

INTERSTATE MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

PORTABLE ASSISTED STUDY SEQUENCE Secondary Credit Accrual Program A Drop-out Prevention Model¹

Problem: The child can't, won't, or is not permitted to attend school, but only needs a credit or two to graduate. The child is an agricultural migrant, is sick or pregnant, or has been suspended or expelled. None of the above are reasons for denying the student the diploma that he or she will need to open other doors to social and economic security.

Solution: Give the student *Course in a Box!* Depending on the subject credit needed, all the materials necessary are pre-packaged, with appropriate self-helps, quizzes and tests, so that the student may study at home during whatever time is available. It is self-paced and help is available, depending on local arrangements, either by phone or by coming to the school for brief consultation or tutorial sessions during or after hours. The content is superior to that contained in the usual GED preparation and is available to younger students. Many students have used it successfully to achieve high school graduation who would have found it impossible to do otherwise. Depending on the school and the student's motivation, it may be possible to accelerate graduation, although that is not the original intent.

Recently, a grant for \$205,000 was awarded to Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District for the development and dissemination¹ of these materials to migrant students. TBAISD will produce several hundred copies of four to six subjects. Present plans call for units in History, Math, Science, Government and English. Other states have developed similar packages and the coordinated national effort is known by the acronym PASS for Portable Assisted Study System.

HISTORY OF PASS

PASS originated in California in 1978 as part of the Secondary School Migrant Dropout Prevention Program. It was designed to allow migrant high school students to earn credits through the completion of self-directed semester courses as they moved with their families from one school district to another. One school district issued the credits for all PASS courses, a model that has been adopted by many other states. Migrant educators from other states soon learned of the California program and its success. Arkansas and Washington started using the program in 1981, Arizona and Oregon in 1983 and New York and Wisconsin in 1984. Twenty-five states were using the program in various degrees by the summer of 1988, ten years after its beginning.

All states are indebted to California for the development and sharing of the original PASS courses. Major and minor revisions have been made but the basic content and format have been maintained. Other states have developed additional courses. There are over forty PASS courses now available.

With PASS spreading to other states it was evident that middle school students also had unmet educational needs because they too worked in the fields and orchards. Mini PASS courses were developed in Wisconsin starting in 1985. Mini PASS is an extension of PASS for middle school students (grades 6, 7 & 8). There are twenty-six mini PASS courses.

WHEN CAN PASS BE TAKEN?

A PASS course can be taken during the school year to supplement the regular

school course offerings or it can be taken in summer programs while the student is actively engaged in agricultural or fishing employment.

HOW DOES IT OPERATE?

1. Student need for a supplementary course is assessed.
2. Student eligibility is determined.
3. Student, course, and teacher (contact person) are brought together.
4. Student works independently with teacher monitoring.
5. Student completes five unit activity books and tests for each semester course.
6. Final grade is awarded.

Often a student only needs one or two units to complete a course started in a home-base classroom. This is referred to as PASS Assist.

WHAT PASS COURSES ARE AVAILABLE?

The number of PASS courses available varies from state to state; however all states offer courses in English, Social Studies and Mathematics. There are courses in Science, Art, Study Skills and Drivers Education. Most courses are available for purchase from the producing states of; California, Michigan, Washington and Wisconsin.

Mini PASS courses are available in Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies from Michigan and Wisconsin.

WHAT IS IN A PASS PACKET?

Each semester course consists of a packet of five units of student study

activity booklets, a test for each unit, a teacher's edition or contact person manual and supplementary books or materials. Generally the packets contain everything the student needs to complete the course.

HOW ARE CREDITS AWARDED?

Credits may be issued from one school district in a state, each local district or by the migrant student's home-based school district. Course credit has been approved by various accreditation associations for secondary and post-secondary schools. Students are able to earn full or partial credit. They can make up course deficiencies or work toward graduation requirements. Students may also enroll in

courses for remediation, self-improvement and enrichment purposes.

HOW IS THE PROGRAM FUNDED?

