

FINAL DRAFT INCLUDING APRIL FORUM NOTES

Forging New Beginnings
For Secondary-Aged
Migrant Youth

Challenges/Barriers, Strategies and Solutions
Policy Recommendations

Record of nationwide collaboration of more than
300 Migrant Education advocates and secondary school experts,
obtained through at least *five* Migrant Education-sponsored events
across a *three year* time span.

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Introduction

Educating the migrant child is complex. The Migrant Education Program has met enormous challenges with policies and programs which have supported *hundreds of thousands* of migrant youth through the delivery of education and health services at the national, state, regional and local levels. And yet, many challenges remain due to the unique aspects of educating the migrant child.

Secondary-school educators across the nation express concern about the graduation rate of migrant students, generating a long list of challenges or barriers, solutions and strategies. This national workgroup of more than 300 migrant educators has combined efforts to document those challenges and suggested solutions and to solicit support from state and national leaders through policy recommendations. It is our united goal to secure top level support to implement prioritized initiatives, develop federal and state policies, and influence the allocation of needed funding. Nationwide, practitioners are eager to join state and national migrant advocates in effecting change at policy making and upper leadership levels.

This document represents the compilation of input from these national events:

- National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) Annual National Conference in Denver, Colorado, 2006
- Annual Secondary Credit Exchange Workshops, McAllen, Texas, 2007
- National Association for State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) Annual National Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, 2007
- Annual Secondary Credit Exchange Workshops, McAllen, Texas, 2008
- Culminating National Work Session: Invitational Forum on Forging New Beginnings for Secondary-Aged Migrant Youth, Orlando, April 19, 2008. Sponsors: Texas Migrant Interstate Program (TMIP), Florida Migrant Interstate Program (FMIP), and National PASS Coordinating Committee (NPCC).

At the Invitational Forum, which preceded the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) Annual National Conference in Orlando, Florida, participants reviewed challenges or barriers and possible solutions and strategies they had previously identified in six broad topics and formulated position statements. Challenges of educating secondary-age migrant youth as reviewed in this publication include these topics:

- 1. Interstate/Agency Coordination/Collaboration**
- 2. Credit Accrual Toward Graduation**
- 3. Parental Involvement**
- 4. Self-Advocacy/Leadership**
- 5. Access to Post-Secondary/Scholarship Opportunities**
- 6. Out of School Youth**

Workgroup participants thank the Interstate Migrant Education Council (IMEC), Jack Perry, Executive Director, which undertook a similar process to develop recommendations to meet the needs of migrant youth. The January 2008 policy brief "A Call for Action: Migrant Students and the High School Redesign Movement," published by the Interstate Migrant Education Council (IMEC), Washington, D.C. was utilized as a tool at the Forum, and excerpts from IMEC's document are referenced in this workbook.

Topic: Interstate/Agency Coordination/Collaboration

Migrant educators, social service providers, employers and communities in both sending and receiving states need to cooperate, collaborate, and coordinate efforts to attain maximal effectiveness in educating shared students. Home base states need receiving states to provide appropriate instruction and support to keep students on track with their studies so that they do not fall behind and give up. Receiving states need information to design appropriate instructional programs and/or courses of study, and place students so that they can achieve instructional congruence in what is being taught. The home base state needs receiving states to send records that can be used to document coursework completed and credit awarded. Receiving states need to rely on home base schools to ensure that students enroll in catch-up or accelerated tutorials, that partially completed coursework from different schools attended is consolidated, and appropriate credits are accrued.

At the heart of these procedures is the need for human communication – the establishment of an interstate network of individuals – to build and maintain relationships, to improve information transfer, and to develop, update, and evaluate instructional interventions.

Goal: All those working with interstate, secondary-school aged migrant youth combine efforts to identify needed instructional and support services and form the necessary connections to “ensure that migratory children who move among the States are not penalized in any manner by disparities among the States in curriculum, graduation requirements, and State academic content and student academic achievement standards.” (Title I, Pt. C, Sect. 1301(2))

