

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT



**VIRGINIA MIGRANT
EDUCATION PROGRAM**
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION

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Virginia's Comprehensive Migrant Education Program Needs Assessment for 2007-2008

I. Executive Summary

As required under Sections 1304(b) and 1306(a) of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, Virginia conducted a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) for the Migrant Education Program (MEP). The process for conducting the CNA followed the proposed three-phase model provided by the United States Office of Migrant Education (OME). The first phase focused on exploring what was already known about the migrant population in Virginia, including information on the mobility, decline or increase of the migrant population, and number of students served. The second phase concentrated on gathering and analyzing data to determine the greatest needs of migrant students. Surveys were administered to migrant coordinators, recruiter/teachers, and migrant parents. In addition, test data on migrant students were collected and analyzed. The third phase focused on decision making and identifying solutions to meet the needs of Virginia's migrant children.

Due to Virginia's status as a small state (receives less than one million dollars in Title I, Part C, funding) and the small size of the migrant population, one team focused on conducting the CNA over the year and a half time period. Input was solicited from migrant coordinators and parents of migrant students.

As a result of the data analyzed for the 2007-2008 school year through the needs assessment, the following recommendations are made:

- Meet state benchmarks in reading/language arts for 2008-2009 and beyond;
- Meet state benchmarks in mathematics for 2008-2009 and beyond; and
- Meet state benchmarks for graduation for migrant students for 2008-2009 and beyond.

II. Purpose and Scope

The purpose and scope of the comprehensive needs assessment was to identify the most significant and pressing needs of Virginia's migrant students. The CNA was conducted during the 2007-2008 school year and provided an opportunity to analyze data, evaluate the MEP, determine program needs, and make recommendations to meet the needs of migrant students in Virginia.

In conducting the CNA, Virginia reviewed the national goals for migrant education and state performance targets in reading/language arts proficiency, mathematics proficiency, high school graduation/dropout rate and school readiness.

An additional purpose of conducting the CNA was to identify appropriate resources and support to meet the identified needs of migrant students. The CNA will provide the needed information to implement a Service Delivery Plan for migrant students in Virginia.

III. Background on Target Population

The CNA was conducted during the 2007-2008 school year for which there were 136 schools in Virginia that enrolled migrant students and 1,423 migrant students eligible for services. These data included 239 children ages 3 through 5, and 347 out-of-school youth. Out of the 1,423 students found to be eligible for services, 476 migrant students were identified as Priority for Services students. Out of the Priority for Services group, 104 children were ages 3 through 5, and 161 were out-of-school youth. There were 1,228 migrant students served during the regular school year through instructional or support services. Out of the 1,423 found eligible for services, 703 were also identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). Migrant students also identified as LEP made up about 42 percent of the migrant population found eligible for services. The migrant population is predominantly Hispanic, with 1,152 identified as Hispanic during the regular school term, and 65 identified as black, and 11 identified as white. There were 707 male migrant students and 521 female migrant students for the regular school year. There were 78 migrant students who were also identified as Students with Disabilities (IDEA) under Part B of Part C, of the IDEA.

Forty percent of migrant families have moved within the past twelve months, 35 percent have moved within the past 13 to 24 months, and 25 percent have moved within the past 25 to 36 months. Within the state, moves between divisions in Virginia account for 12 percent of the mobility for migrant families. Interstate moves account for 88 percent of the mobility.

