

Supporting Statement

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)

Forms I-17 and I-20

OMB No. 1653-0038

A. Justification.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Section 641 of the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA)*, Public Law 104-208, Div. C (Sept. 30, 1996) requires the creation of a program to collect information, on an ongoing basis, from designated school officials at Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) -certified schools relating to F and M nonimmigrants during the course of the F and M nonimmigrants' stay in the United States, using electronic reporting technology to the fullest extent practicable. It further requires federal approval and authorization of schools participating in such enrollment.

IIRIRA mandates collecting the identity and current address in the United States of the nonimmigrant and the classification of the nonimmigrant, the date on which a visa under the classification was issued or extended or the date on which a change to such classification was approved by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the current academic status of the nonimmigrant, including whether the nonimmigrant is maintaining status as a full-time student, and any disciplinary action taken by the institution against the alien as a result of a conviction of a crime.

The *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act of 2001*, Public Law 107-56 (October 26, 2001), amended IIRIRA to add the requirement that information be collected on the F and M nonimmigrants' date and port of entry into the United States.

On October 30, 2001, the President issued *Homeland Security Presidential Directive-2 (HSPD-2)*, requiring the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct periodic and ongoing review of all schools certified to accept F and M students.

On May 14, 2002 the *Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002 (EBSVERA)*, Public Law 107–173, 116 Stat. 543 (May 14, 2002), was enacted requiring DHS to recertify all schools approved for attendance by F and/or M students within two years of its passage. Further, it mandates that DHS conduct an additional recertification of these schools every two years.

Data collection requirements for Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) certification, oversight and recertification of schools authorized to enroll F and/or M students required by these laws and directive are detailed by regulation in 8 CFR 214.2, 8 CFR 214.3, and 8 CFR 214.4.

The Student and Exchange Visitor Program is a component of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) assigned by DHS to administer the Student and Exchange Information System (SEVIS) and to carry out the responsibilities mandated by the above laws regarding F and M nonimmigrants.¹ Substantive requirements and procedures for SEVP and SEVIS are promulgated in the following rulemaking proceedings:

- *Retention and Reporting of Information for F, J, and M Nonimmigrants; Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)* [67 FR 34862 (May 16, 2002), proposed; 67 FR 76256 (December 11, 2002), final]
- *Allowing Eligible Schools To Apply for Preliminary Enrollment in the Student and Exchange Visitor System (SEVIS)* [67 FR 44343 (July 1, 2002), interim final]
- *Requiring Certification of all Service Approved Schools for Enrollment in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)* [67 FR 60107 (September 25, 2002), interim final]
- *Exchange Visitor Program: SEVIS Regulations* [67 FR 76307 (December 12, 2002), Department of State (DoS) interim final]

¹ The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Exchange Visitor Program, a component of the Department of State, is under the same mandate of IIRIRA as SEVP with respect to the Exchange Visitor Program, authorized under the J visa classification. The Exchange Visitor Program fulfills its requirements within SEVIS and addresses its data collection requirements to the Office of Management and Budget in a separate filing. This Supporting Statement does not include the ongoing annual costs associated with the Exchange Visitor Program of the Department of State.

- *Authorizing Collection of the Fee Levied on F, J, and M Nonimmigrant Classifications Under Public Law 104-208* [64 FR 71323 (December 21, 1999), proposed; 68 FR 61148 (October 27, 2003), proposed; 69 FR 39814 (July 1, 2004), final]
- *Extending Period of Optional Practical Training by 17-Months for F-1 Nonimmigrant Students with STEM Degrees and Expanding Cap-Gap Relief for All F-1 Students with Pending H-1B Petitions* [73 FR 18944, (April 8, 2008), interim final]
- *Adjusting Program Fees and Establishing Procedures for Out-of-Cycle Review and Recertification of Schools Certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program To Enroll F or M Nonimmigrant Students* [73 FR 21260 (April 21, 2008), proposed; 73 FR 55683 (September 26, 2008), final]

SEVP has two additional Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) authorizations for forms used in program-related processes, but not produced by SEVIS. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form numbers are as follows:

- OMB No. 1653-0037 for the Form I-515A, *Notice to Student or Exchange Visitor*, used when F or M nonimmigrant students arrive at ports of entry without proper documentation, are given temporary admission, and must present proper documentation to SEVP within 30 days to remain in status.
- OMB No. 1653-0034 for the Form I-901, *Fee Remittance Form for Certain F, J and M Nonimmigrants*, used by prospective F and M nonimmigrant students in conjunction with their mandatory payment of the I-901 SEVIS fee, which funds SEVP operations.

2. Purpose of collection.

SEVIS is an Internet-based data-entry, collection and reporting system. DHS, DoS, and a growing number of other government agencies, as well as SEVP-certified schools use SEVIS data. SEVP certifies qualifying schools and grants access to SEVIS.

Designated school officials at these SEVP-certified schools are the respondents that collect and enter the information in SEVIS via the following:

Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student,"

Form I-20 (A-B), “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status – For Academic and Language Students,” and

Form I-20 (M-N), “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (M-1) Student Status – For Vocational Students.”

In obtaining SEVP certification, a school makes a legally binding commitment to comply with applicable federal laws, regulations and DHS requirements.

SEVIS provides authorized users access to information on F and M nonimmigrant students, and the accompanying spouses and dependents.

SEVIS provides SEVP the ability to communicate via email with all DSOs at SEVP-certified schools.

