

Migrant Education Program (MEP)

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is authorized by Part C of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The MEP provides formula grants to states to establish or improve education programs for migrant children. These grants assist states in improving educational opportunities for migrant children to help them succeed in the regular school program, meet the challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet, and graduate from high school. The general purpose of the MEP is to ensure that migrant children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to other children. To achieve this purpose, the MEP helps States and ESC/LEAs address the special educational needs of migrant children to better enable migrant children to succeed academically.



Migrant students are students who move with their families as they search for work. These moves across school district lines may occur as many as two or three times each school year. Their parents are usually agricultural workers or fishermen who are compelled to move frequently in order to harvest and/or process seasonal crops and fish for a living. A family who spends the winter in Florida picking oranges begins to move north in the spring to pick peaches in Georgia and then to New York in the fall to pick apples. Once the apples are picked and the cold weather comes, the migrant family heads back to Florida until the following spring, when the cycle begins again. Other migrant families may fish during the fishing season in the Gulf of Mexico and move throughout the gulf coast states looking for work when fishing is in season.

While many migrant children were born in the United States, the majority of mobile migrants are primarily of Mexican, Central American, Puerto Rican, or Haitian origin. Many of these migrant students will move through a school district without ever finishing a grade and may or may not come back the following year after encounters with other schools. Irregular school attendance, traveling from one temporary site to another and limited English language proficiency can limit the school success rate of these students

Many of the U.S.-born middle and high school migrant students are fluent in English, but they have trouble succeeding in school because of the many risk factors associated with their highly mobile lifestyle. These students face the challenge of adapting to a new school, new teachers, new school rules and curricula, and new classmates many times each year. Migrant children draw a lot of strength from their family, which are the focal point and the one constant in their lives.

You can find more information about Region 12 migrant program on our website: www.esc12.net

WHAT SECONDARY COUNSELORS MUST KNOW ABOUT MIGRANT STUDENTS

Key challenges jeopardizing migrant students' chances to excel academically and later in life.

These include a lack of:

- Access to fully qualified or adequately prepared teachers and staff
- Enrollment in rigorous, college preparatory coursework
- Participation in challenging grade level content coursework if students are ELLs
- Resources for unmet instructional needs
- Knowledge about and access to information on higher education or post-secondary vocational options

Other challenges include:

- Disproportionate attendance at high-needs schools with high concentrations of children who are poor and/or who are ELLs
- Large gaps in missed instructional and assessment time
- Missed time and lack of continuity while adjusting to different academic standards, curriculum, expectations, instructional programs, and school environments every time they move
- Being over age in many cases, yet not being able to perform at grade level due to interrupted schooling, late entry into the country, lack of exposure to high quality early childhood education prior to Kindergarten
- Difficulty keeping track of high school credits earned for graduation if students attend multiple schools in different states

How can we assist Migrant students?

- For new students from a different country, the registrar and counselor may place student in the 9th grade (this allows time to analyze transcript, authorize credits and move to appropriate grade level within reasonable time frame)
- Graduation Enhancement Program
 - See attachment of course listings
 - Please contact Migrant Counselor to enroll student
- Credit by Exam – Migrant program assists with payment
- Translating Mexican transcripts
 - See attachment of course translation
- Help in finding financial aid
- Giving students the resources for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
 - Official transcripts
 - Official high school transcript or diploma
 - Other helpful documents (i.e. enrollment record, proof of enrollment and a photocopy of student's yearbook picture)

A migrant child is one who has migrated with his/her family in search of seasonal/temporary employment in agricultural related work, poultry, livestock or fishing.