

Giving Migrant Students An Opportunity To Learn



Developed by National Association of State Directors Migrant Educators

Distributed by National Association of Migrant Educators

N A S D M E

National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education

Dear Fellow Educators:

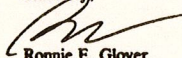
It is with great pride that I submit to you this landmark publication. We are proud that the children of migratory farmworkers and fishermen repeatedly have demonstrated that they can fulfill our highest expectations. They possess a drive and willingness to work hard for education, often under the most difficult of circumstances.

We are grateful that migrant children have far more opportunities for a meaningful education today than in decades past. But ensuring that migrant children consistently receive a full opportunity for a quality education is a constant challenge. The nation's commitment to high academic standards for all students provides us a chance to share with you what we have learned about the special needs of these children.

As the schools in your state and your district develop plans for enabling all students to meet high standards, we hope you will find these guidelines helpful in formulating programs and policies that ensure that migrant children--and all other children-- have a genuine opportunity to learn what will be expected of them.

My sincere thanks to the NASDME Equity/Opportunity Committee, co-chaired by my colleagues Angela Branz-Spall and Cvieta Sheridan, for so admirably carrying out this task. Special thanks to the "outsiders," those not directly involved in Migrant Education, who made such invaluable contributions-- particularly Susan Duron, Roger Rosenthal and Maria Garza. And our undying gratitude to John Dominguez and the N.A.M.E. Board of Directors for making it possible to reproduce and distribute the publication.

Sincerely,



Ronnie E. Glover
President

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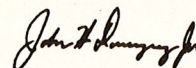
Dear Friend:

On behalf of all members of N.A.M.E., the nation's only grassroots organization of Migrant Education practitioners, let me offer you a sincere invitation to use this book as a guide to improving educational opportunities for migrant children. We heartily commend Mr. Glover for the foresight to address the need for defining the parameters that assure these students the opportunity to learn.

N.A.M.E. is honored to make possible the distribution of this important publication to policymakers and leading educators in every state. We are highly pleased that two members of our Board of Directors played an active role in its creation: our Treasurer, Al Wright, and our Eastern Stream Representative, Vidal A. "Vic" Rivera. We congratulate all the participants in the project.

N.A.M.E. fervently believes that migrant children, given the opportunity, can meet expectations as high as educators hold for any other students. We earnestly hope this publication will improve the capacity of all educators for providing those opportunities.

Yours very truly,



John Dominguez

Opportunity-to-Learn Standards for Migrant Students

The intent of the Goals 2000 Educate America Act is to improve the quality of **all** of America's schools for **all** of America's students. Signed into law by President Clinton in the spring of 1994, Goals 2000 urges every state to establish challenging academic standards for all children as a basis for accomplishing eight national education goals. Fundamental to Goals 2000 is the development of content standards and student performance standards that describe what all students should know and be able to do.

Goals 2000 establishes a National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC) to set criteria for certifying voluntary national standards for curriculum **content** (the broad knowledge and skills students should acquire in subject areas), pupil **performance** (identifying the different levels of achievement of the content standards that students should exhibit), and **opportunity to learn** (defining the resources and services needed to give students an opportunity to meet performance standards).

Well informed educators believe that "all children can learn," given the opportunity. This belief forms an essential tenet of the Opportunity-to-Learn standards described by the Council of Chief State School Officers as:

"circumstances and conditions provided to ensure that each student has the quality of personnel, courses, curriculum, materials, technologies, instructional time, working space, financing, procedures for placement, provisions for special aid, and other services necessary to achieve content and student performance standards."

Opportunity-to-Learn standards have thus emerged as a viable means of assisting schools and states in examining the adequacy of their planning, allocation of resources, and the development of meaningful educational programs.

This document provides a guide for educational policy makers to use in making sound educational decisions that affect the future of this nation's migrant children. It is designed to:

- 1) highlight the special considerations to take into account regarding the education of migrant children;
- 2) provide a systematic way of responding to the diverse needs of America's migrant children;
- 3) offer insights into the very real struggles arising from the demanding, mobile lifestyle of migrant children; and
- 4) assist schools, districts, and states in strategically planning reform strategies with the education of all children in mind.

The first section of this publication begins with **María's Story: Just Like Me**—the story of a former migrant student that provides us with some insights into the migrant lifestyle and the educational challenges that result. Following is **Lessons from María's Story** in which each of five lessons from María's story are highlighted. Each of the five lessons provides the basis for the last section, **Opportunity-to-Learn Standards**. As states continue to develop and implement reform strategies, this publication may be used as a resource to help focus attention on an often overlooked population...migrant children.