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Differences in and lack of access to graduation requirements. Inability to access required home base state proficiency tests from outside that state during testing window.</p> <p>Lack of access to the state assessment required by the home base state where student plans to graduate.</p> <p>High school graduation requirements are often cumbersome to locate in SEA websites, and frequently not listed on LEA websites, making it less likely that placement counselors will consider migrant students’ home base graduation requirements when placing student in classes.</p>	<p>Create MEP national educational standards and educational assessments</p> <p>Create formal vehicle for access to and timely sharing of assessment and graduation information. (Example: all states whose schools enroll migrant children should be funded to participate in a nationwide database system conveying educational and health records electronically.)</p> <p>Create national, state and local policy to ensure assessment, credit accrual and graduation information is utilized upon placement of migrant students.</p> <p>Institute interstate coordination efforts to conduct out of state testing where necessary</p> <p>Fund a national interstate exchange center to consistently apply MEP policies and procedures and create partnerships and liaison with sending and receiving schools.</p> <p>A correlation of states’ assessment requirements is posted in MSIX.</p> <p>All states receive federal funds to actively participate in the MSIX migrant student records transfer system, and meet minimum participation requirements which support sharing of state assessment, course/grades/credit accrual and graduation data.</p> <p>MSIX offers a succinct summary of minimum graduation requirements and of state</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
	<p>assessment requirements, deadlines and contact names.</p> <p>Ensure that counselors have access to and utilize credit accrual, assessment and graduation information upon placement of migrant students.</p> <p>Provide training to counselors to ensure timely and comprehensive reporting of secondary data to MSIX</p>
<p>Educators in a receiving state experience delays in obtaining student records, and in summer may be unable to contact the student’s home base counselor.</p> <p>Schools sometimes do not forward (or delay in forwarding) educational records/transcripts of students who were not formally withdrawn (returning school property and paying fees owed)</p> <p>In some states, students are not enrolled by receiving schools until printed transcripts and health records are received from sending schools.</p> <p>Summer school teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not know what courses the student is already registered for in the fall when they make placement decisions. do not have access to highest priority placement recommendations of the student’s academic counselor. 	<p>Impose reporting deadlines in MSIX.</p> <p>Update information in MSIX promptly when final grades are issued in spring. Encourage summer school teachers to access these records directly.</p> <p>Make withholding transcripts for migrant students illegal, as it is with homeless students</p> <p>Streamline the sharing of transcripts and health records between states, perhaps by making it easy for migrant families to organize, retain, and convey physical records on enrollment.</p> <p>Each sending state has a summer coordinator who has access to school records of that state and can readily provide needed transcripts and health records to receiving schools.</p> <p>A secondary planning group determines MSIX reporting deadlines, minimum participation requirements and priorities.</p> <p>A national directory of migrant contacts in school districts is made available to facilitate communication between sending and receiving districts.</p> <p>Home base districts fund a counselor to be available by phone in summer and to access home base records.</p>
<p>Inadequate alignment of course content across districts and states</p> <p>In some states, placement counselors cannot accept partially completed high school coursework toward graduation requirements without reviewing the course syllabus to determine alignment with their essential learning requirements.</p> <p>Courses may not align from one state to another; there may not be an equivalent course in the receiving school.</p>	<p>Identify and publish a list of district contacts to expedite receipt of needed course descriptions.</p> <p>Develop interstate comparable-credit recovery programs.</p> <p>Improve one-to-one communication between sending and receiving schools.</p> <p>Create a master ‘conversion’ list of courses which compare sending school courses with receiving school courses.</p> <p>Share state requirements for granting partial work or partial credit through MSIX</p>
<p>Inconsistency in grade conversion tables and</p>	<p>Identify state laws governing award of letter grades in their respective states.</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>promotion policies</p> <p>In some home base states, numeric grades are required. There is no written Federal policy stating how alpha grades received by students in other states should be uniformly converted to numeric grades.</p> <p>There is inconsistency within and between states on promotion policies between grades</p>	<p>Develop a nationally recommended grade conversion table. Influence legislators to revise state laws to conform with that recommendation.</p> <p>Develop and advocate for adoption of a uniform policy on promotion between grades.</p> <p>Identify state laws governing the award of letter grades, and post those charts on State MEP websites to assist counselors in home base states.</p> <p>Identify within states the level at which promotion policies are made. Are they all based on state law? In some states, are they determined at the district level?</p>
<p>Need for authoritative resources to equitably translate records and issue transfer credit for education in Mexico, Central and South America</p>	<p>Obtain accurate information, and develop and distribute authoritative guidance for placement counselors.</p> <p>Continue and expand binational coordination efforts.</p> <p>A national coordinator forms partnerships with countries and gains timely access to foreign transcripts, course outlines, and grading systems.</p> <p>Provide counselor training on interpretation of foreign transcripts.</p>
<p>Insufficient funding to permit collaboration by all states that share migrant students.</p>	<p>Access to support services through interagency coordination</p> <p>Fund a national and/or regional interstate exchange center to provide consistency of MEP policies and procedures.</p>
<p>Inconsistent support for access to needed medical/dental care across states</p>	<p>Fund a national center to support consistent access to needed medical and dental care across state boundaries</p>

IMEC Policy Recommendations:

- D1. The U.S. Department of Education should seek language in the next revision of the Binational Agreement with Mexico that promotes international credit exchange and acceptance.
- F1. The United States Office of Migrant Education (OME) should continue to focus on high school completions.
- F2. The law should state that the goal of migrant education is to provide a continuum of supplemental instruction and support services from preschool through secondary levels that culminates in high school completion.

Workgroup Policy Recommendations (Facilitator: Tomás Yañez)

- **ADVOCACY:** Linking local advocates from both the sending and receiving states is paramount to migrant student educational success. Communicate/expand information on school transcripts from Mexico to other countries.
- **FUNDING:** OME must ensure that each SEA provides specific funding for secondary education initiatives leading to high school completion.
- **INFLUENCING POLICY MAKERS:** Identify and work with local, state, and national entities such as IMEC and NASDME who can affect policy development that strengthens interstate and interagency coordination.

Topic: Credit Accrual Toward Graduation

The main problems experienced by highly mobile, secondary-age migrant students are credit accrual and placement in coursework leading to graduation in the home base district.

Late enrollment in fall, delay in re-enrolling following a mid-year move, and early withdrawal from school in spring are typical results of the migrant lifestyle's dependency on work in agricultural crops. The migrant student who has missed many days of school that grading period and transfers into a new district is often placed in a contract-based instructional program in an alternative high school or told to wait until the next grading period to re-enroll in school. Cumulatively, these challenges affect ability to accrue credits, promote from one grade to the next, maintain motivation to persist in school, and graduate with a high school diploma.

Goal: Secondary-school age migrant youth are placed in rigorous coursework applicable to their home base school's graduation requirements. They receive transcribed Carnegie credit for all partial and complete high school courses in which they earn passing grades, irrespective of school district, state, or national boundaries.

