

BA PIER Meeting
Thursday, February 15th, 1:30pm-3:30pm
Kaplan International Berkeley
150 Berkeley Square
Berkeley, CA 94704

Agenda

- I. Welcome from Lisa Holsworth, Director of San Francisco Bay Area Schools, DSO (5 mins.)**
 - a. Welcome!
- II. Introduction from Ryan, Chair of BA-PIER, welcoming new members (10 mins.)**
 - a. Ryan worked at Kaplan 10 years ago, has been to some BA-PIER meetings, and was voted into the Chair position last June, to his surprise. In his capacity as Chair, Ryan will continue listening to the membership and its needs. Thank you for contributing discussion topics for our breakout sessions. Please help us get new and more diverse members coming to BA-PIER meetings. Mix and mingle as much as possible – we will rotate tables later. Efforts will be made to stick to tradition (e.g. we will get back to 1pm-3pm meeting time), but with new leadership comes some change.
 - b. Introduce Becky (Secretary), Kristi (Treasurer), Daniel (current Vice Chair, leaving), Tracey (Communications Coordinator, absent)
 - c. Becky voted in as new Vice Chair to fill in for Daniel
 - d. Is there an interest in having four meetings per year? Kristi: we used to, but it was a lot of work for the officers. There is some interest. We will vote in June. Officers could be allowed to attend three out of four of the annual meetings.
- III. Guest Speakers, Tiffany Coyne, Lambert Glory, and Ron McPeak, SEVP Field Representatives, Northern California (20 mins.)**
 - a. Tiffany is Northern CA, Lambert is San Francisco (Hayward > SLO > Nevada), Ron is S.F.
 - b. SEVIS Updates – Upload Evidence functionality (SEVP certification, recertification, I-17 updates, and correction requests sent to SRC). Check out the webinar posted on the website, see archives. Easy process. TIP: Don't bundle all your evidence. You can select the "type" of evidence from a drop-down menu to upload different files (10mb max for each file, 60 characters limit for file name). There are two guides available – one for updates and one for correction requests. After you click "submit", the next page will prompt you to upload the evidence. This new process will be mandatory after March 8th – future evidence must be uploaded. If I-17 is locked, you'll still need to notify SEVP within 21 days, and will need to email changes/evidence in this case (sevp@ice.dhs.gov). SEVP can unlock your I-17 so you can make updates and upload additional evidence (RFEs as well). Any updates requiring signatures, Print, Scan, then Upload. You can save before submitting. You must print your draft to sign before you go to the next page, where you'll be required to submit your evidence (signatures). While you're locked, if you need to update. Email will be centralized to one inbox. If you click submit, you have 2 business days to submit your evidence. Try to submit same business day if possible. Let your administration know, have a "signing day" scheduled in advance to avoid unexpected delays. Look at the drop-down list before you upload your evidence so you can use a similar naming convention and not confuse your documents when uploading.

Recert.sevis@ice.dhs.gov and update.sevis@ice.dhs.gov are being phased out. Tiffany is willing to review your RFE to help you understand what they're asking for.