María's Story:

“ . . . Just Like Me ”



By María Garza

No one can fully appreciate the barriers encountered by migrant children in the pursuit of an education unless one experiences them through the eyes of such a child. María Garza is now a successful 34 year old woman, the mother of three children, and the wife of an official in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. But a little over two decades ago, she was an apprehensive 10 year old entering a new school in a new community. The experiences she so vividly recalls are lived again every school day by thousands of migrant children.

It is Mid-January, 1972, in Homestead, Florida. Holding my mother's hand, I enter the registration office at the elementary school. They want academic records from my previous schools.

"La Villa, Texas," my mother responds, adding that she has my school records.

Immunization records are required, they say. My mother attempts to explain that we have been on the road for a week. They refer us to the migrant clinic somewhere in the county.

The next day, along with several hundred other migrant children, I wait for the school bus at the entrance to the labor camp. Our families had left for work very early - I still remember it was dark.

My first day of school I have a mixture of feelings, both fear and excitement. But I believe it is just a matter of time before my teacher will select me as the smartest kid in the class. I had completed elementary school in Mexico, and this was fifth grade. I could do square root equations, and I had won many regional academic competitions for my school. I was even "La Abanderada" (honor student) at my school.

As we arrive at the elementary school, the first thing I see is the long coral rock wall that divides the portable classrooms where migrant children go to class from the rest of the school. When I enter the portable and meet the teacher, I realize that she speaks no Spanish. I speak no English. She assigns me to a seat in the back of the room and asks other migrant children to translate the subject matter. Later in the day she hands me a stack of preschool drawings and a box of crayons.

It is mid-April, and the migrant camp is almost empty. The families have left to follow the crops. We are leaving, too. Our next stop is Ruskin, Florida. My teacher had never noticed that I was smart, that I could solve square root equations, that geography was my favorite subject, or that I had acquired a good understanding of the English language.

Well, maybe next time

It is the first week of May.

Holding my mother's hand, I enter the school's registration office in Ruskin. They want records from my previous school. They need records of immunizations and grade level. My mother attempts to explain that we have lived in our truck for the past two weeks and can't locate such documents. We are referred to the County's Health Department for immunizations.

I am placed in the fourth grade. I'm not sure why. I hope that maybe this teacher will notice that I can do regular work. But I'm assigned to the last chair in the back of the classroom and given a stack of worksheets to color . . .



It is mid-June. Again we are packing our belongings. We are following the crops to Charleston, South Carolina. As soon as we arrive, we are told that school officials are very tough, and they don't want any children in the fields. Once again holding my mother's hand, I enter the school registration office. Same questions, no records, more shots.

My mother asks if it is dangerous to administer so many immunizations to a child in such a short period of time. The school officials are strict and tough. They demand written proof of immunizations. But we had no records.

In the new classroom, I draw the usual seating assignment and the usual academic assignment.

It is the end of July. We must pack our belongings and follow the crops to Alabama.

I am sure the same story has repeated itself over and over again with the same results for hundreds of thousands of other migrant children, children . . . just like me.

Lessons From María's Story

What does María Garza's autobiographical vignette - a pattern repeated for many years and in many different school environments - say about being a migrant farmworker's child in the United States?

Beyond the vivid depiction of some of the hardships associated with the migrant lifestyle, María provides some very important lessons for educators and policy makers. These are lessons that are immediately applicable to the development of challenging academic standards for all children, as highlighted by Goals 2000. To effect systemic reform that enables all children to attain high standards, decisionmakers must adopt measures that ensure that all have the opportunity to learn challenging subject matter. María's story illustrates the basic principles that apply to Opportunity-to-Learn standards for all children, including migrant children.

1

The drive for excellence must be accompanied by a commitment to equity; migrant students must be provided access to all programs and services from which they may benefit.

María's access to education, a fundamental right of all children, was delayed until she obtained a repeated immunization; once admitted to school she was denied access to meaningful instruction because the schools she attended lacked the capacity to bridge the language gap. Every school and every educator in whose care a child is placed shares the responsibility for his or her education. Because migrant children often enroll at atypical times, they may be denied access to educational and extracurricular programs available to other children.

2

Meeting the educational needs of migrant students requires extraordinary management, coordination, and collaboration efforts that may span boundaries and borders.

María, a previously successful, high-achieving student, was not recognized for her educational accomplishments when she enrolled in various schools during her family's migrations. Obtaining and utilizing essential information about students' educational progress is a challenging task for schools enrolling migrant students. All the schools attended by migrant children bear a collective responsibility for assuring that the fragments of their education blend into a coherent whole. This necessitates close coordination in the planning, delivery, and follow-up of services.