Challenges and Solutions

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
NCLB School Report Card does not designate migrant students as a separate subgroup	Include migrant students as a subgroup in School Report Card categories required under NCLB
<p>School bureaucracy and policies lack flexibility needed to meet unique credit accrual needs of migrant youth</p> <p>Loss of credit due to insufficient days of attendance (care of siblings, need to contribute to family income)</p> <p>Enrollment in contract-based learning programs with limited options due to inability to enroll at beginning of school in fall</p> <p>Loss of credit due to failure to take final exams in sending school before moving out of district</p> <p>Loss of credit for both fall and spring grading periods when agricultural work is unavailable, forcing family to return to Mexico or a homebase state Nov-Jan or later.</p>	<p>State and local school boards establish policies that meet the unique needs of migrant youth</p> <p>Obtain or develop model school board policies for award of and combining of partial credit.</p> <p>Incentives?</p> <p>SEAs develop creative solutions in place of required placement in contract-based learning due to late enrollment</p> <p>Sending schools notify receiving schools of families migrating to their area</p> <p>Offer credit accrual recovery alternatives through the school (examples: PASS, NovaNet, PLATO, etc.)</p> <p>Create distance learning opportunities to complete final exams in a proctored environment in the receiving school</p> <p>Train SEA and LEA leadership on the unique needs of migrant youth</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Exclusion of students attempting to enroll in school late in spring</p> <p>Counselors lack of authority to award partial credit, and/or to combine partial credit to satisfy a graduation requirement</p> <p>In some schools, withdrawal form documenting seat hours and exit grades is only completed if student is formally withdrawn from school</p> <p>Coursework documented on a withdrawal form must be completed within the same grading period or is lost to the student</p>	<p>Communication network via the Internet could be implemented so that sending districts aware that migrant families are following crop cycles into another state could alert receiving districts to watch for and expedite school enrollment</p> <p>Enroll the student in needed units of PASS courses so he/she can return to the district prepared to test</p> <p>Send class homework with the family for completion during the school absence</p> <p>Provide counselor and registrar training on methods for combining partial credit</p>
<p>Differences in course content and sequencing, and in grading periods between districts and between states.</p>	<p>Authorize school counselors to accept transfer credit toward graduation requirements without independent evaluation of scope and sequence.</p> <p>Provide guidance to school counselors on combining partial coursework on the basis of seat hours, whether completed in block, quarter, trimester, and semester grading periods</p> <p>Promote a uniform grading period schedule and a standardized sequence of coursework for secondary students across districts within a state, and ideally among states</p> <p>Registrars include course descriptions with withdrawal forms listing exit grades and seat hours when these are forwarded to the next school attended by a migratory child.</p> <p>Districts post their course descriptions (in bulleted or checklist form) and curriculum department contact information on their websites</p>
<p>Lack of availability of needed courses in receiving school</p> <p>Course may not be offered, or may be offered in a different grading period cycle, or at a different grade level.</p> <p>Lack of credit accrual alternatives in student's most proficient language</p>	<p>Through improved communication between home base and receiving district, create unique programs that correlate between schools.</p> <p>Exceptions based on migrant student extenuating circumstances must be made to ensure the student is enrolled in needed class.</p> <p>Offer core content in the student's first language</p> <p>Utilize available technology to support local school districts in anticipating migratory patterns and preparing needed educational and community resources.</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
(cont'd.)	<p>Support communication between school counselors in sending and receiving schools in anticipation of group migratory moves to help make needed coursework available.</p> <p>Offer flexible alternative credit accrual options (PASS, distance learning, computer labs, etc.) and necessary support so migrant students can complete coursework begun in a sending school.</p> <p>Expand offerings of PASS courses translated into Spanish</p> <p>Expand access to and local acceptance of credit obtained through the Country of Mexico via the Plazas Comunitarias Internet web portal</p> <p>Create a migrant lab that allows students to obtain credit from the sending state or district</p>
<p>Inappropriate course placement, or course placement that does not satisfy graduation requirements, leads to low academic performance and reduces motivation to persist to graduation</p> <p>Migrant students often are not permitted to advance their academic skills and satisfy non-elective graduation requirements while learning English</p> <p>Learning deficits resulting from moves between schools with different course scope and sequences, and from school absence, are inadequately diagnosed and remediated</p>	<p>Identify or develop and make available reading comprehension tests in commonly used languages of Mexico, Central and South America</p> <p>Identify or develop and make available uniform and readily accessible diagnostic tests in core academic subjects identifying learning gaps and prescribing needed instructional content</p> <p>Identify and promote use of age appropriate remedial coursework needed for secondary school students whose formal education in the country of origin was limited</p> <p>Identify and promote use of proficiency tests in the student's primary language that identify competencies in math and science and inform placement decisions</p> <p>Provide credit accrual alternatives in the student's primary language (example: PASS courses translated into Spanish language, etc.)</p> <p>Encourage communication between the counselor and classroom teacher subsequent to placement when the migrant student's success in completing assignments can be evaluated</p> <p>Evaluate the student's comprehension of written, as well as spoken, English. Assess and support understanding of essential academic level English language vocabulary for the subject matter being studied</p>
<p>Migrant student and family lack documentation of graduation requirements in the home base school district, and of credits completed and needed to satisfy those requirements</p>	<p>Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings inform families about variation in graduation requirements within and among states, support selection of a home base school district where the student will graduate, and provide documentation of graduation requirements and credits completed.</p> <p>Develop and make readily available a succinct Powerpoint presentation in English, in Spanish, and in any other major languages represented by the migrant population, that schools could offer in PAC meetings</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Classroom teaching (low expectations, inadequate scaffolding skills, insufficient coordination with paraeducators)</p> <p>LEA migrant-funded programs focus few MEP resources on secondary schools</p> <p>Smaller and rural schools often lack resources to support and mainstream English language learners, especially at the secondary school level.</p>	<p>Fund and provide professional development opportunities for classroom teachers and paraeducators, promoting educational strategies that help migrant students learning English succeed in mainstream classes</p> <p>Designate MEP funding to LEAs specifically targeting secondary school grades</p> <p>Provide supportive services to help school districts design effective intervention services that supplement, rather than supplant. Example: MEP/ESL funding</p> <p>Work with state teacher certification boards to develop endorsement areas for teachers of migratory students</p>
<p>Motivation to persist and graduate is diminished by grade retention and learning in overage-for-grade situations</p>	<p>Promote credit recovery options in lieu of grade retention</p> <p>Provide credit recovery/retrieval programs students can take in addition to mainstream scheduled coursework at times when migrant students are able to participate. Offer needed support (food, transportation, child care, etc.)</p>
<p>Lack of access to and participation in school extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, music programs, class offices, etc.)</p>	<p>Offer extracurricular activities and clubs focused on the experience, interests, availability and needs of migrant students. Create service learning activities for students not involved in other extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>Ensure that migrant students have access to the financial and support resources needed to participate in these motivational school activities</p> <p>During placement interviews, identify interests and facilitate access to extracurricular opportunities available in the school and community</p>
<p>School counselors assigned to support an average of 400-500 students lack the time and resources to meet the unique needs of migratory youth</p> <p>Student's academic counselor may not speak the preferred language of the migrant family</p> <p>As priorities shift in schools, the school counselor's role is diminishing in the context of planning and implementing programs to help the migrant, at risk student.</p> <p>Need authoritative information on translating course titles and awarding credit based on seat hours for education in other countries</p> <p>Need written authority to accept MSIX records for placement decisions while awaiting printed transcripts and health records</p>	<p>Fund a Migrant Student Graduation Specialist position in districts serving many migrant secondary students. This individual provides supplemental services supporting the counselor's role (i.e., investigate of partial credit earned; recommend combination of partial work in satisfaction of graduation requirements).</p> <p>Identify and make readily available the seat hours, as well as grades and course descriptions, of coursework all students complete in Mexico, Central and South America.</p> <p>Provide authoritative responses to these common questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should 9th grade Mathematics completed in Mexico be transcribed as algebra or as geometry credit? • Should an English as a Foreign Language class completed in another country be transcribed as English or as Foreign Language? (Note: Student is already receiving Foreign Language credit for the home language course completed.) • Can ESL coursework be counted toward English course graduation requirements, or only as electives? <p>(cont'd.)</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
	<p>Identify and provide access to published resources and knowledgeable educators to help interpret educational records from other counties. (Admissions departments of universities receiving international students may be very helpful.)</p> <p>Publish and disseminate written authorization to school counselors to accept MSIX records in making school placement decisions. Offer online access to the data through passwords with local school administrator authorization.</p>
<p>Limitations of school transcribing software</p> <p>Transcribing software often makes it difficult and/or time consuming to document less than full credit for coursework completed at the school (example: .5 Carnegie credit or nothing, rather than available range of .1 to .5 Carnegie credit).</p>	<p>Influence school software developers to build partial credit awarding flexibility into transcribing programs</p>
<p>Lack of summer school opportunities in many districts, states</p> <p>Secondary school summer programs are often scheduled during weekday morning hours when many migrant students are working in agricultural crops</p>	<p>Make additional funding available to states and districts to operate secondary summer school programs at times accessible to migrant students. Provide needed support to participate, such as transportation.</p> <p>Authorize use of MEP funds to reimburse migrant families for loss of income resulting from their children’s attendance in summer school. Investigate other sources of funding for this purpose, such as CATE/OJT</p>

