

**W**elcome to Hilton Head Preparatory School. Each year, students from countries around the world choose Hilton Head Prep for their college preparatory education. We are confident you will enjoy our beautiful island community and being a part of our "Prep Family." We are here to help make your transition as seamless as possible. Welcome again!

The International Student Handbook provides important step-by-step instructions for obtaining the necessary documentation to attend school in the United States. Please be aware that all international students must obtain an F-1 Student Visa prior to entering and studying in the United States. In order to obtain an F-1 Student Visa, you must first obtain an I-20.

If you have any questions about the procedures for obtaining a Student Visa, please contact Bobbie Somerville, Director of Admissions at [bsomerville@hhprep.org](mailto:bsomerville@hhprep.org) or 843-671-2286, ext. 505 or you may also visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

### PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING AN I-20

- International students must first complete the Hilton Head Prep admissions process and deliver all related documents, along with a \$75 processing fee, to Hilton Head Prep before an I-20 can be issued.
- Once the student is officially accepted to Hilton Head Prep and the tuition and technology fees are paid, we can begin the I-20 process.
- The student must also provide to Hilton Head Prep an American address where he or she will be living.
- Hilton Head Prep will issue the student an I-20 through the Student and Exchange Visitors Information System. **If the I-20 needs to be sent by mail or Fed Ex, the student is responsible for the charges.**

### PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING AN F-1 VISA

- Once you have received and reviewed the I-20, you will need to visit the Student and Exchange Visitors Information System online ([www.fmjfee.com](http://www.fmjfee.com)) to pay the SEVIS I-901 administrative fee. The fee must be paid three days prior to your embassy visit. You will need to present your payment receipt at the embassy when you take in the I-20 to apply for your Student Visa.
- Contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate or visit the U.S. Embassy website for your country to learn more about the required documentation for your Student Visa.
- When the required documents are completed and fees are paid, you must make an appointment with the U.S. Embassy. Getting an appointment with the U.S. Embassy may take some time, so please make this appointment as soon as you are able.

### ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR F-1 VISA (TRAVELING TO THE U.S.):

- Keep your passport and I-20/F-1 Visa with you at all times.
- You must show your passport and I-20/F-1 Visa to Immigration.
- The Immigration officer may stamp your Visa and I-20.
- You will receive an I-94 card from an immigration officer. This card must be kept with your passport at all times. The I-94 card indicates your duration of stay in the United States.

### ONCE YOU ARRIVE AT HILTON HEAD PREP:

- Please bring your passport, I-94 card, and Student Visa to school and present it to the Designated School Official (DSO).
- The DSO will confirm your legal entry into the United States through the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and SEVIS.
- The DSO will need to make copies of all your legal documents: I-20, I-94, Visa, and passport.
- Please keep all of your Visa documents in a secure place.

### LEAVING THE U.S. FOR HOLIDAYS OR TRAVEL

- The international student must notify the DSO, who will verify that the student has a continued I-20 and that the I-20 is signed on the 3rd page.
- Students must travel with their legal documents.

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HANDBOOK



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