

RESEARCH

Educational Program Report



Migrant Education Program (MEP) Evaluation Report 2007-2008



2008 Board of Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM (MEP) 2007–2008

Program Description

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is authorized under Title I of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB). Section 1301, Part C of Title I states that the purpose of MEP is to assist states in their efforts to meet the special needs of migrant students. In general, the MEP attempts to “support high-quality and comprehensive educational programs for migrant children to help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that result from repeated moves” (*No Child Left Behind: A Desktop Reference*, 2002).

A migrant student refers to any child under age 22 who works in the fishing or agricultural industry, or whose parent/guardian/spouse works in one of the aforementioned industries, and has crossed school district lines within the previous 36 months for the purpose of temporary or seasonal employment in the agricultural or fishing industries. Many challenges face migrant students, such as poverty, poor health and nutrition, limited English proficiency, and mobility, which make their educational needs difficult to address. Because the challenges migrant students face extend beyond educational needs, many local education agencies often give higher priority to providing support services such as school supplies and clothing vouchers, rather than to instructional services (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

Under NCLB, migrant education programs are required to:

- Identify and address the special educational needs of migrant children;
- Provide migrant students with the opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic content standards that all children are expected to meet;

- Promote interstate and intrastate coordination of services for migrant children by ensuring the timely transfer of school records at no cost to the education agency requesting such records; and
- Encourage family literacy services for migrant students and their families.

In an effort to comply with Title I, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Division of Migrant Education works with local education agencies (LEAs) to design programs that help migrant students “overcome the challenges of mobility, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, and other difficulties associated with a migratory life-style, in order to succeed in school, and to successfully transition to postsecondary education or employment” (Texas Education Agency, Division of Migrant Education, 2006). Additionally, TEA works with LEAs to address methods to meet state and federal goals for servicing migrant students.

A migrant student qualifies for MEP services for a period of 36 months. After 36 months, the migrant student loses his or her migrant status unless he or his family makes a “qualifying move” to obtain migratory work. If the family makes a qualifying move they can regain migrant status for the student by applying for a certificate of eligibility (COE), which will extend the student’s MEP eligibility for another 36 months.

Local education agencies receiving federal funds for migrant program implementation are required to provide an evaluation of the program at the end of the academic year. The purpose of this report was to evaluate HISD’s Title I Migrant Education Program for the 2007–2008 school year as mandated by federal and state guidelines. Enrollment and achievement data

from 2007–2008 were collected, and budget information from this school year is included as well.

Key Findings

1. What were the demographic characteristics of eligible migrant students enrolled in HISD schools from the 2005–2006 school year to the 2007–2008 school year?

- The number of eligible migrant students increased by 21% from 480 to 579 between the 2006–2007 and 2007–2008 school years. Demographic data show that a majority of the migrant students were: Hispanic (100%), considered at risk (82%), and economically disadvantaged (97%). More than half (54%) were served by the Bilingual or ESL programs.

2. How was the migrant education program budget allocated for various services and what types were provided for HISD migrant students and their families?

- During the 2007–2008 school year, the largest amount of money spent on direct services to migrant students was \$142,385.30, which was spent on reading and instructional materials. An additional \$44,929.57 of the migrant education program budget was spent on clothing and uniform vouchers, and \$20,125.00 was spent on recruitment expenses. Finally, \$5,740.00 was spent on student tuition (credit recovery and accrual through Houston Community College), and \$595.59 was spent on parent/Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings.
- Supplemental services for migrant students increased from 2006–2007 to 2007–2008 for the following instructional services: Building Bridges, elementary and secondary tutorials, books/instructional materials, and TAKS materials. The only category showing a decrease was tuition vouchers. In addition, support service increases occurred in: school

supplies, clothing/uniform vouchers, and social work/outreach/advocacy.

3. What methods were used by district MEP staff members to identify and recruit migrant students, and verify the eligibility of migrant students and their families?

- The migrant recruitment specialist and community liaisons reported approximately the same number of recruiting contacts in 2007–2008 as in 2006–2007, 320 versus 324. However, the number of eligible families increased from 132 to 170. Community liaisons reported that the number of school supplies distributed increased by 3%.

4. What were the number and percent of migrant students by grade level at each of the proficiency levels on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for spring 2008?

- TELPAS results for spring of 2008 reveal that the majority of migrant LEP students in K-2 were at the Beginning level of English language proficiency (52%), and only 3% were rated as Advanced High. Migrant LEP students in grades 3-12 were mostly at the Advanced and Advanced High levels (70%), with 35% of them rated Advanced High.

5. What were the passing rates on the English and Spanish Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in 2008 for migrant students?

- The percent of migrant students passing English TAKS reading was lower than the HISD passing rate at each grade level, except grades four and eleven. Similarly, mathematics TAKS passing rates lagged behind the district figures for every grade, except grades three and four. Passing rates for writing, science, and social studies were lower than district figures at every grade level, with the exception of grade eight social studies.

- The percent of migrant students passing Spanish TAKS reading was slightly lower than that for the district (81% vs 85%). Migrant students also had lower passing rates on the TAKS mathematics and writing components than the district.
- Despite performing below the overall district levels, migrant students exceeded the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) TAKS passing standards in each area tested on both the English and Spanish language TAKS.

6. *What were the normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores on the Stanford and Aprenda in 2008 for migrant students?*

- Migrant student performance declined by two NCE points on the reading subtest of the Stanford 10 between 2006–2007 and 2007–2008. Performance on the mathematics and language subtests showed no change.
- Migrant student 2008 Aprenda 3 NCE scores were all at or well above grade level 50th NCE in the reading, mathematics, and language subtests in grades 1 through 6, and mathematics and language showed increases from the previous year overall.

7. *What were the graduation and dropout rates of HISD migrant students over a five-year period (2002–2003 to 2006–2007)?*

- In 2006–2007, the graduation rate for the Houston Independent School District (HISD) migrant students was 46.2 percent (single-year rate). The four-year cohort graduation rate was 30.4 percent. The percentage of migrant graduates earning advanced certificates or honors increased to 92.3% in 2005–2006, but declined to 75.0% in 2006–2007. The dropout rate increased to 5.1% in 2006–2007, and has been variable over the past five-year period, ranging from 2.2 to 5.3%.