IMEC Policy Recommendations:

- A1. Migrant students need strong and supportive relationships with the school community.
 - (a) A student must feel welcome when he/she enrolls in a new school.
 - (b) An individualized approach is essential.
 - (c) Mentoring and monitoring are critical.
 - (d) Parent involvement is important.
 - (e) Cultural awareness is necessary in migrant education programs
- B1. Migrant students need flexible schedules.
- B2. Migrant students need access to strong summer programs.
- B4. School districts should allow a flexible time frame within which students can meet graduation requirements, with the expectation that some students may need more than four years to do so.
- B6. State MEPS should seek alternative methods, such as Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) courses, by which migrant students can complete coursework and recover credits.
- C1. State education agencies (SEAs) should develop policies that foster expansion of credit acceptance at the local education agency (LEA) level.
- C2. An information transfer system is critical for migrant secondary students.
- F3. The ESEA reauthorization should require that high school completion rates be disaggregated by the same categories as those used for assessment.

Workgroup Policy Recommendations (Facilitator: Brenda Pessin)

There should be:

- Course work for migrant students that is acceptable to individual states
- Well-informed placement of students that leads to graduation
- A system in place of acceptance of partial work/credit to be used to earn graduation credit
- Education of all migrant students in graduation requirements in order to allow for self-advocacy
- Alternative options for credit accrual at the district/state level including summer, regular school year, and other intensive credit accrual options based on academic standards and competencies
- A designated individual at every high school with a migrant student who is responsible for monitoring student progress toward graduation
- Access and understanding of technological supports for students to accrue graduation credit
- Credit RECOVERY!

Topic: Parental Involvement

Based on expectations in their native countries, many migrant parents see a sharp delineation in the roles of the school and the family. Families provide nurturance and teach morality, respect and good behavior. Schools instill knowledge. In the Hispanic culture, teachers are highly respected and any interference from parents may be considered rude and disrespectful.

Differences in perception are not the only barriers that have to be overcome in involving migrant parents in their children's academic education. Other barriers can be divided into five categories: school environment, culture and language, educational level of parents, psychological issues and logistical issues.

All who work with migrant students must be committed to a process whereby families and educational programs are joined as partners for students' educational success. Migrant parents are, in most cases, supportive of educational opportunities for their secondary-age youth. However, they are often unaware of the need for post-secondary education today. To promote continued high aspirations for secondary youth, migrant educators will need to furnish parents with information in these areas. Secondary programs seeking the involvement of the migrant family will recognize the need to communicate in the parents' primary language and promote the awareness of students' and parents' rights.

Goal: Secondary schools and the Migrant Education Program provide access and support services in order that migrant parents and guardians may participate as equal and effective partners with schools and communities in the academic preparation of their secondary-aged children.