The SEVIS database enables:

- Schools to instantaneously transmit electronic information and event notifications on F and M nonimmigrants to ICE throughout the nonimmigrants’ stay in the United States. These include required notifications, reports, and updates to personal data.
- DHS to efficiently administer their approval and oversight processes (i.e., certification and recertification) of schools wishing to benefit from enrolling F and M nonimmigrants.
- DHS to efficiently administer its SEVP certification denial and withdrawal processes, to include appeals and motion to reopen or reconsider submitted by schools’ subject to adverse decisions leading to removal of the benefit to enroll F and/or M students.
- Law enforcement agencies to monitor F and M nonimmigrants with regard to the maintenance of their nonimmigrant status. SEVIS is a critical national security component, a primary resource for conducting counterterrorism and/or counterintelligence threat analysis by the law enforcement and intelligence communities. Two primary law enforcement/intelligence users of SEVIS are
 - The Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force
 - The ICE Counterterrorism and Compliance Enforcement Unit.

- Government benefits providers, and service providers, to better serve their F and M nonimmigrant customers.

SEVIS data is used daily to qualify individuals petitioning for F and M status and to facilitate:

- Port of entry screening
- Processing of benefit applications
- Nonimmigrant status maintenance
- Timely removal of nonimmigrants from the United States, as needed.

SEVIS data is used to assist school officials, and the United States government in promoting the *Secure Borders and Open Doors* initiative (January 17, 2006). In concert with biometric assessment technologies that are being introduced, SEVIS data continues to support access to the United States for bona fide aliens seeking F and M nonimmigrant status, while elevating the detection and barring of aliens that might threaten the nation.

3. Use of information technology.

The introduction of SEVIS enabled replacement of complex, decentralized, time-consuming and inefficient paper-based processes with Internet-based technology which allows for simpler, quicker, more efficient paperless processes. Data is now collected uniformly and electronically, available to agencies at any time and with resulting cost savings to its users. The timeliness and integrity of SEVIS data is positively impacting all systems with which SEVP interacts. Specific improvements with the implementation of SEVIS include:

- OMB presently approves the entry, collection, and production of all fields previously approved for the paper Forms I-17, *Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student*, and I-20, *Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status*. The use of SEVIS provides the most efficient means for collecting and processing required data. It promotes single-point entry of data by the individual with the most reliable source of data, currently the designated school officials. Since August 1, 2003, all data must be entered in SEVIS and all forms must be generated through SEVIS. Certification and recertification applications must be submitted electronically.

- Multiple-copy forms have been eliminated. This streamlining is most evident with Forms I-20, which previously entailed mailing of copies from the ports of entry to a central data-entry location and, then, to the school—a process that could take weeks.
- SEVIS-generated forms incorporate encryption, which significantly reduces the likelihood of fraud in forms issuance and the opportunity for successful counterfeiting.
- SEVP uses its Web site as the primary means of general communication with schools; it uses email as the primary means of directed communication. In circumstances involving adjustment of or response to SEVIS data, emails are generated automatically by SEVIS. This reliance on email, rather than traditional paper-copy mailing, significantly reduces manual processing by SEVP personnel and provides designated school officials more timely information. Electronic communication is also minimizing the burden of filing and recordkeeping.
- SEVP is identifying other government data resources where there are shared data needs. Where identified, SEVP is brokering arrangements for interfaces and data-sharing. In the short term, this improves the overall currency of data among government resources. In the long-term, it enables development of algorithms between data systems that will identify discrepancies as they occur and resolve them immediately, enhancing overall data integrity and elevating national security.
- SEVIS data collection incorporated the entire designated school official (DSO) approval process for F-1 student employment. This eliminated the need for the Form I-538, *Certification by Designated School Official*, consequently now obsolete.
- Many SEVIS users reported to SEVP that they recognized management benefits and improved ease in complying with SEVP requirements as a benefit of working within the framework of SEVIS.
- SEVIS data is retained indefinitely in electronic form, either in active or archived records. Consequently, traditional records retention requirements for schools are significantly reduced.
- SEVP has instituted paperless procedures for service of all its notices and adjudications to schools and schools must make their submissions to SEVP electronically.

- SEVP is investing heavily in the enhancement of SEVIS reporting capabilities. Improved reporting and data analysis will increasingly be the basis for overseeing school compliance and verifying eligibility and qualification for continued SEVP school certification. Identification of performance trends will enable SEVP to better identify policy, outreach, and training needs.
- SEVP is transitioning to accept electronic submission of forms and data, in lieu of paper forms.
 - Electronic forms submission and signature acceptance processes will expedite processing
 - Electronic validation of forms by consulates, ports-of-entry and benefit providers will be uniformly available to government users. Consequently, presentation and authentication of paper copies will be eliminated from all Federal processes.
 - Primary use of electronic validation of forms will further reduce the potential negative consequences of fraudulent documentation.
 - Eventual elimination of paper forms will present significant savings for schools in postage and handling.
- When schools applied for SEVP certification, required supporting documents were collected by a DHS representative at the time of the mandatory site visit. This business process is amended. If verifiable electronic forms of documentation are available (including, but not limited to faxing and Websites) the alternates (e.g., tax information and school catalogues) are being accepted. School submission of required documentation is required to be electronic as much as feasible for both certification and recertification.
- SEVP incorporated the F and M nonimmigrants' email address and telephone number in the SEVIS data collection. In case of emergency, SEVP and the DSOs can directly contact any or all the F and M nonimmigrants students.