Recommendations

1. The migrant program is not able to fully utilize all staff members available to assist in recruitment and identification of migrant students and families. Certification of eligible (COE) migrant families is a time-consuming process that requires documentation of the family member's spoken word without edit. This process cannot be shortened or condensed, since TEA conducts annual audits. Previously, it was suggested that the migrant program seek to hire part-time recruiters to assist the recruiters and lead recruiters. This has not proven possible, mostly due to budgeting constraints. As an alternative, the migrant program should expand their efforts at cross-training available staff as recruiters. More difficult COE cases could remain assigned to the full-time recruiters. However, some of the recruitment and identification workload could be shifted to staff who are already on the payroll, if these individuals received adequate training and field experience. This process may be difficult, and there are indications that available training resources have proven inadequate in the past. Given the potential benefits from cross-training staff for recruitment and screening, it is recommended that the program fully explore this option.
2. Efforts should be made to increase the number of community liaisons working for the migrant education program. At one point, there were as many as four community liaisons assigned to the MEP, whereas currently there is only one. Community liaisons allow for frequent direct contact with migrant families and students. This could easily be used to follow up with students who have dropped out or who may be at risk of dropping out. The MEP and district should explore ways of increasing the number of community liaisons assigned to the program.

3. Dropout and graduation rates continue to be problem areas for migrant students. Before a student has dropped out, there are a number of actions that can and should be taken in order to prevent the dropout from occurring. MEP staff already engage in some of these, but there are other steps that should be considered. Areas where the MEP should either begin or step up their activities include: (a) identifying migrant students at risk of dropping out by checking attendance records and lists of students failing two or more classes; (b) increase parental involvement, including promotion of “contracts” between students and their parents covering school attendance, studying, and discipline; and (c) offer more balanced options for potential dropouts and students who wish to leave early, including credit-by-exam, English-proficiency plus GED, or transfer to an alternative school (e.g., Liberty High School, REACH High School, Leader’s Academy).
4. There are also steps that can be taken after a student dropout has occurred. Again, MEP staff have been engaging in some of these but there is room for improvement in efficiency. For example, each fall a list of all students who have left school is made available (“PEIMS leaver file”) and potential dropouts can be identified from this. These students are then contacted by MEP staff in order to try and get them back into the school system. However, this list is currently searched through manually, and at approximately 500 pages, this is a time-consuming process. A simple recommendation is that the MEP make use of the HISD Research Department to identify potential dropouts, which would greatly speed up this step.

MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM (MEP) 2007–2008

Introduction

Program Description

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is authorized under Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Title I states that the purpose of MEP is to assist states in their efforts to meet the special needs of migrant students. In general, the MEP attempts to ensure that children of migrant workers have access to the same free, appropriate public education as all children. Specifically, No Child Left Behind Act aims to achieve the following goals:

- “support high-quality and comprehensive educational programs for migratory children to help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that result from repeated moves;
- 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 achievement standards;
- ensure that migratory children are provided with appropriate educational services (including supportive services) that address their special needs in a coordinated and efficient manner;
- ensure that migratory children receive full and appropriate opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet;
- design programs to help migratory children overcome educational disruption, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, various health-related problems, and other factors that inhibit the ability of such children to do well in school, and to prepare such children to make a successful transition to post-secondary education or employment; and

- ensure that migratory children benefit from State and local systemic reforms” (NCLB Title I, Part C).

Many challenges face migrant students, such as poverty, poor health and nutrition, limited English proficiency, and mobility, which makes their educational needs difficult to address. Because the challenges migrant students face extend beyond educational needs, many local education agencies often give higher priority to providing support services such as school supplies and clothing vouchers, rather than to instructional services (U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

To meet state content and performance standards, local education agencies (LEAs) instituting migrant education programs generally provide academic support services to migrant students who fail to meet state standards or who are at risk of not meeting state standards (*ibid.*). In the Houston Independent School District (HISD), services to migrant students are provided directly by the MEP staff, not by the schools.

Program Goals

To comply with Title I, Part C of NCLB, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Division of Migrant Education has stated that its primary goal is to “support high-quality and comprehensive educational programs for migratory children to help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that result from repeated moves” (Texas Education Agency, Division of Migrant Education, 2006). Additionally, TEA works with LEAs to address methods to meet state and federal goals for servicing migrant students. HISD offers the following services to migrant students:

- School supplies and uniform/clothing vouchers;

- Building Bridges, a home-based early childhood education program for migrant parents and children;
- Parent informational meetings;
- Service coordination, such as social work and outreach services, for migrants ages 3 to 21;
- Advocacy (academic advice and guidance)
- Graduation enhancement/credit accrual;
- Correspondence and credit-by-exam courses through the University of Texas at Austin;
- Tuition for fall, spring, and summer school classes, and;
- Tutoring priority for services (PFS) students.

The state and its migrant-funded LEAs, including HISD, continue to address the unique educational needs of migratory children through the following “Seven Areas of Focus”:

1. Identification and Recruitment (ages 3–21);
2. New Generation System for Migrant Student Record Transfer (ages 0–21);
3. Migrant Services Coordination (all levels);
4. Parental Involvement (ages 0–21);
5. Early Childhood Education (ages 3–grade 12);
6. Secondary Credit Exchange and Accrual (grades 9–12); and
7. Graduation Enhancement (grades 7–12).

Program Participants

According to the State of Texas, a migratory child is a person between ages 3 and 21 years who himself has moved, or whose parent, spouse, or guardian has moved in the preceding 36 months from one school district to another in order to obtain seasonal employment in the agricultural or fishing industry. After 36 months the migrant student loses his or her migrant status, unless the family makes a “qualifying move” to obtain migratory work. After a qualifying move they can regain migrant status for the student by applying for a Certificate of Eligibility (COE).

Program Budget

For the 2007–2008 academic year HISD received \$869,172 for the migrant education pro-

gram to cover personnel salaries and migrant services (\$648,769 for FY 2008 and \$220,403 reallocated from FY 2007). Funding is based on a weighted formula which takes into account both the numbers and characteristics of those previously served by the program.

During the 2007–2008 academic year, MEP allocated \$213,775 for various services targeted toward migrant students; the remainder was spent on staff salaries and other operational costs. The data in research question two will provide a breakdown of how the budget was allocated for MEP services.

