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Guidance Directive 2009-06

Secondary School Student Program: Establishment of a Toll Free Number for Students

The Department of State has established a toll free number to enable secondary school students to contact the Department directly regarding issues related to their exchange visitor program and their stay in the United States. Effective August 1, 2009, this telephone number will be in operation 24 hours a day 7 days a week. **The telephone number is 1-866-283-9090.**

This number has been activated as an added measure to ensure the health and safety of these exchange participants. Students have a right to be treated fairly and to report abuse without retaliation or threat of program cancellation.

This office will be monitoring all calls and will contact the sponsor regarding any matter reported.

Effective immediately, you will need to:

- (1) Provide this number to all students currently participating in your program;
- (2) Reflect this number on the Identification Card you are required to provide all new students entering the United States as a participant in your program; and
- (3) Include information concerning the availability of this number in your program materials and during the student's orientation.

The health, safety and welfare of foreign students in your exchange visitor program are your responsibility. As a Department-designated sponsor, it is also your responsibility to assist in carrying out the foreign relations mission of the Department by ensuring that each student has a successful exchange experience.

Stanley S. Colvin
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Private Sector Exchange