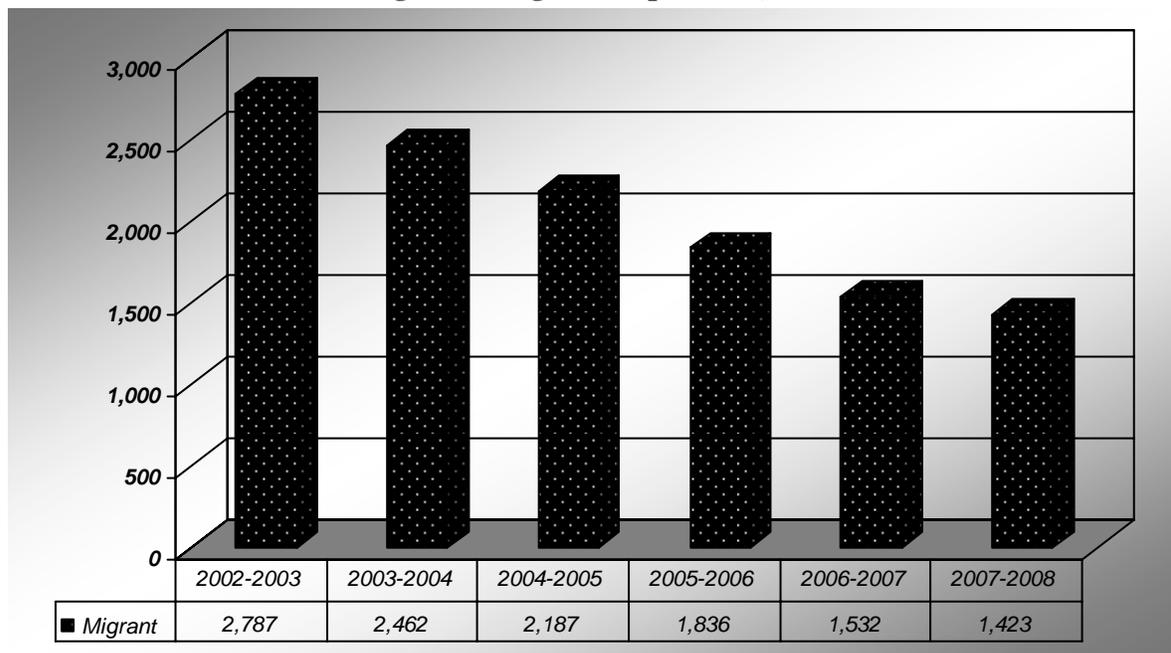
For the 2007-2008 school year, eleven regional/division level Migrant Education Programs (MEPs) in Virginia received a combined total of \$787,148.01 in Title I, Part C, funding. Based on the number of migratory students in a school division, programs are either offered year-round and/or during the summer. Supplemental services provided to migrant students and their families included but were not limited to: English as a second language instruction; computer literacy instruction; family literacy; general education diploma (GED) preparation; and outreach/advocacy work to increase the quality of nutritional, health, and dental care.

Virginia's migrant families predominantly follow the eastern stream migrant pattern starting in Florida and following the crops up the east coast often as far as Maine. Common qualifying work in Virginia includes: setting, plugging, pulling, stripping, and bulking tobacco; processing poultry; staking, pruning, harvesting and replanting tomatoes; roping Christmas trees; picking apples and other fruits; and pruning, weeding, and irrigating berries.

Once a child has been identified as migrant and approved by the division migrant coordinator on the Virginia Certificate of Eligibility, the student’s information is entered into the Migrant Information System (MIS 2000) by the Migrant Data Specialist. The child receives migrant education services based on needs and the serving division’s program type.

Table 1 below shows a gradual decline in the number of students eligible for the MEP over the past six years. Factors contributing to the decline in the population include: families settling out, fewer migrant job opportunities in Virginia, families finding permanent jobs, and the recent closing of several tomato farms in Virginia along the Eastern Shore.

Table 1: Virginia’s Migrant Population, 2002-2008



IV. Methods

The Virginia team responsible for conducting the CNA included the director of the office of administration and accountability, ESL coordinator, migrant coordinator, migrant data specialist, and information technology staff. The team met periodically from May 2007 through February 2009.

The data collected and analysis tools used included: 1) information stored in the Management Services for Education (MIS2000) which is the statewide migrant database; 2) the information from the 2003-2004 through 2007-2008 Consolidated State Performance Report, Parts I and II; 3) migrant achievement data on the statewide Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments; and 4) surveys administered to migrant coordinators and parents of migrant students.

All students in grades 3 through 8 and End-Of-Course (EOC) classes in high school are annually assessed in reading and mathematics using the SOL assessment. All students are assessed at least once in elementary school, once at the middle school level, and once at the high school level in science. MIS 2000 is the statewide migrant student database. This software provides storage, retrieval, transmittal and reporting features used to manage migrant student information. The Virginia Migrant Education Program Certificate of Eligibility is also used to gather information, as well as the Virginia Migrant Education Program Withdrawal Form. The withdrawal form lists Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status and any services (instructional and other) the migrant student and/or their family received during a term. A term is defined as the regular school year or a summer session.

