SEVIS Way Ahead: A Message to the Academic Community **Transcript**

Hello, I'm Lou Farrell, Director of the Student and Exchange Visitor Program.

All of you are key stakeholders in our mission, and users of SEVIS, so we want to provide you, the academic community, with updates on our steps to improve and modernize SEVIS.

As you know, we use SEVIS as a critical tool in our program's mission to protect national security while supporting the legal entry of the more than one million F and M students, J exchange visitors and their accompanying dependents to the United States who participate in a variety of programs at your fine institutions.

We recognize the frustrations caused by the recent SEVIS performance issues which users experienced late last summer. I want to take a moment to reaffirm SEVP's commitment to providing an effective and efficient system to school users.

Throughout the last year, SEVIS has undergone changes to better serve our mission, and provide improved usability. The original focus was building SEVIS II. Now, we are focused on the immediate solution – modernizing the current system.

This is because new technologies have become available since we first began work on SEVIS II. These new technologies will allow SEVP to apply many of the functionalities planned for SEVIS II, to the current system. As a result, we are harnessing new technology to build robust functionalities that will greatly improve the current system.

We are using the work we have done to-date for SEVIS II, the visualization meetings, and the user feedback we've gathered from the academic community and our government partners, to modernize the current system and guide future development.

Understandably, this has raised questions about what's next for SEVIS, and how this affects schools. Our immediate goal is to implement functionalities that address national security vulnerabilities and performance issues, and we will do this by incorporating feedback we receive directly from our government, school, and sponsor officials.

Here are the highlights of what we will be doing:
- First, improving system performance for school and program users to increase system responsiveness during peak times
- Second, standardizing information requirements to enhance searching, reporting, and data matching; allowing designated school officials and program officials to get reports from SEVIS on their students and exchange visitors, and to then print the information as a PDF or extract it to an Excel file
- Third, creating an alert list where SEVIS users can click on a nonimmigrant name, take

action on a record, such as registration, then go back to the alert list directly without having to retrace their navigation to the student record SEVIS Way Ahead: A Message to the Academic Community Transcript

- Fourth, validating all U.S. addresses to provide consistency and accuracy, and ensure addresses are complete and real, and allow officials to override any addresses that do not match the postal service validation system
- Fifth, improving ways to identify incorrect data in SEVIS, to correct or delete it for consistency and accuracy, and to eliminate duplicate records
- And finally, our first release which we will plan to deliver in April, will enable school users to provide detailed information about
  - Accreditations
  - FAA certifications
  - And other requested forms of recognition and licenses

Our efforts are underway. We anticipate releasing the first round of enhancements early this year. We have preliminary plans to provide up to four other rounds of enhancement releases throughout 2014.

As we transition to a more efficient and effective SEVIS, it's my commitment to keep you updated, through Study in the States, on our progress and future release dates.

We also plan to have pre-release and post-release webinars to discuss the specific functionality in each release, and highlight how to use any new features.

Finally, we will update the SEVIS Help and User Manuals to reflect these future releases, and we will post additional training material on Study in the States.

Please stay tuned for the upcoming webinars regarding SEVIS enhancements.

In the meantime, we welcome your continued feedback. You may e-mail any questions and comments you have to SEVP@ice.dhs.gov.

I want to close by restating what I started with: You are critical to ICE's national security mission, as well as to the success of hundreds of thousands of F and M students and J exchange visitors who come to the United States. On behalf of all of us at SEVP, we greatly admire and respect the important work that you do, and we are most grateful to be working with you.

Thanks very much for taking the time to listen to me, and until next time, my best to all of you. Take care.