Purpose of the Evaluation Report

Local education agencies receiving federal funds for migrant program implementation are required to provide an evaluation of the program at the end of the academic year. The purpose of this report was to evaluate HISD’s Title I Migrant Education Program for the 2007–2008 school year as mandated by federal and state guidelines. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What were the demographic characteristics of eligible migrant students enrolled in HISD schools from the 2005–2006 school year to the 2007–2008 school year?
2. How was the migrant education program budget allocated for various services and what services were provided for HISD migrant students and their families?
3. What methods were used by district MEP staff members to identify and recruit migrant students, and verify the eligibility of migrant students and their families?
4. What were the number and percent of migrant students by grade level at each of the proficiency levels on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for spring 2008?
5. What were the passing rates on the English and Spanish Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in 2008 for migrant students?
6. What were the normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores on the Stanford and Apenda in 2008 for migrant students?

7. What were the graduation and dropout rates of HISD migrant students over a five-year period (2002–2003 to 2006–2007)?

Literature Review

In addition to the cultural disadvantages that migrant students often face, this group also encounters problems associated with their migrant life-style. Specifically, the high mobility associated with migratory work makes migrant students susceptible to interruptions in their education, which leads to a lack of continuity in their curriculum (Salerno, 1991). Interruptions in a student's education can lead to the student falling behind his or her peers, which may lead to poor academic grades, frustration with school, and, ultimately, early school withdrawal (Kindler, 1995; Salerno, 1991).

The extreme poverty of migrant families often leads to poor nutrition, an inability to afford sufficient health care, and pressure on the migrant students to leave school early to supplement the family's income (Huang, 1993; Kindler, 1995; Salerno, 1991). In fact, one study showed that migrant children, sometimes as young as ten years old, often make significant financial contributions to their families by working rather than attending school (Prewitt-Diaz, Trotter, & Rivera, 1989). Finally, because Spanish is the primary language of most migrant students in the U.S., many migrant students face a language barrier in American schools, which presents additional disadvantages (Salerno, 1991; Kindler, 1995).

Methods

Data Collection

Data collected for this report included student enrollment and performance of HISD migrant students. Student enrollment and individual identification numbers were collected from the TEA Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Student performance data were collected from the following: the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), the Stanford Achievement Test (Stanford 10),

the Aprenda: La Prueba de Logros en Español (Aprenda 3), and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). In regards to language proficiency in English, the number and percent of students attaining each proficiency level on the TELPAS were included, as were the number and percent gaining in proficiency between 2007 and 2008. Additional data were collected from the HISD's Chancery database system, the New Generation System database (NGS), and the district annual report under the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS).

Assessment Instruments

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills is a state-mandated, criterion-referenced test administered for the first time in the spring 2003 as a means to monitor student performance. The English language version measures academic achievement in reading at grades 3–9; English Language Arts at 10 and 11; writing at grades 4 and 7; social studies at grades 8, 10, and 11; and science at grades 5, 8, 10, and 11. Students in the 11th grade are required to take and pass an exit level TAKS in order to graduate. The Spanish language version measures the performance of students in reading and mathematics in grades 3–6, in writing at grade 4, and in science at grade 5. The Spanish version of the TAKS is a translation of the English version.

The Stanford 10 is a norm-referenced, standardized achievement test in English used to assess students' level of content mastery. The reading, mathematics, and language subtests of the Stanford 10 are included in this report for grades 1 through 11.

The Aprenda 3 is a norm-referenced, standardized achievement test in Spanish, and is used to assess the level of content mastery for students who receive instruction in Spanish. The reading, mathematics, and language results are included in this report for grades 1 through 5.

The Aprenda was developed by Harcourt Educational Measurement, the same company that developed the Stanford. However, the Aprenda is not a translation of the Stanford. Rather, the structure and content are aligned with

those of the Stanford, but development and referencing are completed in order to provide culturally-relevant material for Spanish-speaking student populations across the United States. Students take either the Stanford or the Aprenda according to their language of reading/language arts instruction.

In response to federal testing requirements, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) developed the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Under TELPAS, English-language learner (ELL) students in kindergarten through twelfth grade are assessed in four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Proficiency scores in each domain are in turn divided into four proficiency levels: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High. A composite score is used to determine whether districts receiving Title III funds meet federally-mandated Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO's) that indicate where ELL students fall on a continuum of English-language development. The progress of students along this continuum is a primary component of the federally-mandated AMAO and helps districts monitor whether their ELL students are making steady annual growth toward English-language proficiency.

English listening, speaking, and writing proficiency in TELPAS are assessed holistically, i.e., via teacher ratings. Raters must be trained and recertified each year. The reading component of TELPAS is assessed via teacher ratings for ELL students in grades K and 1, but is done by written test for grades 2 through 12. The TELPAS underwent some major revisions for 2008 which include the following; (1) the reading portion increased the emphasis and importance given to academic as opposed to conversational English, (2) more items were included to assess the Advanced High level of proficiency, (3) different grade clusters were used, and (4) new cut-points were established during the summer of 2008.

Qualitative Data Collection

Informal interviews with key stakeholders in HISD's Migrant Education Program (MEP) were

conducted to gather information on program goals, objectives, and activities.

Sample

Enrollment data were based on PEIMS and included all students enrolled in HISD schools through October of each academic year. The analysis of academic achievement data was based on eligible migrant students and non-migrant students in the TAKS, TELPAS, Stanford, and Aprenda databases, i.e., all students included in the spring administration of the respective tests who were listed as full-time students in the Chancery database. For the purposes of MEP, migrant students were those students between the ages of 3 and 21 years who moved, or whose parent, spouse, or guardian moved in the preceding 36 months from one school district to another in order to obtain seasonal employment in the agricultural or fishing industry.

Results

What were the demographic characteristics of eligible migrant students enrolled in HISD schools from the 2005–2006 school year to the 2007–2008 school year?

Migrant student total enrollment typically makes up less than one percent of the district's student population. The number of eligible migrant students increased by 21% in 2007–2008 from the previous year. This follows three consecutive years of declining enrollment. Enrollment data for the last three academic years are presented in **Table 1** (see p. 9), which also provides a breakdown of ethnicity data. The data reveal that all migrant students, 100%, were classified as Hispanic in 2007–2008.

Also presented in Table 1 are the number and percent of migrant students served in various programs. The data show that in 2007–2008 the vast majority of the migrant students were considered at risk (82%) and economically disadvantaged (97%). The table also reveals that most migrant students were served by Title I (97%) and that a large number of them were limited English proficiency (LEP) students served by

Table 1. Migrant Student Demographics, 2005–2006 to 2007–2008.