4. Duplication of collection.

SEVP is unaware of any duplication of effort in the collection of F and M nonimmigrant or participant school data, and there is no other similar information system currently available that can be used for the purposes of SEVIS. However, a number of data systems collect generic alien visitor data in processes that F or M nonimmigrants encounter subsequent to the collection of data for SEVIS. Through a concerted effort to develop interfaces with these systems, SEVP is making progress in reducing duplication of collection.

Data collection in SEVIS by SEVP is made in two primary areas that encompass management of: F and M nonimmigrant (and, to a limited degree, their dependents) personal enrollment/participation information; and SEVP certification, oversight and recertification of schools authorized to enroll F or M students. With respect to these areas, other than the addition of the SEVIS tracking numbers and the recent addition of the F and M nonimmigrants' email and phone number to the collection, SEVIS does not require the collection of any data that was not previously required by DHS (or the previous Immigration and Naturalization Service, which DHS incorporated). What differs qualitatively with SEVIS over the previous workload is that the data is now collected uniformly and electronically, and is made available to needing agencies at any time.

Regarding the management of F and M nonimmigrant information:

- As addressed in Item 3 (above), the introduction of SEVIS eliminated multi-copy Forms I-20 that were formerly used by schools. Since SEVIS implementation, only Forms I-20 from SEVIS are accepted. The SEVIS Form I-20 was designed to incorporate only the data elements previously approved by OMB to be collected on each form.
- SEVIS allows the accompanying spouse and dependents of a nonimmigrant student to have their own copy of the Form I-20. (Previously, they entered the United States with a copy of the sponsor's Form I-20.)
- SEVIS replaces Form AR-11, *Alien's Change of Address Card*, reporting for F and M nonimmigrants. With SEVIS, F and M nonimmigrants report changes in name or U.S. address to their designated school officials. SEVIS eliminated a redundancy in reporting with the Form AR-11 process.

- The nature of information technology allows systems to “remember” data that has been previously entered and to pre-populate data fields from those previous entries. This, then, limits new data entry to only changes. Further, design features of the software reduce the likelihood of data-entry errors, in comparison with paper-based processes. The impact of this reduced redundancy and improved quality on both Forms I-20 and I-17 updating is significant.

Historically, an initial Form I-20 averaged 30 minutes and every pre-SEVIS paper update required the same time. A student, in a four-year program, may require 10-12 updates to the Form I-20 information over the duration of the student’s program of study. A DSO can complete each one of these updates in SEVIS in about five minutes. The Form I-17, from “scratch,” may take one to two hours. A quarterly or “as needed” update in SEVIS shouldn’t take more than 10 minutes. This includes updates to the Form I-17 submitted for recertification. Clearly, while SEVIS required heroic effort to populate for initial implementation of the program, the long-term time savings are significant.

5. Impact on small business or any other small entities.

The collection of information for SEVP does not disproportionately impact small businesses or other small entities. At the time of the most recent analysis (December 2013) SEVP determined that SEVIS directly affects all schools that seek to be or are SEVP-certified to admit F and M nonimmigrant students.

At the time of the most recent analysis (December 2013), there were 10,205 certified schools. Of these, SEVP estimates that about 46% (4,143) are small entities as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA). For the purposes of the SBA, the following three types of schools qualify as small entities:

- Those with annual revenues of \$6 million dollars or less
- Public school systems serving a population of less than 50,000
- Flight schools with annual revenues of \$21 million dollars or less

The use of SEVIS, as a means for record keeping and reporting, streamlines paper-based processes previously in existence. SEVIS uses technology that was already in place at most institutions. Authorized institutions only need to access the Internet. There is no download of

software. SEVP does not charge a SEVIS subscriber or user fee. However, while there is no charge for access to SEVIS, there may be individual organizational costs, such as upgrades to vendor software or campus information technology systems, for certifying schools that choose to use the batch-method interface with SEVIS². DHS took these costs into account in designing SEVIS and minimized them by utilizing common industry standards. Accordingly, the implementation of SEVP and SEVIS had no significant impact on more than a few small entities, as that term is defined in 5 U.S.C. 601(6).

The final rule, “Improving and Expanding Training Opportunities for F-1 Nonimmigrant Students With STEM Degrees and Cap-Gap Relief for All Eligible F-1 Student,” (81 FR 13040; March 11, 2016), identified 18,000 employers that would fall in this category but found no significant change of burden unique to small businesses. A full analysis will be addressed in the new Fee rule.

6. Consequence to the federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

If information is not collected in SEVIS, DHS will not be able to comply effectively with the statutory mandates of legislation cited in Item 1 (above). Information would need to be collected through a paper process, as previously required, which would most likely necessitate resumption of manual data entry by government employees and create a backlog for data entry. The data integrity of the F and M nonimmigrant information may also be compromised. DHS measures to ensure compliance with the law and regulations will be severely limited without the information being retained and without it being as readily accessible as it is in SEVIS. Collection of data less frequently than is required by SEVP could result in failure to make timely identification of potential F and M nonimmigrant threats to national security or threats of immigration fraud.

7. Explain special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

² While batch processing (the large scale transfer of data from one system to another) may entail a school investing in software or software development to develop an interface to SEVIS and the school’s data systems, the alternative is that all data entry be done by real-time interface (RTI), which requires that all data be manually keyed-in. A school that utilizes batch processing does so as a business decision, based upon determination that its investment is less than the cost of RTI.