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Parents need opportunities to participate in school in ways that value their knowledge/skills/experience, are culturally appropriate, and financially feasible. Missing work to participate in school events and activities creates a financial hardship for migrant families, and may jeopardize their jobs.</p>	<p>MEP funded staff work with classroom teachers, administrators, and migrant families to break down the disparity between their definitions of "parental involvement" in children's education</p> <p>Secondary schools and the Migrant Education Program need to provide access and support services in order that migrant parents and guardians can be directly involved in the educational success of their children</p> <p>Schools creatively identify opportunities for parental involvement that do not penalize families through lost work time. Emphasize value of consulting with the local Parent Advisory Council.</p> <p>Small school communities within larger school buildings enable teachers to become personally acquainted with parents, providing opportunities to learn how the parents feel they can most successfully support their children's educational success, and for teachers to build those opportunities into their lesson plans, homework assignments and class activities.</p> <p>LEA meetings with families are held at locations and times comfortable for and convenient to migrant parents</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
(cont'd.)	<p>Professional development workshops for educators expose them to differing definitions of “school participation” in cultures represented by migratory families, and assist in generating creative opportunities for parental involvement in children’s education</p> <p>Teachers receive training on culturally relevant strategies for visiting their students’ homes to meet with families. Such visits help to build caring and trusting relationships that encourage parental involvement in children’s education.</p> <p>Provide child care to support involvement of migrant parents in school activities</p>
<p>Migrant families are sometimes unable to communicate their questions and needs effectively due to language barriers</p> <p>Cultural attitudes of migrant families toward schools and persons of authority revealed through body language and verbal communications may easily be misinterpreted.</p>	<p>MEP staff facilitate effective communication between local PAC and school board</p> <p>Skilled translation services are readily accessible within schools, both during the school day and during activities involving parents and families</p> <p>Credit bearing summer professional development workshops are offered to future and current school counselors and nurses to acquaint them with needs of migratory students and families, and to inform them about local, regional and national social services available to meet those needs</p>
<p>Teachers do not speak the language spoken in the home and cannot easily confer with parents</p>	<p>Provide access to skilled, culturally competent language translation service</p> <p>Provide opportunities for teachers and migrant parents to become acquainted to improve communication and encourage an attitude of caring and advocacy.</p>
<p>Parent Advisory Councils and educators in local districts lack cost-effective resources to support migrant parents’ understanding so they can participate as full partners in the education of their youth.</p>	<p>Introduce essential school information with its specific relevance to the migrant family and their children’s success</p> <p>Provide information and resources for use in PAC meetings and to share during identification and recruitment home visits. Examples of topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • importance of formally withdrawing their children from school • impact on their child’s credit accrual of leaving school before a grading period ends, delaying to enroll the student again following a move between districts, or enrolling children days or weeks after a grading period has begun • legal rights, school policies, credit accrual and graduation requirements • opportunities for postsecondary education, and long range benefits to the family of helping their children earn high school diplomas • funding availability for continued education following high school • appropriateness of questioning educational communications they do not understand or with which they do not agree. (Model through role play activities.) <p>Offer instructional support strategies that help parents verbalize their dreams for their children’s futures</p> <p>Offer opportunities for needed school information to be conveyed through presentations by the family’s own children</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
(cont'd.)	<p>Develop and make readily available translated handouts that placement counselors could share and discuss with families as children are enrolled in school to communicate why formal withdrawal is necessary, and to their children’s benefit.</p> <p>Utilize local resources to communicate with migrant families on a regular basis in person or by phone, to learn when migratory moves are imminent. Tying this communication to support available in the receiving district might make sharing these plans more attractive to families.</p> <p>Provide workshops for migrant families and their youth to explore types of educational opportunities after high school, and provide hands-on opportunities to apply to those schools and locate scholarships, grants, and loans to fund further education for their children</p> <p>Facilitate opportunities for migrant parents to talk candidly with college students and their families with whom they can relate</p> <p>Continue to support migrant students who have graduated from high school as they successfully transition into the post-secondary educational experience</p>

Workgroup Policy Recommendations (Facilitator: Tom Hanley)

- Redefine parental involvement
- Change/shift the issue to reflect the need for the schools and MEP to take the lead.
 - “Secondary schools and the MEP need to provide access and support services in order that migrant parents and guardians...”
- States must implement a system and report annually their migrant student graduation rates (cohort) and **ACT** to increase that rate – monitoring, evaluation, standard measurements (Consolidated State Performance Report).
- In general, parents are not as prepared for parental involvement.
- It may be our job to provide our parents opportunities, not to question or change their behavior.
- Truly CARING may be a bigger challenge (barrier) than language.

Topic: Self-Advocacy/Leadership

In their efforts to develop the capacity of migrant students and their families for self-advocacy, Migrant Education Programs ideally utilize empowerment training programs. Best practices demonstrate that self-advocacy and personal empowerment are encouraged among migrant students and parents through leadership training with peers who share their experiences and challenges.

The following five areas of personal growth are often incorporated into self-advocacy/empowerment leadership training for migrant students and their families:

1. Valuing personal assets to enhance self-esteem
2. Developing effective communication skills
3. Expanding goal setting and coping skills
4. Learning decision making techniques and strategies
5. Enhancing problem solving skills

Research points to the success of incorporating such supplemental enhancement and support programs into the design of a state's overall Migrant Education Program. State education agencies and local school districts must be supported by MEP in developing innovative strategies to provide self-advocacy and leadership development opportunities for migrant youth and families that are both financially feasible and effective.

Goal: Secondary-school aged migrant youth and their families become self-advocates through self-confidence, possession of accurate information, and ability to effectively plan, overcome obstacles, and communicate.