Ethnicity	2005–2006		2006–2007		2007–2008	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
America Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	1	<1	0	0	0	0
African American	7	<1	3	<1	0	0
Hispanic	729	99	477	99	579	100
White	0	0	0	0	0	0
Program						
LEP	375	51	269	56	341	59
ESL	123	17	83	17	114	20
Bilingual	231	31	167	35	196	34
At Risk	617	84	399	83	477	82
Title 1	720	98	474	99	563	97
Special Education	80	11	43	9	53	9
Gifted/Talented	36	5	29	6	24	4
Economically Disadvantaged	737	100	475	99	563	97
Total	737	100	480	100	579	100

Source: PEIMS

Multilingual programs, such as bilingual (34%) or ESL (20%). These figures are consistent with migrant education literature, which explains the many disadvantages faced by migrant students. Special Education programs served 9% of the migrant students and 4% of migrant students were classified as gifted and talented.

Despite the increased enrollment, migrant student enrollment in 2007–2008 remained 55% below the ten-year average for the period 1996 to 2005 (see **Figure 1**). The continuing lower enrollment shown in recent years is likely related to two factors. First, more stringent criteria were adopted in 2006 concerning eligibility. The prin-

ciple change was that in order to be considered eligible for MEP services, a family had to consider migrant work (i.e., agriculture or fishing) as a “principal means of livelihood” (PMOL). This is not necessarily practical when dealing with work that is essentially seasonal, such as agriculture. A second factor which has undoubtedly affected migrant enrollment has been continued and increased controversy and political pressure concerning undocumented workers. This may have acted to reduce the number of migrants seeking employment in the region, or decreased the number of those willing to apply for program services.

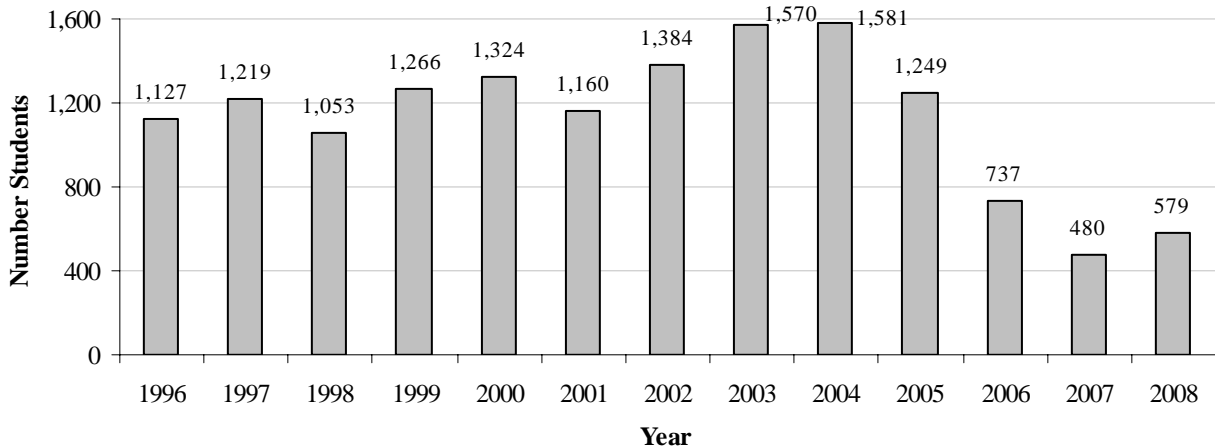


Figure 1. Migrant student enrollment in HISD, 1996 to 2008.

How was the migrant education program budget allocated for various services and what services were provided for HISD migrant students and their families?

The Houston Independent School District offers the following services to migrant students:

- School supplies and uniform/clothing vouchers;
- Building Bridges, a home-based early childhood education program for migrant parents and children;
- Parent informational meetings;
- Service coordination, such as social work and outreach services, for migrants ages 3 to 21;
- Advocacy (academic advice and guidance)
- Graduation enhancement/credit accrual;
- Correspondence and credit-by-exam courses through the University of Texas at Austin;
- Tuition for fall, spring, and summer school classes (credit recovery and accrual through Houston Community College).
- Tutoring priority for services (PFS) students.

Table 2 presents budget allocations for various services offered by the Migrant Education Program for the 2007–2008 grant year. The largest allocation from the migrant budget went for reading/instructional materials (\$142,385.30). Parent /PAC meetings had the smallest allocation

Table 2. Migrant Education Program (MEP) Budget Allocation for Various Services for the 2007–2008 Grant Year.

MEP Service	Allocation (\$)
Clothing/Uniform Vouchers	\$44,929.57
Parent/PAC Meetings	\$595.59
Reading/Instructional Materials	\$142,385.30
Recruitment Expenses	\$20,125.00
Student Tuition	\$5,740.00
Total	\$213,775.46

Source: HISD SAP

tion of funds (\$595.59) from the budget. The total amount spent on various MEP services for 2006–2007 was \$213,775.46.

When looking at **Table 3**, which shows the number of migrant students/participants who have benefited from MEP services in 2006–2007 and 2007–2008, it is important to note the difference in accounting methods between the New Generation System (NGS) used by MEP, and the PEIMS system, which is used by HISD’s Research and Accountability department. These two systems have different purposes. NGS numbers determine program funding levels, and the database is used to track all services provided, whereas PEIMS is used to track demographics and performance data for students enrolled in HISD. The NGS accounting method, therefore, includes migrant children and adolescents who are not enrolled in any HISD schools, while the

Table 3. Number of Migrant Students Receiving Supplemental Benefits Through MEP During the Regular and Summer School Months for 2006–2007 and 2007–2008

Instructional Services	2006–2007		2007–2008	
	Regular	Summer	Regular	Summer
Building Bridges	35	n/a	37	26
Tutorial Elementary	2	0	35	0
Tutorial Secondary	12	12	25	12
Tuition Vouchers	2	22	6	16
Books/Instructional	310	n/a	420	0
TAKS Materials	268	n/a	304	n/a
Credit by Exam	-	-	4 ^a	-
Support Services				
School Supplies	571	-	589	-
Clothing/Uniform Vouchers	607	-	674	-
Social Work/Outreach/Advocacy	625	-	708	-

Source: New Generation System

^a 4 students took a total of 29 exams

PEIMS accounting method only captures students who are enrolled in HISD schools. Thus, counts obtained via NGS will often show a greater number of migrant participants because they include “resident only” migrants. Finally, PEIMS numbers were finalized in fall of 2007, while NGS numbers were not fixed until the end of the current grant year (i.e., August 31, 2008).