- c. Uploading Evidence: cannot be password protected or encrypted. Cannot be deleted after it's uploaded. SEVP has ownership once evidence is submitted.
- d. Fixed items (SEVIS enhancements) OPT/CPT extension of OPT link is open for all levels, alerts at 18 and 24 month for STEM, active students requiring STEM OPT reporting. Authorized RCL – school sessions have new popup information for what these fields mean.
- e. Question: alert key works for one school and not the other. Contact SEVIS technical feedback email.
- f. SEVIS release 6.37: STEM OPT reporting will display new dates. DSOs can report receipt of 12-month and 24-month evaluations. Access old broadcast messages in SEVIS in your event history. Documentation guides are released as attachments to the broadcast messages.
- g. SEVP student portal is in the test phase with 11 schools across the nation participating in the pilot program. Will be released nation-wide. Students in active status OPT will receive an email asking them to register their access to report OPT. In this case, DSO responsibilities will be less. Students will be more accountable for meeting F-1 reporting requirements. Can update employment, phone number, address. DSOs will be able to still report changes on behalf of the student. Students won't be mandated – schools can institute their own policies to require student reporting. DSO training will be available – schools in pilot are providing feedback now on the interface. You can check your alerts to see a downloadable report of student-changes. DSO changes take 24 hours – student changes will be immediate. If SEVIS is down, the portal will also be down – student may contact you in this case. The portal is just for 12-month post-completion OPT – not STEM yet, but eventually.
- h. NEW TRAINING PLATFORM: New modules are coming in Spring 2018. Good for bringing on new personnel. More up-to-date and easy to use. www.ice.gov/schools currently has DSO training resources. This is where the updated training will be as well.
- i. Recertification, Updates: each year, PDSO must verify all DSOs through certification (user verification). Recertification is every 2 years and looks at your eligibility, compliance and operations (also changes). Recertification used to be a 2-step process. Submit updates, wait for approval, then submit recertification. Now these steps are combined. Backlog issue. Updates took about 6 months, then recert took about 12 months. Combining the process is meant to save time. 180-day window provides access Apply for Recertification link (I-17 updates is now included in this process, don't click the edit I-17 link). You cannot update ownership or instructional sites during the Recertification. The link is still available, but you shouldn't use it unless it's for. Definitions of evidence, checklists for all sections of I-17.
- j. Question: why such a backlog for I-17 updates (9,000 schools, first in first out, priorities for upcoming CEDs). PDSO and DSO changes also take priority. 5 new adjudicators are being trained now! There are only 10-20 now for all 9,000 schools. Asking field reps are being asked to spend 90 days to help. Allow for 1 academic year to plan to issue an I-20

for a new program. Updates should be taking 6 months, Recertifications are taking 9-12 months. More than 90 days.

- k. Question: when you submit I-17 updates, should you get an email response? Sent to update.sevis@sevp. Follow up if sending emails to the 2 phasing out emails. Standardized responding time will happen more quickly by downsizing to 1 inbox.
- l. Question: How do you manage recertification while you're waiting for updates to get adjudicated? Wait, get everything ready. Trying to expedite cases with CED's in the upcoming 60 days. Month before CED, will work with adjudicator to possibly extend CED. You'll still get automated emails that are stressful and are sent to everyone but don't worry. School will not be withdrawn. Contact your field rep if you're in that tight place or check SEVIS to see if your CED has been extended.
- m. Verification Period: 12.2.17 – 3.2.18
- n. www.ice.gov/tips if your student has witnessed fraudulent activity 866-DHS-2ICE. Victims and witnesses may be eligible for immigration relief
- o. OPT is to gain experience in a program of study, caution against recruitment agencies. STEM OPT employers must be e-verified and I-983 requirements, new form required for new employers.
- p. Keep all SEVIS records for F-1 students for 3 years after completion of I-20.
- q. Question: What is CPT and are there any updates on CPT? Check Study in the States. New CPT regulations are not being updated right now, because STEM OPT regulatory updates were just finished. Additional CPT clarification is not ready at this time. Schools have a lot of questions, there is a lot of grey area for schools to create their own policy. When new clarification comes out, the requirements will be stricter. Review the CFR pertaining to CPT, take this language and apply it to your program. 12-months in valid F-1 status (not academic year), not necessarily at your school. Except graduate level students.
- r. Question: Hybrid programs – schools approved for MBA, offer same curriculum online, would only write I-20 for the time that the student comes to U.S. to complete certain program requirements (e.g. capstone), even for 2 weeks. Chances of student getting visa (contact local consulate or embassy). Provide information for the student to take with them to their visa interview to explain the nature of the curriculum. If a student completes the first year of a 2-year program online, then comes to the U.S. and completes the 2nd year and earns their degree, they are OPT eligible. Contact the embassy or consulate to see if a student needs a new visa if SEVIS number has changed.
- s. Question: OPT after graduate certificate after bachelor's? USCIS will ultimately make decision. Check what level the program is listed at on your I-17.
- t. SEVP has redesigned their "ask a question" tool, if you don't get what you need from there, you can always contact your SEVP field rep. But if more people report questions to the online resource, they will respond to this information and see trends and provide better information. Also contact the SRC (8-6 EST). If you can't get a clear answer, it's because there hasn't been specific policy guidance on this issue and it's a grey area. It's your duty to do your due diligence to read the regulation, make a policy, and be consistent in your practice.