The following are special circumstances:

- Requiring respondents to report information to SEVP more often than quarterly.
Reporting requirements [as specified in 8 CFR 214.2(f)(17) and 8 CFR 214.2(m)(18)] with respect to enrollment, personal information, address, and maintenance of visa status require that F and M nonimmigrants provide updated information to DSOs much more often than quarterly. Thresholds (i.e., the allowable maximum time before such changes must be reported) that require the F and M nonimmigrants to report to their DSOs are determined by the potential of threats to national security that could result from failure to inform enforcement agencies of changes within a reasonable time.
- Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it. SEVP regards a submission made electronically in SEVIS as equivalent to a written response. In some circumstances, the recordkeeping, retention and reporting requirements for SEVP-certified schools (as specified in 8 CFR 214.3) require the submission of changes in SEVIS in 30 or fewer days of the school being made aware of the change. Thresholds (i.e., the allowable maximum time before such changes must be reported) for this reporting are determined by the potential of threats to national security or of immigration fraud that could result from failure to inform enforcement agencies of changes within the allotted time. They are also essential for prosecution of noncompliant designated school officials.
- Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years. The length of a student's program varies depending on the academic or vocational goal. To ensure student and school compliance and to enable auditing of compliance, schools are required to maintain a nonimmigrant student's record for at least three years after program completion or the nonimmigrant student's transfer to another school. To facilitate maintenance of F or M visa status and the processing of future applications for visitation to the United States, F and M nonimmigrant students are encouraged to retain personal copies of Forms I-20, visas, passports, entry, and benefit-related documents indefinitely.

8. Solicitation of public comments.

On, September 18, 2017, ICE published a notice in the Federal Register at 82 FR 43565, soliciting public review and comment for a 60-day period on the proposed extension of this information collection. ICE received no comments relating to the information collection. On January 10, 2018, ICE published a follow up notice in the Federal Register at 83 FR 4267, soliciting public review and comment for an additional 30-day period on the proposed new information collection. SEVP received a total of three comments in response to the Student and Exchange Visitors Program's Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) / Form I-17 and Forms I-20 30-day notice.

COMMENT:

One commenter (under two separate comments) took issue with the perceived cost to the American tax payer for nonimmigrant F-visa and M-visa students to attend school in the United States.

RESPONSE:

There is no net cost to the federal government for SEVP and SEVIS. SEVP is mandated by law to be fully fee-funded (see Item 1). Section 286(m) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1356(m), provides that fees may be set at a level that will ensure the recovery of all costs of providing adjudication services. That section, together with Title V of the Independent Offices Appropriations Act of 1952, 31 U.S.C. 9701, and the OMB Circular No. A-25, Revised requires that a fee be set at an amount sufficient to recover the full cost to the federal government. Fees are developed at a level projected to cover the aggregate of SEVP operating costs. Expenditures are restricted from exceeding the actual amount of revenue received. For a detailed explanation of the cost to the federal government and the fees that compensate the government for this cost, see the following rule: Adjusting Program Fees and Establishing Procedures for Out-of-Cycle Review and Recertification of Schools Certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program To Enroll F or M Nonimmigrant Students [73 FR 21260 (April 21, 2008), proposed; 73 FR 55683 (September 26, 2008), final].

Background: Section 641 of IIRIRA, 8 U.S.C. §1372, directs DHS to collect information relating to academic nonimmigrant students (F-1 visa) and vocational nonimmigrant students (M-1 visa), as well as their dependents (F-2 or M-2), and provides for the collection of the required fee to

defray the costs of this program. Through the Form I-901, Fee Remittance for Certain F, J and M Nonimmigrants, (OMB #1653-0034; see the fmjFee.com website), the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) collects the fees.

At this time and for the foreseeable future, the use of the Form I-901/fmjFee.com site provides the most efficient means for collecting and processing the required data, and associated fee. SEVP also uses the Form I-901/fmjfee.com to provide payment verification (electronic receipt) to the F-visa or M-visa nonimmigrant upon payment and to positively identify that a particular F or M nonimmigrant has paid the fee. The F and M nonimmigrants need to produce proof of the I-901 fee payment (as well as provide other documents) at the consular interview in order to obtain the relevant F-visa or M-visa. The respondents to the Form I-901 are the F-visa or M-visa nonimmigrants. The fees collected from these nonimmigrants support the Form I-901/fmjFee site activities, as well as fund other facets of SEVP including the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

COMMENT:

One commenter questioned why the SEVIS/Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student," Section 2.2, required listing subjects taught, with the exception of English. And, requested modification to the Form I-17 in order to allow K-12 institutions to reflect accurately the full extent of their curriculum without triggering a language training assumption.

RESPONSE:

Various sections of the Form I-17, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student," are used to identify the purpose for which a school intends to issue a Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status." At the kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) level, the Form I-20 is most commonly issued for a student to obtain a high school diploma, which is a drop-down option that can be selected in field 2.3. Evidence collected by SEVP when certifying a school's program of study, such as a K-12 program, is used to identify the program's intended curriculum. Sections 2.2 and 2.4 of the Form I-17 are to be used only to provide additional information when the intent of a program of study is unclear. Because English is usually considered part of the core curriculum of most K-12 programs, it does not need to be specifically listed as an area of study in sections 2.2 or 2.4.

9. Explanation of payment or gift to respondents.

SEVP does not provide payments or gifts to respondents for this information collection.