Resident only migrant students who are enrolled in non-HISD schools (i.e., charter or private) receive clothing vouchers, school supplies, tuition vouchers for high school credit recovery classes, and outreach services. Resident only students who are not enrolled in school are referred to GED classes, in particular the University of Houston’s Migrant Education Program High School Equivalency Program (HEP), where free GED classes are available for eligible migrant families. Outreach services are available for the students and periodic contact is made throughout the year to monitor any change in their status. Furthermore, migrant parents who have children between the ages of three and five are eligible for the Building Bridges program, which provides parents with the tools necessary to help their young children develop social, cognitive, and language skills.

The instructional services data in Table 3 show that from 2006–2007 to 2007–2008, Building Bridges participation increased from 35 to 63 students. This increase was due to the inclusion of migrant students who received benefits during the summer session as opposed to the regular school year. With the exception of tuition vouchers, every other instructional service offered showed higher numbers in 2007–2008. Increases were seen in tutoring for elementary and secondary students, distribution of books and other instructional materials to migrant students, and provision of TAKS instructional materials.

Table 3 also shows the number of migrant students receiving support services. Each of these numbers increased between 2006–2007 and 2007–2008. More migrant students received services in school supplies (571 versus 589), clothing or uniform vouchers (607 versus 674), and social work/outreach/advocacy (625 versus 768).

What methods were used by district MEP staff members to identify and recruit migrant students, and verify the eligibility of migrant students and their families?

MEP recruitment activities for the 2007–2008 school year are shown in **Table 4**. Since the 1996–1997 school year, the migrant data specialist has used the New Generation System (NGS) to track migrant students and their families. Because federal funds are tied to the number of migrant students being served by a district, recruiting migrant families for participation in MEP becomes a top priority. The recruitment procedures included processing referral applications and verification of program eligibility. The lead recruiter issues a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for each family who qualifies for MEP services, and this certificate entitles a migrant student to three years of eligibility to participate in the program. MEP staff also distributed approximately 589 school supplies to elementary, middle, and high school migrant students in 2007–2008 (see Table 4).

Throughout the year, HISD migrant recruitment specialists and community liaisons made telephone calls to family homes and local

Table 4. Identification and Recruitment Activities of the Migrant Recruitment Specialist and Community Liaisons, 2007–2008.

Activities	No. of Students 2006-07	No. of Students 2007-08
Phone calls/Visits		
Eligible for MEP	132	170
Not eligible for MEP	192	150
Students recruited ^a		
New	171	187
Previously identified	288	293
Certificates of eligibility	132	170
Total school supplies distributed		
Building Bridges	35	38
Elementary School	281	288
Middle School	138	139
High School	117	125
Subtotal	571	589

^aIncludes prekindergarten and kindergarten

schools in an effort to find students who may be eligible for services. All referrals came from home language surveys and employment surveys, and were from within the district. Other recruitment efforts were made by distributing migrant fliers in the following venues: health fairs, health clinics, food pantries, community centers, public libraries, and apartment complexes.

Using these sources to identify potential program participants, phone calls were made to families to establish eligibility criteria. For families found to be eligible, an appointment was scheduled to fill out the COE. Home visits were also made to families with no home phone or working phone number, and COE's were completed if the family was eligible. For families not available at home, a door knocker was left for them to contact the migrant office, and the Chancery database was periodically checked for any new contact information.

To assist with recruitment and identification efforts, the MEP staff requested the development of a report identifying the late entry of former eligible migrant students previously enrolled in HISD. This daily report ascertains whether any former or current migrant students have entered the HISD school system. When such children are

identified, recruiters make contact with the family to determine if a qualifying move has been made and the reason for the late entry.

One thing to note from **Table 4** is that between 2006–2007 and 2007–2008, the number of families contacted via phone calls or visits was roughly the same (324 versus 320). However, for the second consecutive year, the percentage of families found to be eligible for MEP services increased, from 41% to 53% of those screened. Two years ago only 22% of those screened were found to be eligible. A significant factor behind this improvement is that the number of client referrals from schools increased in 2006–2007, and this trend continued through this past grant year. Thus, there has been improved pre-screening and referral of eligible students and their families via the school system.

What were the number and percent of migrant students by grade level at each of the proficiency levels on the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) for Spring 2008?

The Texas English Language proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) assesses all ELL students between grades K and 12 in four lan-

Table 5. TELPAS Proficiency Levels for Migrant Students, Spring 2008

Grade	# Tested	Beginning		Intermediate		Advanced		Advanced High		Composite Score
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
K	38	36	95	1	3	1	3	0	0	1.1
1	38	18	47	12	32	8	21	0	0	1.7
2	38	5	13	22	58	8	21	3	8	2.2
3	33	5	15	10	30	11	33	7	21	2.5
4	32	2	6	9	28	10	31	11	34	2.9
5	24	0	0	5	21	8	33	11	46	3.1
6	25	0	0	7	28	11	44	7	28	3.1
7	20	1	5	5	25	5	25	9	45	3.1
8	5	0	0	1	20	2	40	2	40	3.3
9	17	1	6	4	24	6	35	6	35	3.0
10	2	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
11	4	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
12	3	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
K-2	114	59	52	35	31	17	15	3	3	1.7
3-12	165	9	5	41	25	58	35	57	35	3.0
Overall	279	68	24	76	27	75	27	60	22	2.4

Source: TELPAS

** Indicates fewer than 5 students tested

Table 6. Migrant and HISD Comparison by Percent Passing the English Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, 2008

Gr.	Reading				Mathematics				Writing				Science				Social Studies				
	Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
3	16	75	9,888	82	16	88	9,897	78													
4	27	81	11,580	77	28	86	11,594	82	28	89	11,552	90									
5	31	65	13,157	77	33	76	13,228	82					32	81	13,085	82					
6	44	77	11,513	85	44	52	11,577	71													
7	38	66	11,894	79	39	54	11,925	67	38	71	11,873	84									
8	33	79	11,662	87	33	61	11,653	66					28	43	11,534	60	28	89	11,472	88	
9	43	58	14,018	77	41	34	13,688	51													
10	17	82	9,573	83	17	41	9,380	57					17	29	9,359	55	17	71	9,277	84	
11	19	95	8,274	89	19	63	8,206	78					18	61	8,233	78	19	89	8,193	95	
Total	268	73	101,559	81	270	59	101,148	70	66	79	23,425	87	95	57	42,211	69	64	84	28,942	89	

Source: TAKS (first administration only)

gauge domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and provides an overall composite score and proficiency level.