3

Administrators, teachers, and staff must hold *high expectations* and maintain *positive attitudes* that support the performance and achievement of migrant students.

María was dismayed that the “teacher had never noticed” that she was smart. How much better if the teacher had conveyed to María that she expected her to do well! Educators and policy makers must accept that high standards for all children include migrant children. They must also recognize that migrant students, provided the appropriate opportunities, can and will succeed. Positive attitudes and positive school atmosphere are essential for any student’s success in school. Every educator must let migrant children know that they are valued members of the school community, that their potential is unlimited, and that the school will provide the assistance to ensure their success.

**4**

A *creative, optimal learning environment* is key to the success of migrant students in school.

María and thousands of other migrant students have demonstrated that there is nothing inherent about being a migrant that prevents them from being successful in school and in the workplace. All they needed is an opportunity to learn. However, it is the responsibility of the school to design and implement creative programs that utilize best teaching practices in optimal learning environments.

These environments must take into consideration the fact that mobility has likely resulted in migrant students’ not being exposed to a single, sequentially taught curriculum; that coursework toward graduation might be fragmented; and that extraordinary efforts at coordination and collaboration must be undertaken for migrant students to achieve success in school. Migrant children need to be a part of, not set apart from, the general student body, but their special needs may call for a diversity of instructional and administrative strategies.

5

The establishment and maintenance of *structures to support the success of migrant students* is critical.

Dependable support mechanisms are needed to ensure the success of migrant children in school. Strong school-home-community partnerships have proven to be very effective. Human and fiscal resources need to be identified and capitalized upon to address health, dental, nutritional, and family support needs. Staff development is key to helping school decisionmakers understand the educational and social issues related to the education of migrant students, choose the tools to properly assess student needs, and plan and implement programs to meet those needs.

Standard 1:

Equitable Access To Educational Opportunities

Migrant students must adjust frequently to new educational surroundings; different standards; and a variety of curricula, instructors, and assessments. The principle of equity demands that their equal access to services be ensured. The education of migrant students can become a montage of unsynchronized educational efforts by schools and states unless there is close ongoing coordination among the schools attended by the migrant student. Policy makers must understand the major forces and the subtle nuances that affect migrant children. With this knowledge, they can then develop appropriate educational programs. Providing equitable access to all educational programs and services is fundamental. Because equal access in and of itself may not suffice in ensuring that migrant children have an opportunity to learn, a commitment is needed to make alternative educational strategies available that are specifically targeted to migrant students. Opportunities to learn and meet challenging standards for migrant students must be scaled appropriately. It will require "more than equal" services and commitment to ensure that migrant students realize equity in the attainment of performance standards set for all students. This concept underlies many of the suggestions for implementation embedded in this publication.

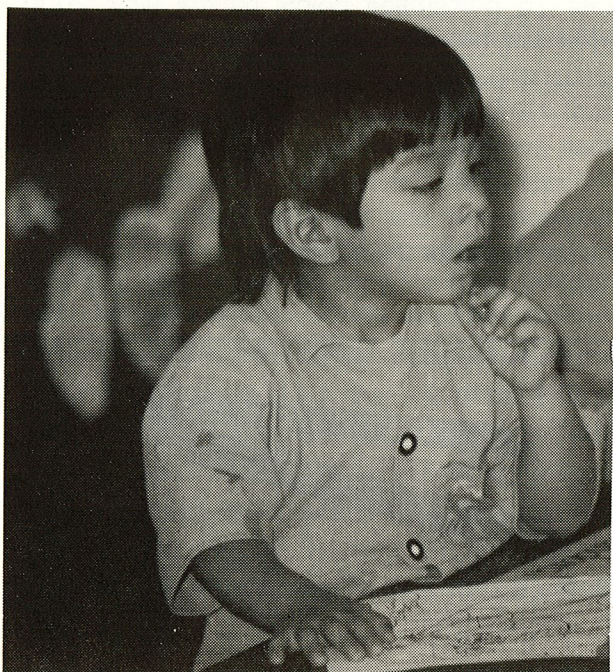
A. Access to Equitable Resources and Financing Among Schools, Districts, and States

Migrant families have no control over the level of state and local support for the various schools in which their children enroll in the course of the family's migrations, and for the most part, neither do the schools. Schools in one state are not answerable to the standards of another state for their financing, with resources varying dramatically. However, the differences in the resources provided by different schools can have a substantial effect on student performance. Educators assessing migrant student achievement in a school offering appropriate resources must be cognizant that inadequate resources in a previous school could have deprived that student of the opportunity to learn. While the Migrant Education Program would seem to be a means of compensating for inadequate resources, there are inequities in the resources with migrant funds being distributed

based on a formula that directs more funds toward states with above-average financing, and fewer funds to those with below-average financing.