10. Assurance of confidentiality.

DHS has designated SEVIS to be a Privacy Act system of records and SEVIS information will be used and disclosed in accordance with 5 U.S.C. §552a, Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. SEVP published a [Privacy Impact Assessment on February 5, 2005](#) and a [Privacy](#)

[Impact Assessment Update on June 23, 2011](#). A System of Records Notice (SORN) published at 75 FR 412 (January 10, 2010).

With regard to SEVP certification appeal or motion proceedings, there is no assurance of confidentiality. SEVP will use the information submitted to determine eligibility for the benefit. SEVP may provide information on the form to other government agencies.

11. Justification of questions of a sensitive nature.

There are no questions of sensitive nature asked in this information collection.

12. Annual and onetime public reporting burden and public cost.

SEVP certifies qualifying schools, and grants access to SEVIS.

Designated school officials (DSO) at these SEVP-certified schools are the respondents. The DSOs are employees of the SEVP-certified schools. These DSOs collect and enter the information required in SEVIS through the schools' own admission information collection tools. That data populates the SEVIS Form I-17 and the Forms I-20 identified in Item #2 of this supporting statement. It is the designated school officials that have the burden. The F and M nonimmigrants do not have the burden.

The ongoing annual public reporting burden and cost of SEVP and SEVIS is divided among:

- DSOs collecting F and M nonimmigrant student information through the schools' own admission information collection tools and processes;
- DSOs collecting, updating and managing F and M nonimmigrant student information in SEVIS; and,
- DSOs managing their respective school's SEVP certification, including initial certification, compliance and recertification.

The table immediately below this paragraph provides a combined summary of the public reporting burden. This summary does not include savings to the respondent realized by the introduction of electronic versus paper-copy data management. Greater explanation and net cost to the respondents is presented in the text that follows.

Su1mmmary of Public Burden and Cost Based on 2016 Data

Type of Respondent or Information Collection	Form Name	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Annual Burden (in hours)	Avg. Hourly Wage Rate	Total Annual Respondent Cost
Management of Student records by DSO	SEVIS / Form I-20	37,780	1	2,998,257	\$39.33	\$117,921,453
	SEVIS/ Student OPT	37,780	1	11,338	\$39.33	\$445,939
	SEVIS/ Student OPT /STEM	37,780	1	3,057	\$39.33	\$120,237
Subtotal Student Data				3,012,652	\$39.33	\$118,487,629
Management of SEVP certification and recert by DSO	SEVIS /Form I-17	37,780	1	*542,985	\$39.33	\$21,355,633
Subtotal School Data				*542,985		\$21,355,633
Subtotal Student and School Data				3,555,637		\$139,843,262

*includes 14 hours per respondent for training, research, reports and professional development

Annual burden and cost of collection, updating, and management of prospective and continuing F and M nonimmigrant data from F and M nonimmigrants by DSOs in SEVIS.

The management of student data by DSOs in SEVIS includes the issuance of Forms I-20; gathering, updating and reporting student information; and the correction of identified errors in student information. DSO salary rate increased from \$15 per hour to \$39.33 per hour due to a reassessment of the DSO’s role in the Final rule, “Improving and Expanding Training

Opportunities for F-1 Nonimmigrant Students With STEM Degrees and Cap-Gap Relief for All Eligible F-1 Students,” 81 FR 13040, March 11, 2016.

- The 3-year average of active student records in SEVIS is estimated to be a cumulative total of 1,604,823 for each year.³
- SEVP anticipates that 796,757 initial F/M students will enroll at SEVP-certified schools annually. The normal applicant will apply to more than one school, requiring development of an average of 2.5 SEVIS/Forms I-20. For approximately 35% of these, the data will be loaded using real time interface (RTI) procedures, at 32 (0.53) minutes each to complete. Presuming costs of \$39.33 per hour for 784,461 hours, the cost for RTI-loaded initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 will be \$30,852,853.
- For approximately 65% of the SEVIS/Forms I-20, the data will be loaded using batch procedures, at one minute each to complete. Presuming costs of \$39.33 per hour for 8320 hours, the cost for batch-loaded initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 will be \$327,232.
- DSOs must update SEVIS/Form I-20 information on students on an ongoing basis. These updates can be for a number of reasons but, because the data fields populated during initial SEVIS/Form I-20 loading are pre-populated for updates, the update using RTI method remains 6 minutes. The update time remains one minute using the batch method. On average, students receive three updates to their records annually. An estimated 35% of updates will be RTI, at an annual cost of \$76,053,533 ; 65% of updates will be batch, at an annual cost of \$10,650,974.

³ For calendar year 2016, the total number of active F and M students in SEVIS was 1,793,098. SEVP projects a 10.5% decrease over the next three years covered by this Supporting Statement (i.e., 1,604,823. students for calendar year 2017 and the same amount for calendar years 2018 and 2019). Estimates for active F-2/M-2 dependents, initial F-1/M-1 students, initial F-2/M-2 dependents, participants in optional practical training (OPT), and participants in STEM OPT are calculated in the same way. Student and School actual 2016 numbers provided by SEVP’s Analysis and Operations Center (SAOC) and SEVP’s Systems Management Unit (SMU); rate of change of nonimmigrants provided by Java Production Inc.

Note: [SEVIS by the Numbers](#) data, posted on the SEVIS Outreach page of the SEVP website, reflect a limited period of the year (a “snapshot” of that segment) rather than the entire year, as given in this statement.

