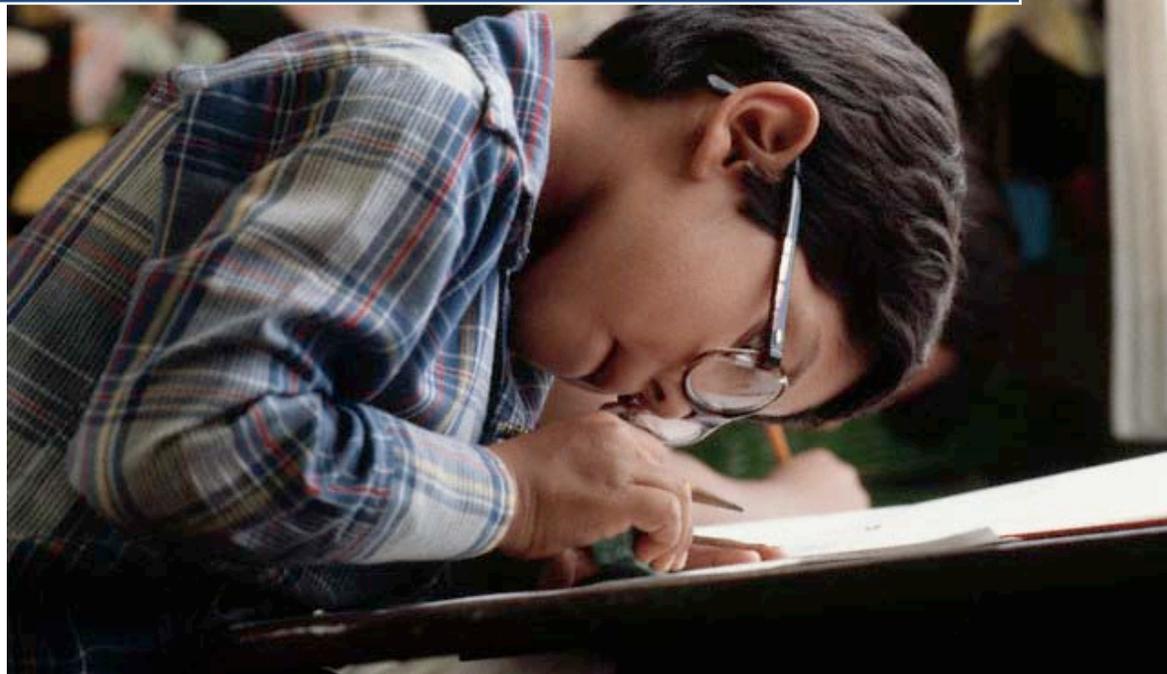


**Executive Summary  
Interim Report  
August 13, 2009**

# TEXAS MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION



Submitted to:  
Texas Education Agency



Prepared by: MGT of America, Inc.



Running head: TEXAS MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

Texas Migrant Education Program Evaluation: Executive Summary

Melissa Clements, Candice King, Hong Gao, and Sean Friend

MGT of America, Inc.

Ali Picucci, Susan Durón, and Tracy Laughlin

Resources for Learning, LLC

Submitted to: Texas Education Agency  
August 13, 2009

## **Acknowledgements**

MGT of America wishes to acknowledge several groups for their graciousness in providing assistance, data, and advice that contributed greatly to the production of this report. First, we thank the Texas Education Agency personnel who provided information to guide this evaluation study and offered feedback on prior drafts of this interim report. Next, we thank the Texas Migrant Education Program Coordinators who completed on-line surveys. Finally, we thank our subcontractors, especially Resources for Learning, for their extensive work on this evaluation study. We also thank Dr. Cinthia Salinas for her guidance on survey development.

## Credits

MGT of America, Inc. (MGT), is a national research and consulting firm that is dedicated to providing the most creative yet practical solutions to the challenges organizations face in both the public and private sectors. MGT has committed the past 35 years to providing the most creative, yet practical, solutions to the challenges our clients face in public education. Through this diverse experience, we offer a thorough understanding of education policy and practice, evaluation and statistical expertise, and sound management capability.

For additional information about MGT, please contact:

**MGT of America, Inc.**

502 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300, Austin, Texas 78701

Phone: (512) 476-4697

Fax: (512) 476-4699

[www.mgtofamerica.com](http://www.mgtofamerica.com)

## Authors and Project Contributors

Melissa Clements, Ph.D.

Candice King, M.A.

Hong Gao, Ph.D.

Sean Friend

Ali Picucci, Ph.D.

Susan Durón, Ph.D.

Tracy Laughlin, M.F.A

Mary McKeown-Moak, Ph.D.

Jim Christie, M.S.