B. Access to Technology

To prepare for a future role in a technological society, migrant students—like all students—need access to technology both as a tool for learning and as an object of learning. Telecommunications technology, distance learning, and computers can break the traditional barriers encountered by rural and/or mobile, migrant students and provide many opportunities to develop and enhance skills and knowledge. Though schools may not be able to offset the inherent advantage gained by children who have access to computer technology in their homes, they can take steps to ensure that migrant children have opportunities to acquire basic computer and information technology skills. Beyond



that, schools that are diligent in searching out ways for technology to help overcome the disadvantages resulting from the migrant lifestyle, can help migrant students learn subject matter that was missed because of late enrollment or enable migrant students to take courses in sequence as they move.

C. Access to Linguistically Appropriate Instruction

Migrant children possess a wide spectrum of English language proficiency, ranging from no English at all to full fluency. Some are native English speakers - in fact, less than one-third of migrant students in the early 1990's were born outside the United States. A considerable majority of students come from homes in which the native language is other than English. Many migrant students come to school with some obvious knowledge of English, but they may lack the proficiency to understand and express complex ideas.

All too often, children whose home language is not English receive instruction only in English and do not become fully proficient in either language. A migrant child may well be

ready to learn in the native language even if he or she possesses little or no proficiency in English. English language skills should be taught concurrently while other developmental skills are acquired.

To ensure that migrant children are ready to learn - or have the opportunity to learn - schools may have to adapt programs, hire bilingual personnel, and take other steps to provide linguistically and developmentally appropriate instruction. Limited English proficient children are legally entitled to instruction that is linguistically appropriate for them. Schools that are unable to provide culturally and developmentally appropriate programs will create significant barriers to achievement for many migrant children.

D. Access to Developmentally Appropriate Early Childhood Education Programs

If migrant children are to be ready to learn when they enter school, their need for good early childhood education programs is much greater than that of families not affected by poverty, mobility, and the cultural isolation of migrancy. Yet, migrant children entering kindergarten typically are less likely to have received appropriate preschool services than have their less mobile peers.

About one-third of all migrant children who attend kindergarten are either retained or placed in a "transition class" instead of being promoted to first grade. The consequences of such treatment, even though often well-intentioned, is clearly injurious to migrant children. They may find themselves placed in low ability or remedial tracks even though they may only be limited in English language proficiency. For migrant children to really have an opportunity to learn, it is imperative that schools find alternatives to retention in kindergarten and first grade.

The best early childhood programs work in partnership with parents. Parents need to feel that they can meet the basic needs of their children for safety, food, emotional support, and health care. Schools can affirm parents' primary role as partners in their children's education. Successful programs do not conflict with

Opportunity-To-Learn Standards

parental responsibilities, but instead empower and support families.

E. Access to Challenging Curriculum and Quality Instruction

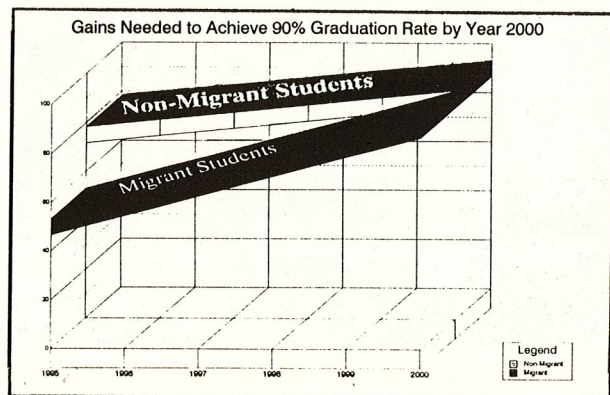
The value of a challenging curriculum cannot be overestimated. Creative, optimal learning environments are the prerequisite to quality instruction in early childhood, elementary, middle school, and high school programs. Migrant children, because of their mobility, have substantial gaps in their curriculum content. Content coverage, content exposure, and content emphasis vary from district to district, region to region, and state to state. Mobility results in students' exposure to various curricula, variations in school schedules, days lost in transit, and limited lengths of stay that a student may have had in a particular school.

