



Non Accredited Private K-12 Definitions of Evidence

You may submit other evidence to meet the criteria of the items asked for below; SEVP will consider all submitted evidence in adjudication of your petition.

All evidence is subject to verification.

This is the evidence required for filing a Form I-17 petition. This is not an exhaustive list and your school may be asked to provide additional evidence during the certification process.

All evidence listed below must be submitted to initial.sevis@ice.dhs.gov within two business days of submitting the petition in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Petitions belonging to schools that fail to submit evidence to the email address above will be canceled. Failure to submit all of the required evidence for filing may also result in the cancelation of the petition.

This is not an exhaustive list and your school may be asked to provide additional evidence during the certification process.

Signed Form I-17

Submit a **COMPLETE Form I-17**, "Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student," with Supplement A. Print the entire Form I-17, it must include signatures as follows:

- a. Form I-17 **signed by the President/Owner/Head of school**
- b. Form I-17 Supplement A Designated Official block signed by all P/DSO(s)

Draft versions of the Form I-17 are not accepted.

Evidence of U.S. Citizenship or Lawful Permanent Residency

Submit ONE of the following for each P/DSO :

- a. A copy of U.S. passport (current or expired);
- b. A copy of a certified, registered/recorded, U.S. birth certificate;
- c. A copy of alien registration card;
- d. A copy of naturalization/citizenship certificate.
 - i. If any of the submitted documents contains a name other than those listed on the "Record of Designated School Officials" (Form I-17A), SEVP requires certified evidence of legal name change including any of the following: a copy of a certified court-ordered name change, a copy of a certified registered and recorded certificate of marriage, or a copy of a certified divorce decree in which a name change is awarded.
 - ii. **SEVP WILL NOT ACCEPT** driver's licenses, hospital birth records, or social security cards.



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Evidence of Payment

In order to remit payment, please visit www.pay.gov and in the Search Public Forms box type “SEVIS” and press enter. Click on the link to the form and follow the instructions. Once payment is submitted, upload your Pay.gov Transaction Confirmation Sheet as proof of payment.

Submit evidence from www.pay.gov of the following payments:

- a. \$1,700 for initial filing
- b. \$655 for each initial instructional site listed on the Form I-17B

Evidence of State Licensure or proof of exemption

Submit evidence from your state educational oversight body that shows the school has authorization to operate in the state or is exempt from authorization to operate in the state. If applicable, the evidence submitted must indicate the effective/expiration date of state licensure or exemption.

Submit evidence from your state’s educational oversight body that your school satisfies compulsory attendance or is exempt from meeting compulsory attendance laws.

Evidence in Lieu of Accreditation

All schools that are not accredited by a U.S. Department of Education recognized agency are required to provide letters in lieu of accreditation. For elementary and secondary institutions, if your institution is accredited and you are unsure if the agency is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, please email schoolcert.sevis@dhs.gov to confirm.

The following details the criteria for letters in lieu of accreditation.

- Private schools petitioning for certification of any combination of grades Kindergarten through 12 must submit a **minimum of three** letters from three different schools. The letters must attest that the receiving schools have accepted students from the petitioning (your) school and that the students were able to successfully matriculate to the next appropriate grade level. The receiving schools (authors of the letters) must either be owned and operated as public educational institutions/systems or be accredited by a U.S. Department of Education recognized agency. SEVP will only accept ONE letter from an institution affiliated/associated with the petition school.
- ALL letters must fulfill ALL of the criteria listed in either “a” or “b” below; the petitioning school can submit a combination of letters from the two categories.
 - a) Letters in Lieu of Accreditation – this option can be used by ANY school applying for certification of any grade levels K-12.

Each letter must:

 - Be on the receiving institution’s letterhead



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- State the receiving institution's U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting body and/or that the institution is operated as a public school/system
 - Include the complete name of the student
 - State the grade level completed at the petitioning school and the date of completion (must be within the last two years)
 - State the grade level entered at the receiving school and the date of entry
 - Include the name of the petitioning school
 - Include an actual signature from the author of the letter (emails and email signatures are not sufficient)
- b) College Acceptance Letters – This option is ONLY available for schools that are petitioning for certification of grade 12 (on its own or in addition to any other elementary or secondary grade levels) and who issue a high school diploma. The colleges accepting the students must be accredited by a U.S. Department of Education recognized agency. If you are unsure if they are accredited by a U.S. Department of Education recognized agency, visit <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx> and enter the institution or programs name in the search field.

Support for Students referenced in Letters in lieu of accreditation

Provide evidence proving each student referenced in the letter in lieu or college acceptance letter attended the petitioning (**your**) institution. The evidence must include program enrollment and completion/transfer dates (e.g. transcripts).

Teacher Qualifications

A statement containing the following information for ALL of your teaching staff:

- a. Educational, vocational or professional qualifications of the teaching staff (by name)
- b. Salaries of each instructor (by name)
- c. Current responsibilities of each member of the teaching staff (by name)
- d. Amount and character of supervisory and consultative services available to students and trainees

Financials

A certified/signed copy of the accountant's last statement of the school's net worth, income, and expenses (no older than one year). Tax documents are NOT accepted.

Facilities

A detailed statement for all locations listed on the Form I-17 Petition to include the following information:

- a. Physical location – Description of the facilities, including the number of classrooms used for instruction, the maximum capacity of each classroom, and the purpose of each classroom (e.g., instruction, lab, computer) and a labeled floor plan of each building and floor.



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- b. Capacity – Official document(s) issued by either the fire marshal or other state or county government body indicating the maximum capacity for each building of the school, for each location listed on the Form I-17B.

School Catalog

An electronic copy of the school's most recent school catalog.

Attendance Policy

A detailed statement outlining the school's attendance policy. For many schools, the attendance policy may be found in the school catalog. If the attendance policy is located within the institution's catalog, please note where in the catalog it can be found. If the attendance policy is not included within the catalog, provide documentation outlining the policy.

Grading Policy

A detailed statement outlining the school's grading policy. For many schools, the grading policy may be found in the school catalog. If the grading policy is located within the institution's catalog, please note where in the catalog it can be found. If the grading policy is not included within the catalog, provide documentation outlining the policy.

Evidence regarding Programs of Study

A statement listing **EACH** program for which you are seeking approval. This statement should be submitted in the format below and include the following:

- a. Specific grade levels
- b. Degree type (if non-degree, specify non-degree program type)
- c. Mode of delivery (for example: is the program in-person, online, distance, hybrid, etc.)
- d. Time necessary to complete each grade level (i.e. "Grade level 8 – 1 year")
- e. Date on which instruction in each program **ORIGINALLY** began.
- f. Instructional sites at which the program will be taught;
- g. Admission standards and enrollment criteria

Pre-Kindergarten Statement

Submit a statement, signed by the PDSO and head of school, attesting that your institution will not issue Forms I-20 for Pre-K students.