IV. Table Discussions (45 mins.)

- a. Recruitment, admissions, programming, immigration, ?
- V. Scott Schulkin, Director of the SF Counseling Center (35 mins.)**
 - a. Scott has spent 30 years in education, both teaching and training professionals. This is a timely discussion in response to school shootings and the impact on students. Will provide email address for follow up questions, as well as resources.
 - b. Like parenting, be attuned; help students put their feelings into words, pay attention to where they are developmentally, who you are vs. what your role is as a parent/adviser (e.g. caring about their bedtime). When it's appropriate to be playful, don't undercut your authority. Dealing with kids draws many similarities to dealing with people in crisis.
 - c. Predictable stressors: isolation, being away from home, lack of familiar structures, tremendous guilt (what will happen to the parents if the family has some dysfunction, e.g. student is reason that parents are still together, then leaves for college...), loss of friends, high expectations and pressure. Students may be chronologically one age, and developmentally another age. People experience many developmental crises, e.g. midlife crisis. Being in college can be one of these crises. Can be a cyclical or escalating problem when you have the kids and the parents encountering stress from college.
 - d. Warning signs: confused thinking, depression, social withdrawal, agitation, slowed verbal responses (trying to filter things out, not just translating in their head), changes in sleeping or eating problems, anger, strange thoughts, inability to cope with activities of daily life, etc. Making peculiar attributions to things. Black and white thinking (all or none). Thinking becomes concrete – trouble with abstraction). Observe a student's eye contact – is it appropriate for their culture? Notice if a student is looking right through you. It's a number of things. Not one thing by itself – doing things constantly in some kind of way.
 - e. Trust your first instinct. Once you get a hint, you tend to talk yourself out of it. You don't want there to be a problem, we dismiss the issue. Look at micro expressions. Pay attention to a student where you have a sense that they're not okay. People don't recognize they're having anxiety. If you're told, "You look stressed," you might be surprised.
 - f. Post-shooting. Stereotypically: males act out more (violence, arguing), women act in more (depression, eating disorders, cutting).
 - g. What can you do: slow down orientation. Give them more time, create more bonding experiences for the students to help them feel less far away from home and more a part of the college. Reiterate things from orientation later in the semester. Check in with your students more often. Create some of the holding environment (some students may find it repetitive, but some may be relieved to feel more of a parenting feeling).
 - h. How to present yourself when dealing with someone in crisis: keep yourself calm, don't have a natural response because it will translate to the other person. Center yourself, beforehand if possible. Try to bring the person to a quiet space. Both parties must have free access to a door/exit. Have relaxed body language. Check for nearby weapons. If taking student to a counselor/secondary meeting location, walk behind them. Use regular and concrete directions. Think about the times you had to calm your child when they were in tantrum. Trust yourself. Do not let your own sense of stress come into the

room (e.g. if you're calling around for resources/support and not getting through to anyone, don't become stressed or frustrated).

- i. Don't be afraid to ask about suicide or homicide. If they are already thinking about it, then don't worry, you're not putting the idea into their head. Be confident "I've noticed you seem a little depressed, are you thinking of hurting yourself?"
 - j. Berkeley mobile crisis. Has backed off using 911 as a crisis hotline. They get some training but are not mental health professionals.
 - k. Question: what if a student is MIA and you think there is a problem. Call for a welfare check (not the police, call mobile crisis).
 - l. Student come to you helping them decide about where they should be
- VI. Wrap-up, other announcements, next meeting details, events coming up/reminders, job opportunities, etc. Those who want to stay longer and continue networking can indicate by a show of hands and we'll ask the host if the space is still available. (5 mins.)**
- a. Next meeting will be held at EC San Francisco on June 21st
 - b. Summer study abroad opportunity in Italy