In a recent report by the National Committee on Time and Learning (NCTL) called *Prisoners of Time*, it was stated that only 41% of the school day is spent on core academics.[4] Due to their mobility, it is reasonable to assume that migrant children would have substantially less time on task, and that they would likely be deprived of adequate content and depth of coverage. The cumulative effect of a patchwork of incomplete learning opportunities is to widen the gap between performance and expectations. Such a gap will have a negative impact on migrant students' school achievement and graduation rate.

F. Accommodating Unique Needs of Migrant Children in Policies, Programs, Procedures, and School Services

The challenge of applying standards to migrant children in a genuinely equitable manner can best be illustrated by considering the national goal for high school graduation: a 90 percent graduation rate by the start of the 21st century. If, in the 1994-95 school year, the overall graduation rate for all students is 75 percent, America's schools are responsible for a graduation rate

increase of three percent each year to raise the rate 15 percentage points by the year 2000. However, because the graduation rate for migrant students has been about 50 percent, for migrant students to achieve the national educational goal, their graduation rate must be *more than double* the rate of the non-migrant population each year between now and the year 2000. The exhibit below illustrates this challenge.



In reviewing and assessing district and school policies, programs, procedures, and school services, administrators and policy makers should identify the institutional barriers that may block migrant students from full participation in educational and extracurricular activities.

To ensure that migrant children have an opportunity to benefit from programs and services available to all students, schools must be flexible with respect to deadlines and scheduling. Many secondary migrant students frequently have to help their families work, especially during the growing and harvest seasons when migrant families have to maximize their earning opportunities. For such students, flexible hours of school could be arranged so that they can meet both their work obligations as well as fully participate in school. Evening, weekend, and non-site-based programs have been very successful in the past in providing migrant youth with access to credit-bearing opportunities leading to high school graduation.

Further, policies and procedures should be established that actively encourage migrant student participation in school and community activities for however long they are enrolled in a school or reside in a school district.

Standard 2:

Management, Coordination, and Collaboration

When school staff are more informed, they are better prepared to plan educational programs; provide high quality instruction; assess outcomes; and be accountable to local, state, and federal decisionmakers. For programs serving migrant students, coordination and collaboration are critical to achieving these important objectives. To provide the optimal opportunities to learn, contact must be initiated with each migrant student's previous school/instructional staff and with the new school once the student leaves. This collaborative process may involve telephone calls, obtaining the services of a translator or interpreter, or repeated written or facsimile communications. All of the schools attended by the migrant child bear a collective responsibility for assuring that each educational component blends into a cohesive whole.

A. Shared Responsibility for the Instruction of Migrant Students Attending School in More Than One District or State

Schools that share migrant students must communicate and coordinate with one another. This can take the form of establishing compacts and agreements, ensuring curricular continuity, transferring information and credits, and jointly monitoring student progress. Ideally, shared responsibility would result in joint planning, joint implementation of programs, and joint assessment. In locations where students reside only for a brief duration, schools should be willing to plan instruction around the curriculum standards and requirements, including test results obtained from the homebase school.

For secondary students to achieve high school graduation, coordination and flexibility are especially important. Many mobile migrant students lose credit for schoolwork successfully completed when they leave school before the end of a term. Schools that enroll migrant students should have a procedure for credit accrual and partial credit award. In the same manner, schools from which migrant students plan to graduate must also be flexible and open in the acceptance of full and partial credits earned in

other schools. *Because migrant students are expected to meet the graduation requirements of the state in which they intend to graduate, schools in other states that provide a portion of their education must be willing to schedule students in appropriate courses that count toward their graduation requirements.*

B. Shared Responsibility for the Assessment of Migrant Students Attending School in More Than One District or State

States need to communicate with one another regarding the preparation of students who are faced with competency test requirements. Because mobile students are often migrating out of their homebase states during the time that competency-based tests are being administered, they have less exposure to the tests and fewer opportunities to prepare for, and to take, tests. States should communicate and coordinate to provide test preparation opportunities. Further, states that require all of their students to successfully pass competency tests as a condition to graduate, need to provide opportunities for migrant students to take tests out-of-state.



Currently, Texas provides migrant students with the opportunity to take the state competency test (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills-TAAS) while they temporarily reside in other states during the summer months. This is an example of good coordination and flexibility to accommodate migrant student needs. Many states have entered into an agreement with Texas to provide test preparation, instructional continuity, and testing.

Migrant students must be included in school testing programs, as appropriate. However, assessment outcomes should be disaggregated to allow comparisons between migrant students and other special and general student populations. The data on any special population can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction for that group. In addition to test data, educators must also compile and analyze data that impacts each subpopulation's opportunity to learn. Such data include days present and absent, English language proficiency, and special instructional and support services provided for migrant students.