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Insufficient contact with educationally successful role models with whom they can relate. Often, no one in their immediate family has graduated from high school. Few opportunities to network with others who have shared their experiences, obtained a quality formal education, and are succeeding in a variety of careers.</p>	<p>Provide Internet based access to role models whose inspirational stories promote “can do” attitudes and real life success strategies</p>
<p>Lack of encouragement from educators familiar with their experiences and aware of their potential. This may result in low academic expectations and subtle or explicit discouragement of specific educational and career goals.</p>	<p>Help students learn how to communicate their interests, goals, and personal success stories with counselors and classroom teachers</p> <p>Encourage classroom teachers serving migrant students to promptly provide nonthreatening opportunities to express their interests, goals and personal success stories.</p> <p>Encourage classroom teachers and school staff to involve migrant students in school and classroom service opportunities that build personal and trusting relationships</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Educators of highly mobile children lack prior knowledge of their families and older siblings, as well as the enrolled student’s aspirations, life experiences, personal assets and potential</p>	<p>Promote school involvement activities that engage migrant families in sharing their experiences and values with counselors and classroom teachers</p> <p>Encourage the participation of school counselors and classroom teachers in PAC meetings so they become personally acquainted with the migrant families whose children they are helping to educate</p>
<p>Reluctance to call attention to themselves and their needs in activities involving others who do not share their experiences and challenges</p> <p>Reluctant to question authority figures who make enrollment, class placement, credit award and disciplinary action decisions, or to understand and effectively participate in available appeal procedures</p>	<p>Through creative, culturally appropriate and financially feasible involvement of migrant families in their children’s classroom activities, enhance migrant students’ recognition that travel, experiences, and activities in which they have participated give them skills and values that can enhance educational and career success.</p> <p>Involve migrant youth and their families in experiences that teach effective problem solving skills, help to develop clear personal and educational goals, and promote resilience in persisting until needed help is obtained</p>
<p>Multiple conflicting pressures make it more difficult to persist in school and graduate. These pressures include but are not limited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to work to help support the family economically • Need to care for younger siblings so adults in the family can work • Challenges of frequently and rapidly adapting to new communities, schools and class expectations • Social pressure to fit in with a supportive group of peers who may not be the best examples of hard-working students headed for diplomas and postsecondary education. 	<p>Provide flexible opportunities for migrant student involvement in class and school activities</p> <p>Encourage non-threatening participation in class activities that build supportive relationships between peers, recognize transferable skills and knowledge, and reinforce successful transition into classes and events of the school</p> <p>Offer community-acclimation support to the student and the family to minimize stress of the transition and facilitate access to social support systems. Examples: Use the local public transportation system. Low cost medical service providers. Introduction to a PAC member who can provide social connections.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for migrant students to participate with peers who share similar experiences in identifying personal strengths, learning how to access social resources, and gaining necessary skills to communicate needs and desires effectively</p>
<p>Limited understanding of successfully navigating the school environment, identifying and utilizing its resources, and actively seeking help when it is needed</p>	<p>Small group or individualized orientation to the new school, its services and resources</p> <p>Immediate linkage with a caring adult educator who knows the student, will facilitate the successful transition into classes, and can serve as an advocate for access to motivational opportunities and extracurricular activities</p>
<p>State education agencies and local school districts lack funding to provide needed leadership development for migrant students and their families</p>	<p>Identify local community, regional, state and federal funding opportunities to support this essential component of educational success</p> <p>Work with colleges and universities to develop bilingual student recruitment events that incorporate leadership development components in the curriculum</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Due to high mobility, migrant families often lack connections to the resources of local governments, schools, communities, and mainstream society where they reside</p>	<p>Fund release time for an educator in the LEA to support credit accrual and access to these local resources by the migrant youth of the school</p> <p>Develop outreach efforts in the school</p> <p>Build local capacity to sustain Migrant Leadership and Self Advocacy Programs – consider before, lunch and after school programs</p> <p>Dedicate a staff member to lead the program and be key migrant student advocate in the middle and high school</p> <p>Create service learning activities for students not involved in other extra curricular activities</p> <p>Compile a list of resources and guide students through a “How to Use”</p>
<p>Migrant students and families cannot confidently advocate for completion of high school graduation requirements they do not possess or understand</p>	<p>High school graduation plan in possession of every 8th grade migrant student</p> <p>Work with incoming students coming in after 8th grade to develop a graduation plan; include parents</p>
<p>Migrant students lack long-term relationships with adult advocates and mentors inside the educational system who support their career goals, value their potential, open doors to opportunities, and facilitate success in high school and post-secondary education</p>	<p>Fund migrant student graduation specialist positions to mentor students and provide access to these opportunities</p> <p>Develop mentoring programs</p> <p>Migrant student graduation specialist in home base school could maintain communication with the student while he/she moves between and studies in different states and districts</p> <p>Partner with post-secondary institutions</p> <p>Identify current mentor program resources</p> <p>Organize group of role models to reach out to students</p>

Workgroup Policy Recommendations (Facilitator: David Garcia)

- OME should recommend that a migrant subgroup be created for AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress).
- OME should review the state Comprehensive Needs Assessments and SDPs to include ALL secondary-age migrant youth in a leadership program that promotes self-advocacy.
- OME should develop a plan to make states aware of services and processes.
- SEA should be trained by OME to work with chief school officers to help them understand the role of Title I Part C dollars in providing educational leadership opportunities for migrant students.
- Develop a mentoring program (role models).

Topic: Access to Post-Secondary/Scholarship Opportunities

One of the primary goals of the Migrant Education Program is to ensure that as many migrant students as possible complete high school and pursue postsecondary education.

Influences in the decision made by migrant students regarding post-secondary participation and success can be attributed to: “1) access to quality high school and college counseling that offers an array of options; 2) personal factors including the individual’s motivation and beliefs about self efficacy; 3) financial factors including access to scholarships, loans and work or work-study programs; and 4) ongoing support from family and educational personnel.” (U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. 1995. *Migrant Farm Worker Students: Decisions Involved in Post-Secondary Participation and Success.*)

While the college admissions process and the procurement of funding for further education are more complicated if the migrant student has limited grasp of the English language, ongoing support of family members and educational personnel, such as migrant counselors, overcome these and other obstacles to continued education. The role of local educators in supporting the migrant student’s progression through a series of essential steps toward participation in further education is invaluable. Lacking family experience with the process of enrolling in college preparatory coursework, participating in activities that will be persuasive to college admission boards, investigating possible schools and majors, studying and sitting for college placement tests, preparing college application paperwork, and securing financial aid (all in time to meet critical deadlines), migrant youth are dependent on obtaining skilled guidance and support from the local school and community.

