

# Interview Tips for International Students Applying for your F-1 Student Visa

## I. Be Informed and Prepared

- Do not listen to rumors about the process or about obtaining a visa. They are often incorrect. Most students who have a valid claim for an F-1 Student Visa do receive them.
- Visit the local embassy website and get a complete set of instructions and all documents needed in the visa application process.
- Follow these instructions carefully and complete all questions thoroughly.
- Be neat and well organized in preparing your papers.

## II. What to Bring With You When Applying For a Visa

- Completed Non-Immigrant Visa Application, Form DS-156 also known as old Form OF-156
- Properly completed SEVIS I-20 form, signed by a parent (if the student is under 18 years of age)
- Your SEVIS I-901 Fee Receipt
- Acceptance letter from the new school
- Your passport, valid for at least 6 months
- One 2 inch by 2 inch photograph
- Scores from standardized tests required by the school, such as the SSAT, ISEE, TOEFL, or SLEP
- Grades from the past school year
- A bank account statement indicating that your family has the funds to cover the cost of one year's tuition, room and board, books, and other related expenses.
- Proof of business ownership, or ownership of property in your home country (not required in all countries)

## III. The Consular Interview

- Schedule your interview as instructed by telephone or by way of the Internet.
- Parents should go to the interview with the student.
- You should be neatly groomed and pleasantly dressed. Think of how you would dress if you and your parents were going for a job interview.
- You should be very familiar with the school you will attend. Bring the school's catalog with you if you have one. Be prepared to answer questions like:
  - a. Why do you wish to study at this school?
  - b. Who is the headmaster? (Peter Bailey, Head of School)
  - c. Who is the admission director? (Susan Masciale-Lynch)
  - d. What do you know about the school? (Coed, Day & Boarding, Quaker, 6 -12<sup>th</sup> grades)
  - e. What will you study? (College Prep curriculum)
  - f. How large is the school? (173 students, 150 in the upper School)
  - g. Where is it located, and how will you travel there? (Poughkeepsie, New York)
  - h. Is it a boys, girls, or coed school? (Coed= boys & girls together)
  - i. In what country will you go to college or university?
  - j. In what country will you work when you are finished with your education?
- Counselors will want to know about your family's financial circumstances to be sure that they can pay for private education. Be ready to provide bank account statements. If your parents have a business and you plan to return to your home country to work in the business, it would be good to know what your role will be in that business.

## IV. What Not to Do When Applying For a Visa:

- DO NOT claim that you want to live and work in the United States. (Be aware that F-1 students may not immigrate to the United States, and are expected to return to their home country.)
- DO NOT go to the interview with incomplete information.