C. Managing Data for Informed Decisionmaking

The critical first step in assuring migrant children the opportunity to learn is the act of enrolling them in school. As the story of María illustrated, this is not always a direct process. All children have a right to a free public education - even if they reside in a community for a short period of time - a right that court decisions have recently amplified. Although the lack of information or documentation from a previous school may make it more difficult for the school to identify the child's needs and place him or her in appropriate programs, a school cannot legally bar a child from school. However, in the absence of proof of immunization, a child's right to enter school cannot supersede the compelling public health concern for ensuring that all children have up-to-date immunizations. María, who had been immunized but had no proof, was referred to a health clinic for more shots, producing two negative consequences. First was the delay of a full day in starting school; the second was the uncertain effect on her health of multiple immunizations.

A school is much better positioned to give migrant children an opportunity to learn if it has access to information about the child. For nearly two decades, critical information that helps schools enroll migrant children and plan appropriate educational programs has been available through a national computer database that contains information on about one million migrant students.

The new Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) calls for states to have a means in place to transfer student records. Schools will have to rely on parental interviews and contacts with previous schools to obtain essential information. Likewise, when migrant children leave, schools must do whatever they can to see that appropriate information is forwarded to the next school, whether through a national or state database or through other established procedures.

Standard 3:

High Expectations and Positive Attitudes

It is the responsibility of educators to convey to migrant children the expectation and belief that they will succeed in school and that the school will provide all the necessary assistance to ensure their success. Instructional staff and administrators must let all migrant students know that they are highly valued members of the school and that their potential is unlimited. At the same time, it is important for teachers to convey that they expect nothing less than students' very best efforts. Teachers must acknowledge that high expectations, positive attitudes, and a positive school atmosphere are all essential to students' success in school regardless of primary language, cultural or ethnic origin, gender, or handicapping condition.

A. Positive Learning Environment

For any of its students to succeed, a school must provide a secure, comfortable, child-friendly environment that promotes a sense of belonging and well-being. For migrant students, there is a critical additional component: they must feel that they are welcome, that they will not be treated differently from other students, and that the school staff understand and address their educational needs. It is important that teachers and administrators set a positive example for all the children in the school by welcoming migrant children and easing their transition into the new school. One strategy for helping migrant students be a real part of their new school, for however long they are to be enrolled, is to ensure that they are invited to participate in school clubs, sports, theatricals, and other activities.

B. High Expectations and Access to Challenging Courses

Good schools and quality teachers have high expectations for all students. Migrant students in all regions of the nation have demon-

strated a vast potential to excel in school. Migrant students can benefit from access to advanced placement courses, ACT and SAT testing, gifted and talented classes, and other opportunities available to the general student population. Despite the disadvantages accruing from their lifestyle, migrant students benefit from a strong work ethic and typically strong family ties. Given the opportunity, they can succeed within the most challenging of academic environments.

C. Heterogeneous Grouping

Heterogeneous grouping practices contribute to improved student achievement by providing an opportunity for students of varying abilities to interact. Such practices promote positive personal relationships and are beneficial in fostering both self-esteem and positive student attitudes toward school and peers. For migrant children who are routinely isolated from the mainstream community because of their mobile lifestyle, it is imperative that schools avoid policies that further separate them from their non-mobile peers.



D. Attitude Toward Learning, School, and Self

While educators strive to maintain positive feelings and attitudes toward all children, they must appreciate that many children lack confidence in themselves and in their ability to succeed in school. Migrant children often do not live in environments that foster readiness for school. Typically, students from middle and upper income homes have resource-rich environments to supplement school instruction. Migrant children are aware that their non-

migrant peers may have more resources at their disposal. This cognizance may contribute to negative attitudes toward school that are transferred as students move from school to school.

The challenge to teachers and all other school personnel is to help migrant children feel just as welcome and just as worthy as any other child. Fortunately, most teachers subscribe to this philosophy as a matter of course. Nevertheless, they can be helped by having an increased awareness of the different cultural and lifestyle characteristics of migrant children.

Standard 4:
**Creative, Optimal
Learning Environment**

Providing migrant students with learning environments that are culturally and personally familiar results in increased school success. Research indicates that the most creative, optimal learning environments are characterized by authentic, holistic, challenging, developmental, experiential, and reflective child-centered environments. Quality teaching staff whose competencies increase migrant students' opportunity to learn and their use of appropriate teaching techniques and strategies are essential to student success.