Goal: When they graduate from high school, migrant students are academically prepared to succeed in, have been admitted to, and know how they will fund at least the first year of their postsecondary education.

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
Migrant youth and their families have limited exposure to the range of available career fields, and the education needed to participate in them	<p>More work-study and career education-enhancement collaboration with school-to-work resources at all levels</p> <p>Provide structured activities that give access to role models, career mentors, and exploration of postsecondary education</p>
High mobility, competing adult responsibilities, and lack of funding limit migrant student access to campus visits, college planning workshops and recruitment events, and service learning opportunities within communities	<p>Stronger linkages and transitional programs for higher educational opportunities</p> <p>Ask recruiters, coaches, educators, team leaders to reach out to students</p> <p>Dedicate MEP funding for schools that involve the migrant students. They can make these activities accessible to, and promote involvement of, migrant youth</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Families and students lack accurate information about choosing and enrolling in college, how much it costs, and available funding opportunities. This undermines migrant student motivation to prepare for success in postsecondary education.</p>	<p>Through PAC meetings, interaction with school personnel, post-secondary personnel, and home visits, communicate accurate information families need to make informed decisions</p> <p>Migrant students and their families need accurate information about the prerequisite high school coursework that colleges expect</p> <p>Provide effective and consistent support for families that are seeking financial resources to permit their children's participation in postsecondary education</p> <p>Promote agreements with community colleges, universities, and technical schools to offer tuition waivers, scholarships, and work/study opportunities targeting migrant students, and including support services to help them succeed in transitioning into college level work</p> <p>A college readiness high school curriculum could automatically be the curriculum of all migrant students unless their parents choose otherwise</p> <p>Local schools access former migrant students who are now in college in the region to participate in migrant family college preparation events</p> <p>IMEC recommends replicating a minicorps model in states (Recom. A4). Access to former migrant students now in college for high school visits with migrant families, and as college mentors and tutors, would be helpful.</p> <p>Participation in Running Start programs in high school reduce the total expense of obtaining a college education, helps students and their families transition into the college experience, and enhances confidence that a college degree is an attainable goal.</p>
<p>Due to mobility issues, migrant students are often required to pay tuition costs at non-resident rates, which makes funding an education even more difficult</p>	<p>States provide venues for provision of out-of-state waivers at the university level</p>
<p>The opportunity to participate in education after high school may be limited by family protectiveness, particularly of daughters</p> <p>The student may lack experience in taking charge of decisions that affect his or her opportunities and future.</p>	<p>Funding for residential college prep and support programs, such as the CAMP program, should be increased</p> <p>Provide opportunities for migrant families to talk with college students and their families to obtain accurate information about campus life and support systems</p> <p>Participation in Advance Placement (AP) courses in high school increases the student's confidence in ability to succeed in college-level coursework, enhances the probability of both being admitted to and completing a college degree program, and builds family awareness of the academic capability of their youth</p>
<p>Ability to pursue further education may be limited by need to contribute to family income, or care for siblings so both parents can work outside home</p>	<p>Help families identify social support systems in the community that can assist in meeting essential family needs so their secondary-school age youth can continue their education</p> <p>Help families understand the cost of not furthering one's education</p>

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Family may lack social connections within school and community to access scholarships and grants</p>	<p>Teach migrant students to solicit and obtain letters of recommendation in school and communities as they study and travel</p> <p>Fund migrant program graduation specialist positions to promote these connections to community leaders and regional opportunities in support of further education</p>

IMEC Policy Recommendations:

- A2. Preparation for the rigors of high school and for post-secondary opportunities must begin early.
- B5. Migrant high school students whose eligibility has expired need continued support to pursue graduation and/or post-secondary opportunities.
- E1. Funding for the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) should be increased, allowing for additional sites and expansion to unserved areas.

Workgroup Policy Recommendations (Facilitator: Alice Matthews)

- States will provide venues for provision of out-of-state waivers at the university level.
- OME should fund states to provide ongoing support for students in post-secondary educational programs.
- Funding for the CAMP program should be increased, allowing for expansion into unserved areas and continuation of proven programs.
- States should provide OME with their state plans for secondary/post-secondary transitional process.
- OME should ensure that SEAs provide information on access to post-secondary opportunities to all migrant students.

Topic: Out of School Youth

Although the Office of Migrant Education has provided guidance for conducting a MEP-specific Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment, the agency has not included out-of-school youth in its model. As a result, state MEPs have developed their own protocols or, more likely, do not include out of school migrant youth (OSY) in their Comprehensive Needs Assessments.

However, Migrant Education Program (MEP) requirements mandate that youth including dropouts up to age 22 be served. Out-of-school youth (OSY) continue to receive the fewest services. Because federal data reporting for OSY on the Consolidated Annual Performance Report is minimal, very little in the way of supplemental instructional and support service data is known. In fact, graduation or completion rates for OSY who return to school is not even reported.