Fifty-nine percent of migrant students were classified as LEP in 2007–2008 and were thus eligible to take the TELPAS. The number and percent of migrant students assessed and rated on the four proficiency levels of the TELPAS in 2008 are illustrated in **Table 5** (see p. 12). Overall, 279 migrant students took the TELPAS, or 82% of those eligible (i.e., all LEPs). The data is broken down into separate summaries for grade ranges K–2 and 3–12, since these are the same groupings used to establish whether Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) required under NCLB have been met regarding the TELPAS (see **Appendix A**). Of primary interest is the percent of tested students scoring at the Advanced High level. As Table 5 shows, this rate was 3% for grades K–2, and 35% for grades 3–12. Both of these figures exceeded the AMAO standards.

What were the passing rates on the English & Spanish Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in 2008 for migrant students?

Table 6 (see above) shows migrant students English Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) results for the spring 2008. State TAKS standards are provided in **Appendix A**. Migrant students had lower passing rates than HISD students at most grades in all subjects, however, their passing rates improved in four subjects compared to 2007 (reading/ELA, math, science, and social studies). Average improvement across these four areas was approximately 10 percentage points. The only area not showing improvement was writing, where performance declined by three percentage points.

Figures 2 and **3** (see p.14) show migrant student English TAKS passing rates for the reading and mathematics subtests for each of the past three years (HISD data for the current year is included for comparison).

Table 7. Migrant and HISD Comparison by Percent Passing the Spanish Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, 2008

Gr.	Reading				Mathematics				Writing				Science								
	Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD		Migrant		HISD						
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%					
3	27	78	4,901	87	27	81	4,898	84													
4	20	85	2,699	83	20	75	2,742	85	20	90	2,726	93									
5	1	**	63	73	1	**	86	44					1	**	61	61					
6	0	**	14	14	0	**	17	24													
Total	48	81	7,677	85	48	79	7,743	83	20	90	2,726	93	1	**	61	61					

Source: TAKS (first administration only)

** Indicates fewer than 5 students tested

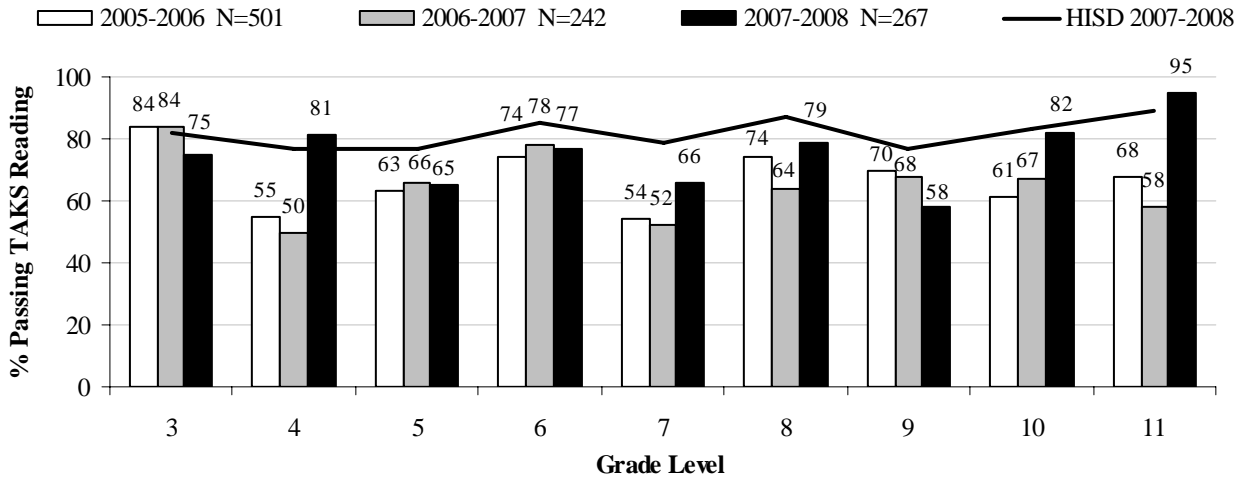


Figure 2. Migrant student English TAKS passing rates in reading/ELA, 2006 through 2008.

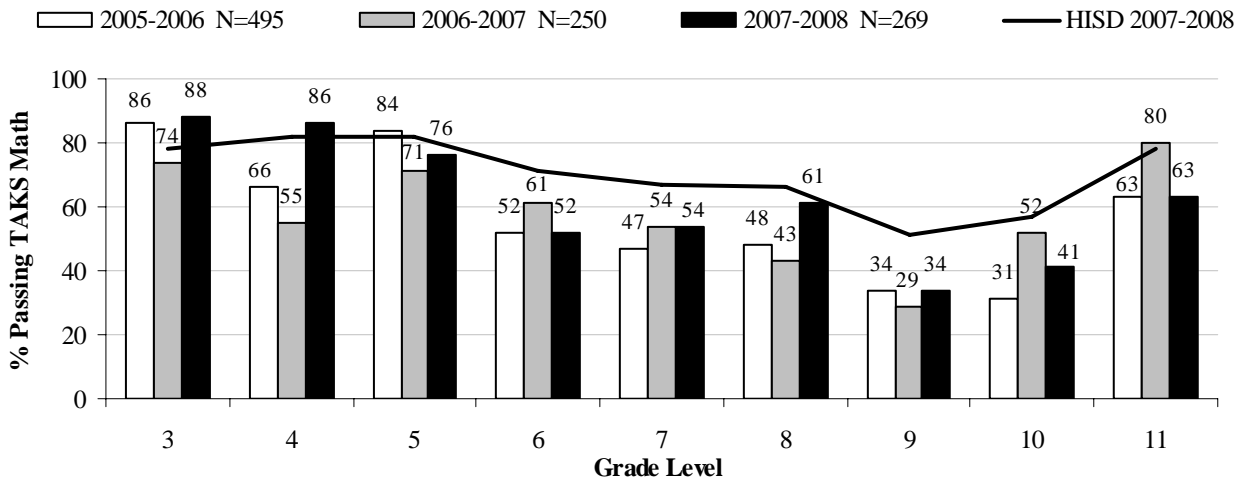


Figure 3. Migrant student English TAKS passing rates in mathematics, 2006 through 2008.

Migrant student performance on the Spanish TAKS 2008 is presented in **Table 7** (see p.13). Shown are percent passing by grade level as compared to HISD for grades 3 through 6. Migrant students had lower passing rates than HISD on the reading, mathematics, and writing subtests (science results will not be addressed since only one migrant student was tested in grade five). Performance in all three subjects declined relative to that observed in 2007. **Figure 4** (see right) shows migrant student Spanish TAKS performance on reading for the period 2006 through 2008. Overall, migrants performed approximately 10 percentage points better on the Spanish TAKS than on the English TAKS.