Generally, Chapter 1 Migrant Education funds are used to support the development and distribution of the courses in each state. Courses purchased from the producing states are also paid for with migrant funds.

At present, PASS materials are available free of charge to migrant students wherever a migrant project is funded by the Office for Migrant Education, Michigan Department of Education. Students using PASS materials may be counted in membership as long as they

meet other requirements for Fourth Friday Count.

All inquiries should be directed to Ms. Jean Franco, Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, 710 S. Elmwood, Traverse City, Michigan 49684, (616) 946-6660. For more information about PASS contact: Marion D. Stiles, Michigan PASS Director, PASS Regional Office, 9534 Red Bud Trail, Berrien Springs, MI 49103, (616) 471-1139.

NOTES:

1. This text was developed by the Interstate PASS Committee; a cooperative organization of educators dedicated to assisting Secondary Migrant Students earn credits towards high school graduation.

AIDS and Hispanic People: A Threat Ignored*

By Mireya Navarro

Years after health officials identified a high incidence of AIDS among minorities in the inner city, much of the Hispanic population continues to ignore or deny the threat, say Hispanic leaders in AIDS services.

Those active in AIDS prevention work say risk groups among Hispanic people may be the toughest that they must reach. Language can be a barrier. The predominant religion forbids the use of condoms and rejects homosexual behavior, making these subjects difficult for many to discuss. Sharply defined sex roles prevent many women from taking the lead in practicing safe sex.

Now, as statistics show that minorities are suffering a rising share of newly diagnosed AIDS cases, pressure is mounting on Hispanic leaders in government business, labor, health care, the church and other fields to become visible and vocal. These voices are being sought to help meet several critical needs: alerting the infected to new drugs and therapies that prolong life; for example, lobbying for money for treatment and prevention programs, and changing attitudes that hinder an effective response to the disease.

Both Hispanic AIDS workers and the New York City Health Department say there is no time to spare.

"The Hispanic community in New York City is in terrible danger," said the City Health Commissioner, Dr. Stephen C. Joseph, "and it's kind of sleep-walking through it."

The same warning is echoed in other major cities.

In Miami, incidence of the disease is increasing at a faster rate for Hispanic residents than for other groups there.

Hispanic residents now account for 29 percent of the city's 3,140 cases, the Dade County Health Department said . . .

New York City's Health Department projects that new AIDS cases among Hispanic residents will reach 3,358 a year by 1993, more than double the number recorded in 1988. For blacks, cases are expected to nearly double, to 3,824 and for whites, the increase would be nearly 50 percent to 2,624. Hispanic New Yorkers account for 27 percent of the city's 23,066 AIDS cases, compared with 17 percent in 1982 and 22 percent in 1986. Hispanic residents represent 23 percent of New York City's population, according to 1987 city estimates.

Blacks, who account for 33 percent of the cases, also carry a disproportionate AIDS burden as the disease shifts from a primarily gay male population to the urban poor. These are mostly heterosexuals who get the virus by shar-

ing needles for intravenous drug use and who often end up transmitting it to female sex partners, and eventually to their children.

When the two ethnic groups are put together, the statistics are striking. In a city with the highest incidence of AIDS in the country, 84 percent of women with AIDS are black or Hispanic, as are 90 percent of the children with AIDS. Among Hispanic and black residents, both men and women, between the ages of 25 and 44, AIDS is the leading cause of death . . .

The Health Department projects that by 1993 the share of new AIDS cases will decline to 27 percent, from 33 percent, for white residents, but will increase to 34 percent, from 31 percent, for Hispanic residents and to 39 percent, from 36 percent, for black residents.

The Centers for Disease Control report similar trends nationally . . .

Some leaders of Hispanic groups say one reason for the slow response to the epidemic is the absence of large, established institutions that can bring people together quickly to work on a given issue. Some of those whose support is now being courted also say that AIDS is competing with other pressing problems, like housing and education. . . .

* *The New York Times*, 12/29/89