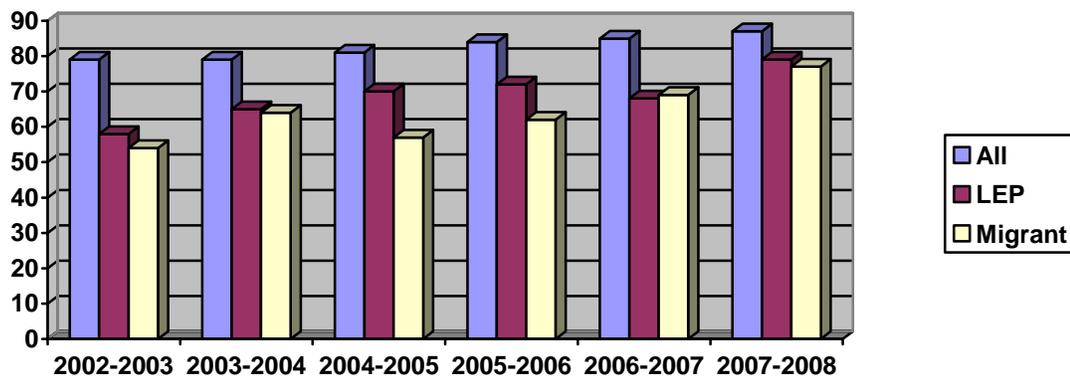
Parent surveys were given to recruiters to distribute to migrant families during the summer of 2008. Each migrant program was asked to volunteer to conduct at least 15 migrant parent surveys. Surveys based on the MEPs were conducted via interviews with select migrant coordinators.

V. Results

Reading/Language Arts Results for Migrant Students Compared to All Students and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

Migrant students have shown a slight increase of performance in reading/language arts based on the statewide assessment results over the past four years. Table 2 below shows migrant student performance in reading/language arts on the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments from 2003-2008 compared to all students and LEP students.

**Table 2: Reading/Language Arts¹
Shown as Percent Passing**



¹ Data as reported in the Virginia Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR) for years 2002-2008

Identified Need:

By 2013-2014, all students, including migrant students, must have a 100 percent pass rate on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in reading/language arts and mathematics. Pass rates for AYP targets in reading/language arts increase on a yearly basis. For the 2007-2008 school year, the AYP target was 77 percent. The migrant subgroup scored 77 percent on the reading/language arts SOL test. While the migrant subgroup made the AYP target, there was a 10-point gap between migrant students and all student scores on the reading/language arts SOL tests. The gaps in meeting AYP targets and the gaps between migrant student performance and all student performance may be explained by the limited English proficiency of the migrant students, educational support at home, the impact of poverty, and/or the impact of educational interruptions.

Solutions

Virginia is part of the Literacy Education And Reading Network (LEARN) Consortium Incentive Grant (CIG) offered through the Office of Migrant Education. This CIG will provide reading lessons/resources, scientifically-based writing and study skills lessons/resources, materials for parents to use with their children that align with the literacy lessons, a comprehensive literacy success plan, and a graduation plan to help MEP staff work with students in grades 7-12 and Out-of-School Youth (OSY). As a member of the CIG, Virginia will have access to high-quality lesson plans to use to improve the reading comprehension, writing, and study skills of migrant students, resources to share with parents to work on reading activities at home, and staff development opportunities. With the additional funds, Virginia will provide additional support that addresses literacy for the migrant students.

As part of Title I, Part C, and Title III, Part A, requirements, professional development opportunities must be provided to teachers and other staff members that work with migrant students. Since the majority of Virginia's migrant population is identified as English language learners (ELLs), a course entitled *What's Different About Teaching Reading to Students Learning English* through the Center for Applied Linguistics is being offered throughout the state. Virginia provided this training during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years. These trainings provided teachers, administrators, and other staff members with the knowledge and skills to meet the unique needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) in reading, as well as address the gaps between all student achievement and migrant student achievement on the statewide SOL tests in reading/language arts. As a result of positive feedback provided for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 evaluations, the state plans to continue to offer the course in the future years.