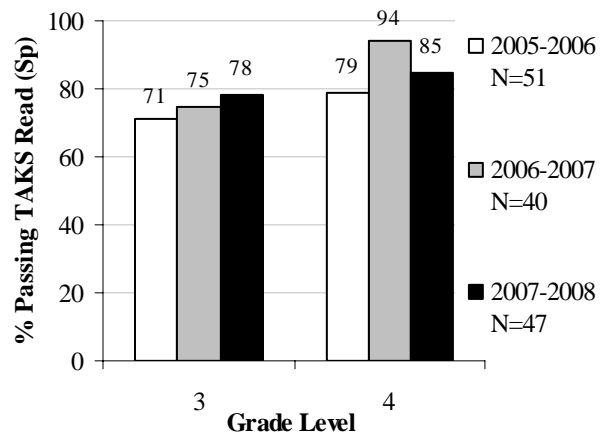


Figure 4. Migrant student Spanish TAKS performance in reading, 2005 through 2008.

Table 8. Migrant Student Stanford 10 Normal Curve Equivalent Score Comparison for 2007 and 2008

Grade	N Taking		Reading			Mathematics			Language		
	2007	2008	2007	2008	Δ	2007	2008	Δ	2007	2008	Δ
	N	N	NCE	NCE		NCE	NCE		NCE	NCE	
1	16	19	47	43	-4	52	45	-7	48	54	6
2	10	21	43	45	2	51	54	3	46	48	2
3	18	16	47	45	-2	52	59	7	50	50	0
4	17	29	43	44	1	55	54	-1	55	41	-14
5	33	40	44	41	-3	53	55	2	43	42	-1
6	42	46	40	36	-4	53	47	-6	40	39	-1
7	39	48	45	40	-5	52	50	-2	46	42	-4
8	30	37	37	42	5	47	53	6	37	45	8
9	32	49	39	36	-3	53	49	-4	47	39	-8
10	28	17	45	43	-2	43	50	7	43	42	-1
11	13	21	45	46	1	52	45	-7	44	41	-3
Total	278	343	43	41	-2	51	51	0	44	44	0

Source: Stanford 10

Both the English and Spanish TAKS performance of migrant students exceeded the passing standards established under TEA's Performance Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS). Migrant passing rates were higher than stated benchmarks in each area tested (note that English and Spanish TAKS results are combined for migrant students under PBMAS).

What were the Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores on the Stanford and Aprenda in 2008 for migrant students?

Table 8 presents the Stanford 10 Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores for migrant students tested in the spring of 2007 and 2008. The difference between these scores was calculated at each grade level to determine if there was a gain or loss in NCEs. Results indicated a slight decline for migrant students in reading, but no change in mathematics or language. Reading scores showed that of the eleven grades tested on

the Stanford 10, seven showed declines from 2007 to 2008, and four showed gains. Overall reading NCE results for migrant students were below the accepted normal range (45–55, which is equivalent to a range of 40th to 60th percentiles). In mathematics, migrant student overall performance was just above average, with an NCE of 51. Five grades showed gains from 2007 to 2008, and six showed declines. Finally, language scores were marginally lower than average for migrant students, and were the same for both years (NCE of 44).

Grades 2 and 8 showed gains in all areas tested, whereas grades 6, 7, and 9 showed a decline in each area.

Table 9 presents migrant students Aprenda NCE scores for spring 2007 and 2008. Included in this table is the difference between NCE scores obtained in the two years. Aprenda scores for migrant students in 2008 were all well above the 50th NCE for grades 1 through 4, indicating above grade level performance. There was a

Table 9. Migrant Student Aprenda 3 Normal Curve Equivalent Score Comparison for 2007 and 2008

Grade	N Taking		Reading			Mathematics			Language		
	2007	2008	2007	2008	Δ	2007	2008	Δ	2007	2008	Δ
	N	N	NCE	NCE		NCE	NCE		NCE	NCE	
1	26	28	68	73	5	65	67	2	70	71	1
2	29	31	68	67	-1	67	70	3	69	66	-3
3	23	28	69	69	0	69	70	1	79	74	-5
4	16	21	65	65	0	73	77	4	68	65	-3
5	1	1	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
6	1	1	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Total	96	110	68	68	0	68	71	3	71	69	-2

Source: Aprenda 3

** Indicates fewer than 5 students tested

three 3 NCE point gain in mathematics, and a two NCE point decline in language (there was no change for reading). Averaging NCEs across all subtests, overall Aprenda performance for migrant students was equivalent to the 82nd percentile.

What were the graduation and dropout rates of HISD migrant students over a five-year period (2002–2003 to 2006–2007)?

Graduation data is presented in **Tables 10, 11 and 12**. Table 10 shows simple graduation rate (i.e., number of migrants graduating in a given school year divided by the number of migrants enrolled in 12th grade in that same year). Over the eleven-year period from 1994–1995 through 2004–2005, graduation rate for migrant students averages 73.5%. The migrant student graduation rate was 46.2% for 2006–2007, the most recent year for which data are available. Recent performance has declined over the past five years from a high of 90% in 2000–2001.

Table 10. Migrant Student Graduation Rates, 2002-2003 to 2006-2007

02–03	03–04	04–05	05–06	06–07
72.3	76.5	71.8	56.0	46.2

Source: PEIMS

An alternative definition of graduation rate is used in TEA’s Performance Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS), and these data are shown in **Table 11**. That formula is based on graduation rate for the cohort of students who were enrolled in grade 9 and progressed through to grade 12 in the reporting year. This is a more rigorous definition than the one used to generate the values in Table 11, and the reported graduation rate in the 2008 PBMAS report was 30.4% for migrant students. Note that this measure is unavailable for years prior to 2005–2006.

Table 11. Migrant Student Graduation Rates, 2005-2006 to 2006-2007

02–03	03–04	04–05	05–06	06–07
-	-	-	42.5	30.4

Source: PBMAS

Also shown, in **Table 12**, is the Recommended High School Program (RHSP)/Distinguished Achievement program (DAP) graduation rate for migrant students over the same time period. This measure is one of the required indicators for migrant students under the PBMAS, and is defined as the number of migrant students who graduated with either the RHSP or DAP certification, divided by the total number of migrant graduates in that year. This rate declined from a value of 92.3% in 2005–2006 to 75.0% in 2006–2007.