Out-of-school youth served by the MEP can be stratified into two groups: those who never attended school in the U.S. (here to work youth); and those who attended school in the U.S. but dropped out. In the 2007 report "Out of School Immigrant Youth," researchers Hill and Hayes of the Public Policy Institute of California described significant differences between these two OSY groups, as evidenced in the table below:

Here to Work Youth	Dropout Youth
Fewer than 15% have health insurance Young men constitute a higher percentage Median age = 19 100% are foreign born 75% of males live away from their parents 39% reported leaving school to work; 37% reported never having attended school	More than 50% have health insurance Young women constitute a higher percentage Median age = 18 60% are foreign born 17% of males live away from their parents Reasons for dropping out of school: 28% lacked sufficient credits to graduate 22% were unmotivated to continue 12% had to work 11% had family reasons such as pregnancy 10% moved and did not re-enroll in school 8% had discipline problems
83% interested in learning English	53% interested in earning a high school diploma 39% interested in obtaining a GED

Improving educational access for this group of migrant youth will require coordinated support of the Migrant Education Program, state agencies, and local school districts and educational programs

Goal: Secondary-school aged migrant youth who are not attending school and have not received a high school diploma are offered flexible, quality educational opportunities that address their interests and needs, and the essential supportive resources to participate in them.

Challenges or Barriers	Brainstormed Solutions and Strategies
<p>Insufficient data on this population: Why did they drop out of school? What educational opportunities interest them? Support needed to participate?</p> <p>Inconsistent definition of school dropout that counts middle school, as well as high school, dropouts</p>	<p>Identify data needed to meet this population's educational needs</p> <p>Develop a mechanism for obtaining this data, evaluating it, and extracting information of constructive use in designing successful educational interventions</p>
<p>Inconsistency in key data elements to collect when recruiting out of school youth into MEP services</p>	<p>Development of a standardized needs assessment process, including key data elements to document through the MSIX system, so OSY information could be exchanged and the youth served as they migrate</p> <p>Expand and refine MSIX data through a working committee of practitioners</p>
<p>Schools lack resources to serve out of school youth, and fear penalty under AYP if they recruit them and they don't graduate</p> <p>Overly narrow definition of education with few successful outcomes</p>	<p>Acknowledge and reward LEA outreach services to these youth without penalizing unsuccessful effort.</p> <p>Identify successful educational outcomes in addition to high school graduation or passing the GED</p>
<p>Lack of age appropriate educational opportunities not limited by physical location that address their interests and responsibilities</p> <p>In traditional high school setting, returning student may feel socially isolated and unconnected to students who lack his/her adult responsibilities.</p> <p>The out of school youth may be unable to afford the stylish clothing, shoes, and supplies that help students feel they fit in with the larger group. Self-consciousness adds to many barriers to be overcome by a returning student. The need for acceptance is especially critical in adolescence.</p>	<p>Increase Federal funding for MEP services</p> <p>Better identification and recruitment of secondary school-aged migrant students no longer attending school & lacking a HS diploma</p> <p>As part of MEP grants, require districts to implement dropout recovery programs</p> <p>Provide supported access to Plazas Comunitarias (CONEVyT) through the Internet to assist these students in obtaining further education through the Country of Mexico</p>
<p>Need for support to participate in educational opportunities (transportation, child care, stipend to replace lost wages)</p>	
<p>Limited exposure to career options, education needed, and information to pursue postsecondary education</p>	<p>Expand access of out of school youth to current information on these topics</p>
<p>Inadequate access to educationally successful role models with whom they can relate</p>	<p>Promote access to such role models through local communities and regions</p>

Workgroup Policy Recommendations (Co-Facilitators: Earl Wiggins & Pat Edwards)

There are two distinct categories:

Here to Work	School Dropouts
Limited schooling (elementary grades)	16-18 years old
“adults”	more likely to speak English
without parental influence (guardian or on their own)	more likely to be with parents

- A system must be developed to collect demographic data on OSY/DO.
- States must IDENTIFY these individuals, conduct needs assessments, provide services and find a way to assess progress and outcomes.
- OME needs to recognize both groups for service design and reporting purposes.
- OME and SEA must identify the allowable educational support services for OSY/DO.
- Bridges must be built between high school and ABE/Adult Ed so kids who leave school are enrolled in those programs (local, state, national, and bi-national).
- Authorize funding to support mentoring.
- Authorize funding for a research project to investigate the problem.
- CAMP students and “Success Stories” should be required/encouraged to *give back* to MEP – such stories are extremely meaningful to kids.
- Eliminate the disincentive for bringing the OSY/DO kids back into the school setting.
- Identify risks and myths.
- Explore more alternative types of completion programs – community-based, plazas [Plazas Comunitarias], bi-national bridges to communication.

GUIDE TO ACRONYMS

CAMP	College Assistance Migrant Program funded by federal grants to facilitate migrant student recruitment to college and successful transition in first year of study
DOE	United States Department of Education
GED	General Educational Development exam; offered to demonstrate knowledge equivalent to that required for a high school diploma
HEP	High School Equivalency Program funded by federal grants to help out-of-school migrant agricultural workers prepare to pass the GED
IMEC	Interstate Migrant Education Council whose mission is "to advocate policies that ensure the highest quality education and other needed services for the nation's migrant children"; www.migedimec.org
LEAs	Local Education Agencies, typically a school board of administrators; as used here, may also extend to administrators of school buildings within a district
MEP	National Migrant Education Program administered by OME and funded through Title I Part C
MSIX	Migrant Student Information Exchange network; an electronic link between state databases
NASDME	National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education
OME	Office of Migrant Education in the United States Department of Education
OSY	Out of school youth younger than 22 years of age who are neither presently attending, nor have graduated from, high school
PAC	Parent Advisory Council, organization of migrant families typically at the school district level
PASS	Portable Assisted Study Sequence; high school curriculum developed specifically as a credit accrual option for migrant youth
SAC	State Advisory Council, organization of migrant family representatives at the state level
SEA	State Education Agency, highest educational authority at the state level; supervises and funds the state Migrant Education Program
SEMY	Office of Secondary Education for Migrant Youth, funded by the Washington State Migrant Education Program

Educators Nationwide Contributing to this Initiative

Note: many more unnamed experts supported this three year process at conference sessions where sign up sheets were not available. Excuse the omissions! Email names to be added to jamie@semy.org.

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