS or the exchange visitor program into notoriety or disrepute) • Public Events or Natural Disasters Directly Involving Student Safety (school shooting/violence/stabbing, earthquake, tornado, flood, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor Violations (self-recognition of errors in vetting, oversight, staffing, etc.) • Patterns of Behavior Problems (substance abuse, aggressive physical contact, severe bullying, etc.) • Host Parent Substance Abuse • Mental Health Issues (eating disorder, cutting, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt, planned program termination due to mental health concerns, etc.) • Dangerous and Unsuitable Living Conditions (non-vetted people in the home, theft, inappropriate relationship, pest infestations, mold, filth, etc.) • Life Threatening Health Condition (traumatic brain injury, severe burn, <i>debilitating</i> heart condition, major surgery, seizure disorder, etc.)

*Reporting depends on the level of seriousness, the impact to the health, safety, and welfare of the exchange student, and the impact to the surrounding community. It is a Department of State **best practice** for sponsors to report particularly serious matters within 24 hours, and other matters within 72 hours, depending on the seriousness of an incident.

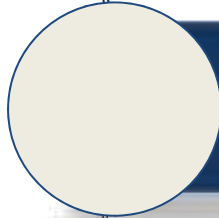
ECA/EC

Incidents and Complaints Academic Year 2015/2016

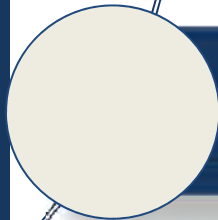
Secondary
School
Student
Program



Number of Incidents & Complaints



Nature of Key Incidents



Nature of Key Complaints



Department of
State

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Sponsor Best Practices

- Screening Host Families
- Monthly Contact Reports
- Child Protective Services (CPS) Disclosures
- Local Coordinator Training



Screening Host Families

- **Quality of the home**
 - Assess pictures taken by LC of the home
 - Would you advertise the home on your website?
 - Would you want your own child there?
- **Second home visit**
 - Are all application photos accurate?
 - Has family composition changed?
- **Financial capacity**
 - Understand varying costs of living
 - Food and housing subsidies
 - Placing two students, where one should be maximum
- **Consider compatibility factors**
 - Good match is key to positive experience
- **Ask about family's hosting history**
 - Check with previous sponsors to see if family still eligible to host
 - Respond promptly to inquiries from other sponsors
 - Standardized Competitor Checks



Monthly Contact Reports

- Should be detailed
 - If not, return to local coordinator for revision
- Document behavioral issues and corrective actions
- Fully explain reasons for student moves
- In person contact vs. text, email or social media
- When incidents do occur and complaints are received
 - Trail of information in monthly reports
 - Demonstrates sponsor effort and compliance
- Best practice: keep records of serious cases of abuse on file indefinitely



Child Protective Services (CPS) Disclosures

- Speak with the host family to learn more specifics
 - Year, state, and if there were any findings or repercussions
- Request that the family provide any CPS documentation or documentation from their attorney that would support their claim.
- Contact CPS to request information about the case
 - Best Practice: Have the family contact CPS to get the info
- If the home is approved, the LC monitors the placement and student more carefully
 - Extra, in-person check-ins



Local Coordinator Training

- Sponsors must ensure that all local coordinators, counselors, Youth Exchange Officers, District Youth Exchange Chairs, and other Rotary Club members affiliated with an exchange visitor's program complete the Department of State training module prior to their appointment as a LC or assumption of duties. The training includes:
 - Instruction designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Exchange Visitor Program
 - Secondary School Student Program category regulations.
 - Public diplomacy objectives
- Sponsors must demonstrate the LC's, counselor's, and other officials' completion of training requirements and that annual refresher training is successfully completed.



Monitoring Visits

- **Site Visits**
 - Randomized selection
 - Various locations
 - Cluster of exchange students and sponsors
 - Have me met students from sponsor X?
- **Fact-Finding visits**
 - Follow-up on problems and issues
 - Targeted visit
 - Problem with an specific sponsor
 - Complaints about housing, local coordinators, safety, etc.
- **Structured Questionnaires**
 - Program satisfaction, orientations, host families, schools, etc.

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Monitoring Visits

Academic Year 2016/2017

- **States:** Arizona, Georgia, Minnesota, Colorado, Michigan, California, and more!
- **Interviewees:** Exchange Students, School Administrators, Principals, Guidance Counselors
- **Sponsor Staff:** Local Coordinators, Regional Managers, Responsible Officers
 - Marketing, Compliance, and Alumni Staff



Past Monitoring Trip Findings

- **Students and school officials were positive**
 - Students would recommend it to their friends
 - School administrators like the diversity it brings to the schools and communities
- **Areas for improvement**
 - Sponsors must provide students with information on their placements prior to their arrival in the U.S.
 - Students arriving in the U.S. after school year begins
 - Some students reported less than monthly contact with their local coordinator
- **Post Trip Activities**
 - Follow-up calls made to sponsors to communicate concerns and positive feedback from trips



Mental Health Project

- Reviewed sponsors' policies
- Conducted informational interviews with experts from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and government
- Culminated in an eight hour course free to sponsor representatives
 - National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health
 - Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
 - Introduced common mental health challenges for youth
 - Reviewed typical adolescent development
 - Taught a five-step action plan for how to help young people
- Mental health issues continue to be of concern for DOS

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Outreach



The screenshot shows the homepage of the J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program website. At the top left is the Department of State seal. To its right is the text "J-1 VISA" in large blue letters, with "EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM" in smaller black letters below it. A search bar on the right contains the text "Search J-1 Visa" and a right-pointing arrow. Below the header is a dark navigation bar with white text for "J-1 VISA BASICS", "PROGRAMS", "for", "PARTICIPANTS", "PROGRAM SPONSORS", and "HOST FAMILIES/EMPLOYERS". The main content area features a banner for "Route J-1" with the text "Follow Route J-1 a special road trip that highlights stories about the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program." and the slogan "Connecting People, Creating Understanding". The banner image shows a road leading to a "ROUTE US J-1" sign against a cloudy sky.



Exchange Visitor Program Communication Checklist

- **Join the Conversation Online**
 - Twitter
 - Route J-1 blog
- **Share Your Exchange Visitor Program Story**
 - J-1 Stories
 - J-1 Change Makers
 - J-1 Hosts
- **Support Key Foreign Policy Issues**
 - Participating in Civic Engagement
 - Promoting Women's Empowerment and Diversity
 - Supporting a Spirit of Volunteerism
 - Fostering Environmental Stewardship
 - Engaging in Entrepreneurship

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

Designation Contact Information

Nick Tiernan, Program Analyst
Tim Fonseth, Program Specialist



DesignationSSSP@state.gov



(844) 300-1824

*Call or email with any questions
Submit documents electronically*

ECA/EC

Secondary
School
Student
Program



Department of
State

OPA Contact Information

James Alexander, Branch Chief
Brandi Duffy, Program Analyst
Joele Tyson, Program Analyst
Olga O'Neil, Program Analyst



HighSchoolExchanges@state.gov



(202) 203-7724

Call or email with any questions