Table 12. Migrant Student RHSP/DAP Graduation Rates, 2001-2002 to 2005-2006

02–03	03–04	04–05	05–06	06–07
74.3	73.5	87.5	92.3	75.0

Source: PBMAS

Finally, **Table 13** shows migrant dropout rates for the same five-year period. Dropout rate is defined using the PBMAS procedures for this indicator, i.e., total number of migrant students in grades 7–12 dropping out in a given year divided by the total number of migrant students enrolled in that year. This data reveals that the dropout rate increased to 5.1% in 2006–2007 from 3.5% in the previous year. The migrant student dropout rate has been highly variable over the past five years, but has generally been above the 2.0% state standard established under PBMAS.

Table 13. Migrant Student Dropout Rates, 2001-2002 to 2005-2006

02–03	03–04	04–05	05–06	06–07
4.1	2.2	5.3	3.5	5.1

Source: PBMAS

Conclusions

The goal of the Migrant Education Program (MEP) in HISD is to support high quality and comprehensive educational programs for migrant children to help reduce the educational disruptions and other problems that result from repeated moves. Demographic data for the 579 eligible migrant students identified for the 2007–

2008 school year show that the majority of the migrant students were Hispanic, at-risk for dropping out of school, economically disadvantaged, served by Title I program, and LEP, with 91% of the latter instructed by the bilingual and ESL programs. The number of migrant students served increased from the previous year by 21%. Budget allocation for the 2007–2008 grant year was \$869,172.

The migrant staff provided two types of supplemental services for migrant students, instructional and support services. Instructional services included: Building Bridges, elementary and secondary tutorials, tuition, and provision of books and instructional materials. Support services included: school supplies, clothing and uniform vouchers, and social work/outreach/advocacy. The migrant recruitment specialist and community liaison reported that during the 2007–2008 school year, all supplemental services for migrant students increased except for one.

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) results for spring 2008 revealed that at both the K–2 and 3–12 grade levels, migrant LEP students reached the Advanced High English proficiency level at rates which exceeded the AMAO standards.

Comparison of migrant students English TAKS percent passing to HISD districtwide figures revealed that migrant students had lower passing rates at most grade levels in all subjects. In reading, migrant passing rates were lower than the district average in all grades. Migrant students' Spanish TAKS percent passing results were generally higher than those for the English TAKS. Both English and Spanish TAKS passing rates for migrants exceeded PBMAS standards in all areas tested.

Overall Stanford scores for migrant students showed a slight decline in NCEs from 2006–2007 to 2007–2008 in reading, but no change for mathematics or language. Performance was still below grade level in reading and language. Migrant students Aprenda NCE scores were well above grade level in reading, mathematics, and language for all grades tested.

The overall graduation rate for migrant students appears to be on a downward trend, with

declines from 2005–2006 to 2006–2007 in two different measures of graduation rate. The majority of migrant students who do graduate finish with either an RHSP or DAP degree. Lastly, the dropout rate for 2006–2007 showed an increase from the previous year to 5.1%.

Recommendations

1. The migrant program is not able to fully utilize all staff members available to assist in recruitment and identification of migrant students and families. Certification of eligible (COE) migrant families is a time-consuming process that requires documentation of the family member's spoken word without edit. This process cannot be shortened or condensed, since TEA conducts annual audits. Previously, it was suggested that the migrant program seek to hire part-time recruiters to assist the recruiters and lead recruiters. This has not proven possible, mostly due to budgeting constraints. As an alternative, the migrant program should expand their efforts at cross-training available staff as recruiters. More difficult COE cases could remain assigned to the full-time recruiters. However, some of the recruitment and identification workload could be shifted to staff who are already on the payroll, if these individuals received adequate training and field experience. This process may be difficult, and there are indications that available training resources have proven inadequate in the past. Given the potential benefits from cross-training staff for recruitment and screening, it is recommended that the program fully explore this option.
2. Efforts should be made to increase the number of community liaisons working for the migrant education program. At one point, there were as many as four community liaisons assigned to the MEP, whereas currently there is only one. Community liaisons allow for frequent direct contact with migrant families and students. This could easily be used to follow up with students who have

dropped out or who may be at risk of dropping out. The MEP and district should explore ways of increasing the number of community liaisons assigned to the program.

3. Dropout and graduation rates continue to be problem areas for migrant students. Before a student has dropped out, there are a number of actions that can and should be taken in order to prevent the dropout from occurring. MEP staff already engage in some of these, but there are other steps that should be considered. Areas where the MEP should either begin or step up their activities include: (a) identifying migrant students at risk of dropping out by checking attendance records and lists of students failing two or more classes; (b) increase parental involvement, including promotion of “contracts” between students and their parents covering school attendance, studying, and discipline; and (c) offer more balanced options for potential dropouts and students who wish to leave early, including credit-by-exam, English-proficiency plus GED, or transfer to an alternative school (e.g., Liberty High School, REACH High School, Leader’s Academy).
4. There are also steps that can be taken after a student dropout has occurred. Again, MEP staff have been engaging in some of these but there is room for improvement in efficiency. For example, each fall a list of all students who have left school is made available (“PEIMS leaver file”) and potential dropouts can be identified from this. These students are then contacted by MEP staff in

order to try and get them back into the school system. However, this list is currently searched through manually, and at approximately 500 pages, this is a time-consuming process. A simple recommendation is that the MEP make use of the HISD Research Department to identify potential dropouts, which would greatly speed up this step.

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APPENDIX A TAKS & TELPAS Standards

TAKS standards in reading/ELA, mathematics, writing, science, and social studies, 2006 Through 2008 ^a

	2006	2007	2008
Reading/ELA	60%	65%	70%
Mathematics	40%	45%	50%
Writing	60%	65%	65%
Science	35%	40%	45%
Social Studies	60%	65%	65%

^a State standards for a rating of Academically Acceptable are shown.

TELPAS AMAO standards in Yearly Progress and Attainment, 2006 to 2008

	2006	2007	2008
AMAO 1: Yearly Progress (K-2)	15%	17%	n/a ^a
AMAO 1: Yearly Progress (3-12)	42%	44%	n/a ^a
AMAO 2: Attainment (K-2)	2.0%	2.5%	2.5%
AMAO 2: Attainment (3-12) Method 1	25.5%	26%	25%
AMAO 2: Attainment (3-12) Method 2	42%	44%	40%

^a Yearly progress not reported in 2008.