Effective with the 2008-2009 school year, Virginia adopted the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. These standards provide a framework for instruction of LEP students through social and academic language, providing LEP migrant students with a strong framework

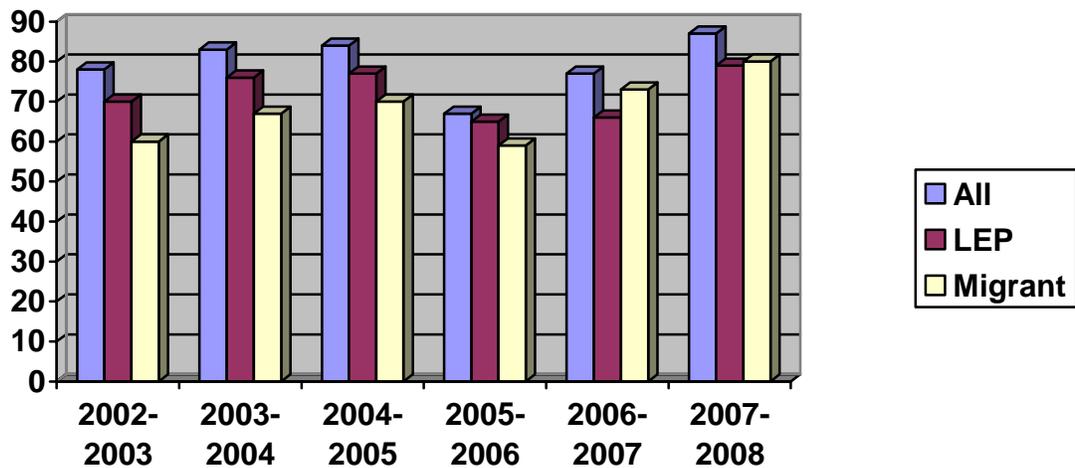
of instruction necessary to be successful on the reading/language arts SOL test. Training on implementing the new WIDA ELP standards was held throughout the state during the 2008-2009 school year. This training will continue for the 2009-2010 school year.

Finally, Virginia has provided college-level courses to teachers on working with LEP students. For the past five years, the Department has partnered with George Mason University to offer *Education 600: Reading and Writing Strategies for LEP Students*. The focus of the course is effective reading and writing teaching strategies for use with LEP students in language arts and content areas. This class is offered three times a year (fall, spring, and summer). It will continue to be offered in 2009-2010. The Department and the University of Mary Washington have also offered a course designed for teachers in grades K-12 that provides an introduction to effective strategies for differentiating instruction for ELLs in the mainstream classroom since the fall of 2008. Both classes will continue to be offered in future years, depending on the availability of funding.

Mathematics Results for Migrant Students Compared to All Students and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

In mathematics, migrant students had a gradual increase in performance from 2002-2003 to 2004-2005, scores declined in 2005-2006; and then increased again in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. Table 2 below shows migrant students' performance in mathematics on the Standards of Learning assessments from 2003 to 2008 compared to all students and LEP students.

**Table 3: Mathematics²
Shown as Percent Passing**



² Data as reported in the Virginia State Consolidated Performance Report (CSPR) for years 2002-2008

Identified Need

By 2013-2014, all students including migrant students, must have a 100 percent pass rate on the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in reading/language arts and mathematics. Pass rates for AYP targets in mathematics increase on a yearly basis. For the 2007-2008 school year, the AYP target was 75 percent. The migrant subgroup scored 80 percent on the mathematics SOL test, exceeding the target. However, there is a gap between migrant student SOL test scores and all students SOL test scores of seven points. The gaps in meeting AYP targets and the gaps between migrant student performance and all student performance may be explained by the limited English proficiency of the migrant students, the impact of poverty, educational support at home, and/or the impact of educational interruptions.

Solutions

Migrant staff will be encouraged to take advantage of the George Mason University *Education 600: Reading and Writing Strategies for LEP Students* class and the University of Mary Washington course on differentiation of instruction. Since the focus of both classes is instruction in language arts and core content areas, these classes will provide valuable strategies in meeting the unique needs of migrant students who are also English language learners.

Virginia participated in the MATEMATICA Consortium Incentive grant in 2004-2005 through 2006-2007. The purpose of the MATEMATICA CIG was to provide a needs-based mathematics program designed to meet the needs of highly mobile migrant students who have had their education interrupted. Curriculum was designed and used by the Virginia Migrant Education program during summer sessions. Migrant programs were encouraged to supplement their mathematics instruction using the materials from the MATEMATICA CIG.