- SEVP anticipates the 3-year average of active F-2/M-2 dependent records in SEVIS to be 109,067, and anticipates 20,399 initial F-2/M-2 dependent records each year. Each dependent requires an individual SEVIS/Form I-20. Most data on the dependent initial SEVIS/Form I-20 is derived and pre-populated from the data in the sponsor’s record, so each dependent SEVIS/Form I-20 takes five minutes each to complete. A dependent will usually average one update per year. The annual cost for dependents is \$23,778 for RTI-loaded and \$13,063 for batch loaded.
- Further, the introduction of SEVIS resulted in the elimination of the Form I-538, which was required to be completed and sent out by DSOs for all students applying for off-campus employment or practical training. The same information is required for USCIS to adjudicate the application, but it is now entered during the SEVIS/Form I-20. SEVP estimates the number of students applying for practical training at 136,607. If 136,607 students apply for practical training, DSOs have the additional burden to make a recommendation update to the student SEVIS record. Consequently, with each student recommended for OPT, a DSO will have to make one additional action at a cost of \$445,939.
- SEVP anticipates that 36,833 students will apply for the STEM OPT option. DSOs have the additional burden to make a recommendation update to the student SEVIS record. Consequently, for each student authorized STEM OPT a DSO will have to make one additional action for a cost of \$120,237.
- The total cost for management of student data is \$118,487,629.

The overall cost to the public to support management of student data, borne by SEVP-certified schools, averages \$13,199.⁴

Management of Student Data: Burden/Costs for Each Year of this Reporting Period (Based on calendar year 2016, projected for 2017- 2019)⁵

F/M Students SEVIS/Forms I-20 and personal info.	Total	Frequency	Burden	Subtotal	Cost/hr.	Subtotal (\$)
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⁴ **Calculation:** Total cost of student management from chart – divided by – number of schools = cost per school. 118,487,629 cost of managing student data – divided by – 8977 estimated approved schools = \$13,199.

⁵ These actions are taken by DSOs in SEVIS to support the F and M visa nonimmigrant students.

			(hours)	(hours)		
Active F/M students	1,604,823					
Initial F/M students	796,757					
Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	592,046	2.5	0.53	784,461	\$39.33	\$30,852,853
Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	208,004	2.5	0.016	8,320	\$39.33	\$327,232
Updates (RTI)	7,765,979	3	0.1	1,933,729	\$39.33	\$76,053,553
Updates (batch)	5,641,884	3	0.016	270,810	\$39.33	\$10,650,974
Student SEVIS/OPT	136,607	1	0.083	11,338	\$39.33	\$445,939
Students SEVIS/ STEM OPT	36,833	1	0.083	3,057	\$39.33	\$120,237
Active F-2/M-2 dependents	109,067					
Initial F-2/M-2 dependents	20,399					
F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	7,284	1	0.083	605	\$39.33	\$23,778
F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	20,758	1	0.016	332	\$39.33	\$13,063
			Total Hours	3,012,652	Total Cost	\$118,487,629

Cost Saving on Forms I-20 with SEVIS

The requirement to manage student data has not changed. However, pre-SEVIS, all Forms I-20 took nearly 30 minutes to complete. The benefit in costs saved by the elimination of the Form I-538 through SEVIS is \$3,410,697.⁶

At the volume of these projections, by using SEVIS, the annual cost savings from the reduction in burden of hours to the SEVP-certified schools is \$715,803,807. This results in an estimated public cost burden reduction of, \$79,737⁷ per SEVP-certified school.

Cost Saving on Forms I-20 with SEVIS for Each Year of this Reporting Period (Based on calendar year 2016, projected for 2017- 2019)

F/M Students SEVIS/Forms I-20 and Personal Info.	Totals	Frequency	Burden (hours)	Subtotal (hours)	Cost/hr.	Subtotal (\$)
Active F/M students	1,604,823					
Initial F/M students	796,757					
Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	592,046	2.5	0.5	740,057	\$39.33	\$29,106,461
Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	208,004	2.5	0.5	260,005	\$39.33	\$10,225,996
Updates (RTI)	7,765,979	3	0.5	11,648,968	\$39.33	\$458,153,931
Updates (batch)	5,641,884	3	0.5	8,462,826	\$39.33	\$332,842,946
Student SEVIS/OPT	136,607	1	0.5	68,303	\$39.33	\$2,686,356
Students SEVIS/ STEM OPT	36,833	1	0.5	18,416	\$39.33	\$724,301

⁶ OPT 136,607 + STEM OPT 36,833 = total # Forms I-538 (no longer used) 173,440 X 0.5 completion time = 86,720 hour burden; 86,720 hour burden X \$39.33 = \$3,410,697 savings gained because SEVIS eliminated use of Form I-538.

⁷ Total public burden reduction 715,803,807 – divided – by the number of SEVP certified schools 8977 = the cost saving per SEVP certified school \$79,737.

Active F-2/M-2 dependents	109,067					
F-2/M-2 initial dependents	20,399					
F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	7,284	1	0.5	3,642	\$39.33	\$143,239
F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	20,758	1	0.5	10,379	\$39.33	\$408,206
			Total Hours	21,212,596	Total Cost	\$834,291,436
			Current Cost			Minus \$118,487,629
			Savings			\$715,803,807

Management of SEVP certification (i.e., school information).

The maintenance of SEVP-certification includes the management of initial, periodic and on-request submission of SEVIS/Forms I-17, reporting changes and correction of identified errors.