A. Quality Teaching Staff

Schools that expect to enroll migrant students must ensure that teachers possess appropriate instructional competencies. This can be accomplished by focused staff development activities. Teachers should be given the opportunity to participate in training on the most appropriate instructional approaches for the various students they may be expected to teach.

Teachers need a solid grasp of content area and a wealth of strategies for conveying knowledge to a diverse student population. They must be prepared to creatively teach content so that all students have an opportunity to learn to think critically and to creatively solve problems. Since many migrant students are limited in English language proficiency, staff development and instructional support programs must address how to alleviate the challenges these students face when interacting with non-bilingual students and staff members. Research and best practices must be disseminated and shared, formal and informal mentoring needs to be encouraged, and demonstration teaching and observations should be facilitated. A teacher who is confident in his or her abilities will model this positive attitude toward students.

**B. Use of Appropriate Teaching
Techniques and Strategies**

Teaching strategies must use a variety of approaches that are appropriate to students' learning styles, cognitive and language proficiency levels, and cultural backgrounds. The encouragement of active and collaborative learning will result in creating a positive learning environment for all students, including the most mobile.

Effective instruction employs a great deal of interaction between teacher and student and allows for the continuous monitoring of student progress, ongoing feedback, and increased individualization. The most effective teaching strategies include small group activities, peer- and cross-age tutoring, reflective teaching, and demonstrations. Language minority children thrive in such optimal learning environments. However, mobile migrant children rarely encounter schools that provide an ethnically-relevant curriculum that reflects the migrant lifestyle. For most schools this would be difficult to achieve, but every school has an obligation to create a sense of belonging for all its students, including migrant children. Providing students with environments that are culturally and personally familiar results in increased school success.

C. Curriculum/Test Alignment

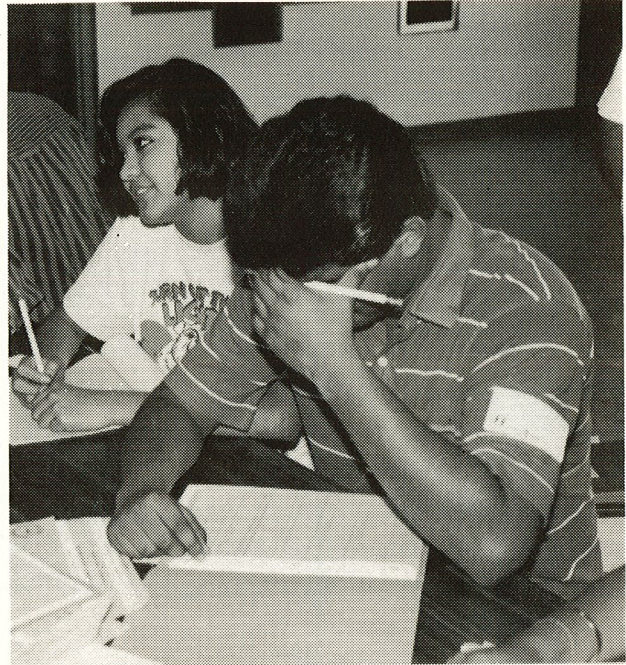
The fundamental principle of assessment is that students can be expected to demonstrate achievement mastery only of the content they have been taught. They probably will not be able to master the content or perform well on tests if the content has not been taught. Assessments may then be interpreted as showing that the student has not met the standard, but *what has really happened is that the student has not been provided an opportunity to learn the curriculum content.* In general, but especially with the drive for higher standards and more demanding curricula, educators must take great pains to ensure that tests overlap with curriculum content.

Consideration needs to be given to the fact that migrant students may not have had exposure to curricular content that they have missed due to their mobile lifestyles. With migrant students more likely to miss days of school because of work, travel, health problems, or family needs, they are also more likely to have missed out on some of the instruction. Additionally, if their English is limited and they were instructed only in English, failure to master content may be due to language rather than lack of subject matter mastery.

D. Alternative Outcome Measures

The reliance on norm-referenced standardized achievement test scores as a measure of school or student success has been heavily criticized. Many studies have indicated that minority students do not do well on standardized tests, due to the cultural and linguistic biases in the test instruments and in the administration procedures.

With the adoption of challenging academic standards, state- and locally-developed



assessments have emerged as a primary means of assessment. For many students, especially language minority students, such alternatives are essential. One such strategy to help ensure equal access to opportunities is to implement portfolio assessment. It is also wise to consider the establishment of desired outcomes for migrant students and some easily identifiable benchmarks, such as credit accrual, promotion rates, and graduation rates. In addition, migrant students could carry samples of their work with them as they change schools to demonstrate to their next teachers their competencies and previous accomplishments.