A resource for working with LEP students in mathematics, *Mathematics: Strategies for Teaching Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students, A Supplemental Resource to the K-12 Mathematics Standards of Learning Enhanced Scope and Sequence* is available on the Department's ESL Web site [<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Instruction/ESL/LEPmathResource.pdf>]. The resource is a supplement to the K-12 Mathematics Standards of Learning Enhanced Scope and Sequence. This document provides teachers of mathematics information on language acquisition strategies for differentiating instruction for LEP students in mathematics.

The Department offers several interested divisions the opportunity to participate in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training presented by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). The SIOP Model incorporates integrated language and content methods, standard-based language and content objectives, language strategies, cooperative learning strategies, and the integration of student's background knowledge. It consists of eight major instructional components: Preparation, Building Background,

Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice/Application, Lesson Delivery, and Review/Assessment. During the SIOP workshops, teachers learn to incorporate these eight components into their teaching.

If the migrant students are also LEP, participation in the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments varies by English Language Proficiency level. Students who are identified as ELP levels 1 and 2 (and first year of enrollment in a U.S. school, regardless of their level) may participate in the plain English version of the Mathematics SOL test. Additionally, all LEP students may be permitted to use accommodations on the SOL tests. Decisions about participation in the statewide assessments are made by the school-based LEP Committee.

Effective with the 2008-2009 school year, Virginia has adopted the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. These standards provide a framework for providing LEP migrant students with a strong framework of instruction necessary to be successful on the mathematics SOL test. Training on implementing the new WIDA ELP standards was held throughout the state during the 2008-2009 school year. This training will continue for the 2009-2010 school year.

Table 4: High School Graduation Comparing the Subgroups of all Students, Migrant Students and Limited English Proficient Students for Students who Entered the Ninth Grade in 2004-2005³

<i>Subgroup</i>	<i>Graduation Rate</i>
All Students	82.1%
Limited English Proficient Students	69.2%
Migrant Students	75.4%

Identified Need

The Virginia On-Time Graduation Rate is a cohort graduation rate that expresses the percentage of students who earn a Board of Education-approved diploma within four years of entering ninth grade for the first time. It is calculated using a formula endorsed in a 2005 compact signed by the nation’s governors and subsequently adopted by the Virginia General Assembly and Board of Education. A gap exists between the graduation rate of all students and migrant students. The gaps between graduation rates for all students and migrant students may be due to over-aged grade placement, retention, limited English proficiency, at risk of failing to meet graduation requirements, poor performance on the necessary Standards of Learning assessments needed for graduation, educational support at home, and/or lack of school engagement.

³ Data as reported in the Virginia School Report Card: Virginia Cohort Reports Class of 2008 (2004-2005 first time 9th grade cohort) found: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/src/ontime_grad_rate.shtml

Solutions

Virginia has implemented a Dropout Leadership Task Force to work on increasing the graduation rate for all students. The Commonwealth of Virginia received a grant award from the National Governor's Association (NGA) to conduct a series of dropout prevention summits throughout the state to involve school divisions and community representatives. The first meeting was held at the Department during the 2007-2008 school year and involved DOE staff, community leaders and representatives from local divisions. Additional summit meetings will be held in the 2008-2009 school year. These meetings will be held in Richmond and presentations and discussion will be based on the findings from the first meeting. In addition, the focus of the 2009 fifth annual Visions to Practice Academy, a statewide professional development opportunity, will focus on providing options for students to ensure success in school.

Migrant programs will provide training and information to parents/guardians of migrant students on the importance of staying in school and graduating from high school. Recruiters will work with families to encourage school enrollment for out-of-school youth. Recruiters and migrant staff will also work with families to help them understand how to obtain a high school diploma and develop plans for work or postsecondary options.

As part of the LEARN CIG, Virginia has access to documents used to develop action plans for graduation for high school students. Migrant Coordinators and recruiters will be trained on how to use these LEARN materials to develop a graduation plan for migrant students.

VI. Conclusion

To meet the needs of migratory children, it is necessary to continue to offer support to school divisions to assist them in improving migrant student performance on the Standards of Learning assessments. Additionally, it is necessary to continue to provide support to school divisions to increase the migrant student graduation rate. These approaches will be used as the foundation for Virginia's migrant service delivery plan. The Department will update the CNA every three years to determine what needs have been met as well as future needs.