- Computed costs include expense incurred by SEVP-certified schools in the time expended to enter data and submit reports.
- It does not incorporate costs that may be placed on schools to acquire and maintain equipment for SEVP-related activities.

- There are an estimated 8,977⁸ SEVP-certified schools. SEVP anticipates 298 schools to petition for initial certification and 2,867 schools to recertify annually in each of the next three years.
- On average a designated school official at a school devotes four hours to complete an initial petition to include obtaining access to SEVIS, data entry and the SEVP on-site school inspection. The current initial certification fee (\$1,700 cost of petition + \$655 for site visit, with each additional campus incurring a separate site visit fee) does meet government’s cost.
- Updates to school information will average five minutes for completion.
- Recertification process for schools will take the same amount of time as the initial certification.
- All documents necessary for the initial petition or recertification are collected electronically.
- SEVP estimates the overall costs to SEVP-certified schools related to DSO personal development, to include training, research, reports and professional development cost, to be collectively \$20,802.423, at approximately 14 hours per DSO.

Management of SEVP Certification: Burden/Costs for Each Year of this Reporting Period (Based on calendar year 2016, projected for 2017- 2019)

SEVIS/Form I-17 School certification, oversight, recertification	Total	Frequency	Burden (hours)	Subtotal (hours)	Cost/hr.	Subtotal (\$)

⁸ For calendar year 2016, the total number of SEVP-certified schools was 8,977. SEVP projects, a flat 298 or zero school increase, for the next three years covered by this Supporting Statement (i.e., 8,977. schools for calendar year 2017 and the same amount for calendar years 2018 and 2019).

Estimates for initial school certification petitions, school recertification petitions, school petition updates and designated school officials are calculated in the same way.

Note: SEVIS by the Numbers data, posted on the Outreach page of the SEVP website, reflects a limited period of the year (a “snapshot” of that segment) rather than the entire year, as given in this statement.

SEVP-certified schools	8977					
SEVIS/Form I-17 Initial school certification processing	298	1	4	1,192	\$39.33	\$46,881
SEVIS/Form I-17 Petition updates	5646	3	0.083	1,405	\$39.33	\$55,292
SEVIS/Form I-17 Recertification processing	2867	1	4	11,468	\$39.33	\$451,036
DSO training, research, reports, and professional development.	37,780	1	14	528,920	\$39.33	\$20,802,423
			School Data Total hours	542,985	Total cost	\$21,355,633
			Student Data	3,012,652		118,487,629
Management of student data and SEVP certification – combined totals		Grand Totals	Hours	3,555,637	Cost	\$ 139,843,262

13. Capital startup and ongoing equipment costs. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

There were no capital or startup costs charged to the respondents or record keepers as a result of the initiation of this collection of information (i.e., the government cost to initiate this collection was not passed on to the schools or the F and M nonimmigrants). Development costs for SEVIS and the initial implementation of SEVP were underwritten with appropriated funds. Recurring maintenance and further development costs are funded through the Form I-901, *Fee Remittance Form for Certain F, J and M Nonimmigrants* (OMB 1653-0034), which is used by prospective F and M

nonimmigrant students in conjunction with their mandatory payment of the I-901 SEVIS fee.

14. Annual government burden and cost.

Annualized Cost Analysis:

System Operation and Maintenance	\$ 20,512,188
Total Annual Cost	\$ 20,512,188

The estimated cost is \$ 20, 512, 188. SEVP based its SEVIS Operations and Maintenance costs on CY2016 costs. The number, which reflects the total system cost for collecting and using the data, includes salary expense for 139 contract staff used as support personnel. SEVIS is accessed via the Internet at <https://sevis.ice.dhs.gov/sevis/>. SEVIS ensures that SEVP can monitor SEVIS data, which is used to assist designated school officials, and the United States government in promoting the *Secure Borders and Open Doors* initiative (January 17, 2006). In concert with biometric assessment technologies that are being introduced, SEVIS data continues to support access to the United States for bona fide aliens seeking F or M nonimmigrant status, while elevating the detection and barring of aliens that might threaten the nation.

There is no net cost to the federal government for SEVP and SEVIS. SEVP is mandated by law to be fully fee-funded (see Item 1). Section 286(m) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1356(m), provides that fees may be set at a level that will ensure the recovery of all costs of providing adjudication services. That section, together with Title V of the Independent Offices Appropriations Act of 1952, 31 U.S.C. 9701, and the OMB Circular No. A-25, Revised requires that a fee be set at an amount sufficient to recover the full cost to the federal government. Fees are developed at a level projected to cover the aggregate of SEVP operating costs. Expenditures are restricted from exceeding the actual amount of revenue received. For a detailed explanation of the cost to the federal government and the fees that compensate the government for this cost, see the following rule: *Adjusting Program Fees and Establishing Procedures for Out-of-Cycle*

Review and Recertification of Schools Certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program To Enroll F or M Nonimmigrant Students [73 FR 21260 (April 21, 2008), proposed; 73 FR 55683 (September 26, 2008), final].

Background:

Section 641 of IIRIRA, 8 U.S.C. §1372, directs DHS to collect information relating to academic nonimmigrant students (F-1 visa) and vocational nonimmigrant students (M-1 visa), as well as their dependents (F-2 or M-2), and provides for the collection of the required fee to defray the costs of this program. Through the **Form I-901, Fee Remittance for Certain F, J and M Nonimmigrants**, (OMB #1653-0034; see the fmjFee.com website), the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) collects the fees.