Whatever assessment measures are used, educators must ensure that the results are interpreted accurately. Assessment results must be used proactively to improve teaching and learning rather than to penalize students by misplacing them in remedial or non-challenging courses.

Standard 5: Structures To Support Success

The identification of a support network must be undertaken to ensure that migrant students are successful in school. First and foremost, students must have access to safe, disciplined school environments that foster the nurturing and caring conditions that result in the natural resiliency of all children and youth. Equitable access to safety, health, and human services along with strong home/school/community partnerships have made a difference in the academic achievement of migrant students. Staff development is key to helping school decisionmakers understand the educational and social issues related to the education of migrant students, choose the tools to properly assess student needs, and plan programs to meet those needs.

A. Equitable Support Through Health, Safety, Nutrition, and Human Services

Migrant families are vulnerable to a number of health problems arising from their lifestyle. For example, frequent exposure to toxic chemicals and struggling with a level of income that often excludes them from health, mental health, and medical services other than those available through public clinics has resulted in serious health problems.

Health, dental, and nutritional deficiencies and chronic health problems are more likely to occur in migrant children than among most other special populations. Such problems present significant barriers to a successful school experience, and must be addressed in an appropriate manner.

Physical health is clearly linked to children's ability to learn. Developmental delays, hearing or vision impairments, emotional difficulties, or learning problems often result from inadequate support for health development. Children's ability to concentrate is diminished when they are tired, hungry, uncomfortable, or under stress due to new surroundings and frequent moves. Children in poor health miss school more frequently in order to get medical

attention or stay home.

Migrant children and their parents have limited access to health care. Many farmworker communities are so isolated from the general community that health services are not readily available. The migrant health centers across the country are able to provide care to less than 20 percent of migrant workers and their families.

Likewise, migrant students and their families must have access to local human services to assist them in meeting other basic necessities of living. Among services needed by migrant fami-



Opportunity-To-Learn Standards

lies are: food, clothing, shelter, translation, child care, legal aid, advocacy, training, transportation, crisis intervention, financial assistance, and social services such as family counseling. Comprehensive services must be available so that the family environment can be stabilized and education can occur. Certainly, a holistic approach serving the needs of the family can better prepare the migrant student to fully participate in learning opportunities.

Awareness of the local human services system must have as its central focus the migrant family and their needs and goals. From this central focus, collaborations can be made with other resources in the community and partnerships can grow.

B. Access to Home/School/Community Partnerships

Research has repeatedly shown the importance of home/school/community involvement to ensure student success. Parents' involvement in education has been found to compensate partially for the lack of other family resources and to help more migrant children succeed. Parent involvement is more than an event...it is a process of families and schools working together for students' success. Home/school/community partnerships should be a well organized, highly structured, goal-oriented program that results in positive growth for the migrant student.

Migrant students should be given the same opportunity to share in school resources and school activities as other students, even though they arrive well after the start of school and may leave well before it is over. Migrant students must be afforded a chance to benefit from whatever special programs or services are available to the student body in general, and for their families to benefit from the services available to the community-at-large.

Information regarding community resources should be easily accessible to school personnel to allow them to initiate linkages and build a referral network as needed for problem

solving. Thus, they may enlist the support of other agencies in examining prevailing situations that affect migrant students and in carrying out specific tasks to address individual problems. In the broader sense of home/school/community partnerships, meetings and staff consultations can be held to identify common concerns among the parties and to address possible ways to resolve them.

Among potential community agencies that could be approached to become partners with the school and parents are: social service agencies, youth agencies, social clubs, neighborhood clubs, police and fire departments, farmworker agencies, unions, child care providers, job training providers, private sector businesses, churches, and government service providers.

Both formal and informal links enable the parents and the school community to share experiences, develop mutual understanding, and work together toward common goals that make a positive impact on the quality of the opportunities for migrant students.

C. Access to Staff Development for All Staff Serving Migrant Students

As schools restructure and reinvent themselves, the needs of staff are ever changing. Years of workshops, inservice training sessions, and coursework/seminars have taught educators and staff development specialists that to be meaningful, staff development must be practical, applicable to real-live teaching and problem solving situations, and connected to educational and pedagogical initiatives.

Further, professional development for all staff serving migrant students must have a focus on the unique linguistic, sociocultural, and cognitive needs of mobile students. Effective staff development is a process that is built on good planning that aims toward gradual change as a means for improving classroom teaching practices. Ongoing role model and peer coaching that provides opportunities for demonstration behavior and feedback in a "safe" environment is highly desirable.

Opportunity to Learn Standards for Migrant Students

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