



FOR RELEASE  
July 26, 2004

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**VIRGINIA RECEIVES GRANT TO IMPROVE MIGRANT EDUCATION**

*Improving migrant education emphasized under No Child Left Behind*

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today announced that the Commonwealth of Virginia has been awarded a \$241,314 federal education grant for an interstate partnership to help migrant students improve their math skills. On behalf of Secretary Paige, Deputy Secretary of Education Gene Hickok today presented a grant check to Virginia Superintendent of Schools Jo Lynne DeMary during an event at the state Capitol in Richmond.

“Strong math skills can open doors of opportunities for students, and the goal of the *No Child Left Behind Act* is to ensure that all children—including migrant children—receive a high-quality education,” Secretary Paige said. “But migrant children face many challenges. When you combine the migratory lifestyle with language and cultural barriers, as well as poverty, these students have many hurdles to overcome. And with the right supportive services, migrant children can achieve at the same level as their peers.”

Virginia is one of eight states to receive the Migrant Education Program Consortium Incentive Grant, a two-year competitive grant for state education agencies that participate in Project MATEMATICA (Math Achievement Toward Excellence for Migrant Students and Professional Development for Teachers in Math Instruction Consortium Arrangement). The combined grant is worth more than \$1.3 million.

Project MATEMATICA addresses the special math needs of migrant children, whose education is continuously interrupted as their families move from state to state to work in the agricultural and fishing industries. The project provides professional development for teachers to strengthen their skills and services to help parents increase their involvement in their child's education.

The vast majority of migrant students who participate in the Migrant Education program are Hispanic (89 percent); one-third have limited English proficiency. The number of limited English participants has risen over the last three years, growing from 22 percent in 1998-1999 to 31 percent in 2000-2001. California, Texas and Florida account for more than half—52 percent—of the migrant student population.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* is the bipartisan landmark education reform law designed to change the culture of America's schools by closing the achievement gap among groups of students, offering more flexibility to states, giving parents more options and teaching students based on what works. Under the law's strong accountability provisions, states must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure all students achieve academically.

More information about the Migrant Education Program is available at

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/mep>.

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