At this time and for the foreseeable future, the use of the Form I-901/fmjFee.com site provides the most efficient means for collecting and processing the required data, and associated fee. SEVP also uses the Form I-901/fmjfee.com to provide payment verification (electronic receipt) to the F-visa or M-visa nonimmigrant upon payment and to positively identify that a particular F or M nonimmigrant has paid the fee. The F and M nonimmigrants need to produce proof of the I-901 fee payment (as well as provide other documents) at the consular interview in order to obtain the relevant F-visa or M-visa.

The respondents to the Form I-901 are the F-visa or M-visa nonimmigrants. The fees collected from these nonimmigrants support the Form I-901/fmjFee site activities, as well as fund other facets of SEVP including the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

15. Change in burden hours and cost.

The data collection has not changed since the previous Supporting Statement. Respondents in SEVIS have been and continue to be the DSOs, not the students. The DSOs input data into SEVIS in order to fulfill two responsibilities: the management of their school's F and M visa nonimmigrant student data, and the management of their school's SEVP certification. Requirements and processes for management of this data have not changed. Variances in aggregate costs/burden between this Supporting Statement and the preceding one reflect the following:

- Changes in overall student enrollment and the number of schools having or seeking SEVP certification;
- Increase in the DSO salary rate from \$15 per hour to \$39.33 due to a reassessment of the DSO role in the rule, "Improving and Expanding Training Opportunities for F-1 Nonimmigrant Students With STEM Degrees and Cap-Gap Relief for All Eligible F-1 Students," 81 FR 13040, March 11, 2016;

2015 Numbers/Categories					2018 Numbers/Categories (Based on 2016 numbers/ projected for years 2017 to 2019)							
Respondents	Total # of Respondents	Total # of Responses	Burden in Hours	Costs	Respondents	Total # of Respondents	Total # of Responses	Burden in Hours	Costs	Difference in Responses	Difference in Hours	Difference in Costs
Respondents - DSOs					Respondents - DSOs							
Maintenance of SEVP Certification SEVIS/Form I-17	9,837	21,899	16,726	250,886	Maintenance of SEVP Certification SEVIS/Form I-17	8,811	20,103	14,065	553,209	(1,796)	(2,661)	302,323
Training/Professional development	37,213	37,213	520,982	7,814,730	Training/Professional development	37,780	37,780	528,920	20,802,424	567	7,938	12,987,694
Management of SEVP Certification - Totals		59,112	537,708	8,065,616	Management of SEVP Certification - Totals		57,883	542,985	21,355,633	(1,229)	5,277	13,290,017
Management of Student records - SEVIS/Forms I-20					Management of Student records - SEVIS/Forms I-20							
Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	37,213	216,894	287,385	4,310,768	Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	37,780	592,046	784,461	30,852,853	375,152	497,076	26,542,085
Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	37,213	402,802	16,112	241,681	Initial SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	37,780	208,004	8,320	327,232	(194,798)	(7,792)	85,553
Updates (RTI)	37,213	553,930	166,179	2,492,685	Updates (RTI)	37,780	7,765,979	1,933,729	76,053,553	7,212,049	1,767,550	73,560,808
Updates (batch)	37,213	1,028,728	49,379	740,684	Updates (batch)	37,780	5,641,884	270,810	10,650,974	4,613,156	221,431	9,910,290
F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	37,213	44,218	3,670	55,051	F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (RTI)	37,780	7,284	605	23,778	(36,934)	(3,065)	(31,273)
F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	37,213	82,118	1,314	19,708	F-2/M-2 SEVIS/Forms I-20 (batch)	37,780	20,758	332	13,063	(61,360)	(982)	(6,645)
Subtotal		2,328,690	524,039	7,860,577	Subtotal		14,235,955	2,998,257	117,921,453			
Management of SEVIS/Student OPT	37,213	108,278	8,987	134,800	Management of SEVIS/Student OPT	37,780	136,607	11,338	445,939	28,334	2,351	311,139
Management of SEVIS/STEM OPT	37,213	20,079	1,667	24,998	Management of SEVIS/STEM OPT	37,780	36,833	3,057	120,237	16,754	1,390	95,239
Subtotal		128,357	10,654	159,798	Subtotal		173,440	14,395	566,176			
Management of Student records - SEVIS/Forms I-20 - Totals		2,457,042	534,693	8,020,375	Management of Student records - SEVIS/Forms I-20 - Totals		14,409,395	3,012,652	118,487,629	11,952,353	2,477,959	110,467,254
Management of Student data and SEVP certification - Combined Totals		2,516,154	1,072,401	16,085,991	Management of Student data and SEVP certification - Combined Totals		14,467,278	3,555,637	139,843,262	11,951,124	2,483,236	123,757,279

Explanation for the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) from the 2015 submission to the 2016 costs:

The increase in SEVIS O&M costs from the 2015 submission to the 2016 costs reflect a full year of a number of services only captured in part in the last submission, plus additional stabilization efforts including engineering and data center costs to make SEVIS access more reliable for users, and operations and maintenance for functionality that began closing certain vulnerabilities. A technical refresh relating to information sharing was also initiated in 2016.

16. Published results.

DHS did not employ the use of statistics or the publication of statistics for this collection of information.

17. Waiver of display of expiration date.

SEVP will display the expiration date for OMB approval of this information collection.

18. Exception to the certification statement.

SEVP does not request an exception to the certification of this information collection.