Eric Hartsfield

Cinthia Salinas, Ph.D.

## Prepared for:

Texas Education Agency

1701 North Congress Avenue

Austin, Texas 78701-1494

Phone: (512) 463-9734

## Research funded by:

Texas Education Agency

## Copyright Notice

**Copyright © Notice** The materials are copyrighted © and trademarked ™ as the property of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and may not be reproduced without the express written permission of TEA, except under the following conditions:

- 1) Texas public school districts, charter schools, and Education Service Centers may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for the districts' and schools' educational use without obtaining permission from TEA.
- 2) Residents of the state of Texas may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for individual personal use only without obtaining written permission of TEA.
- 3) Any portion reproduced must be reproduced in its entirety and remain unedited, unaltered and unchanged in any way.
- 4) No monetary charge can be made for the reproduced materials or any document containing them; however, a reasonable charge to cover only the cost of reproduction and distribution may be charged.

Private entities or persons located in Texas that are **not** Texas public school districts, Texas Education Service Centers, or Texas charter schools or any entity, whether public or private, educational or non-educational, located **outside the state of Texas** *MUST* obtain written approval from TEA and will be required to enter into a license agreement that may involve the payment of a licensing fee or a royalty.

For information contact: Office of Copyrights, Trademarks, License Agreements, and Royalties, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701-1494; phone 512-463-9270 or 512-936-6060; email: [copyrights@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:copyrights@tea.state.tx.us).

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	i
Glossary of Acronyms .....	x

## List of Figures and Tables

Figure E-1. OME Seven Areas of Concern, Texas SDP Services, Best Practice Principles .....	v
Table E-1: Most and Least Commonly Provided Services Across All Districts.....	vii

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with MGT of America, Inc. (MGT), and their subcontractor, Resources for Learning (RFL), to conduct a two-year evaluation of the effectiveness of the Texas Migrant Education Program (MEP), as required by Section 1304(c)(5) of Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), and by Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 34 CFR 200.84 and 200.85. The evaluation study began in September 2008 and will conclude in March 2010. The goals of this comprehensive evaluation are to determine the degree of effectiveness of the MEP at meeting the needs of priority for services (PFS) and non-PFS migrant students and to use the results to provide guidance for ongoing programmatic improvements.

This two-year evaluation of the state's MEP includes the following five overarching study objectives:

- 1) Conduct a literature review of best practices in migrant education.
- 2) Determine the instructional and support services implemented in Texas.
- 3) Review alignment of Texas MEP services with best practices from the literature and make recommendations for additional migrant programs and services that are likely to be effective at helping migrant students in Texas.
- 4) Determine the effectiveness of local and statewide longstanding Texas migrant education programs.
- 5) Compare trends in academic achievement of migrant and non-migrant students in Texas.

This interim report includes findings from the first two of these objectives: literature review of best practices in migrant education and summary of Texas MEP instructional and support

services being implemented by MEP grant recipients. The remaining evaluation objectives will be covered in a comprehensive final evaluation report to be completed in spring 2010. In the remainder of this executive summary, we provide an overview of the findings from these two objectives beginning with the literature review and ending with the description of migrant services districts provide throughout the state of Texas.

According to the latest available data from the National Center for Farmworker Health (n.d.), more than three million migrant farmworkers reside in the United States with the largest concentrations in California, Texas, Washington, Florida, and North Carolina. Living conditions and educational opportunities for the children of migrant families are among the worst in the nation (Gouwens, 2001; Green, 2003; Kindler, 1995). In fact, out of all student groups, migrant students are among the most likely to drop out of school (DiCerbo, 2001; Green, 2003).

The federally funded MEP was initiated in 1966 with an amendment to Title I of ESEA to serve these students. Subsequent regulatory changes through the *Improving America's Schools Act of 1994* and the NCLB increased emphasis on accountability and student performance.

As one of the states serving the largest concentrations of migrant students, Texas has played a key role in migrant education initiatives. For example, Texas was one of four states that participated in a two-year federal pilot of a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) process for the U.S. Department of Education's (USDE) Office of Migrant Education (OME). This process was designed to create a tool to support data-driven decision making in migrant education programming and policy at the state and local levels (USDE, n.d.).

As a result of the CNA pilot, the OME identified seven common "areas of concern" in migrant education (TEA, 2007a). These were:

- Educational Continuity;

- Instructional Time;
- School Engagement;
- English Language Development;
- Educational Support in the Home;
- Health; and
- Access to Services.

Through the pilot CNA process, the Texas MEP identified eight statewide needs related to four of the areas of concern. These areas of concern were instructional time, school engagement, educational support in the home, and educational continuity.<sup>1</sup> The eight statewide needs were focused on target populations and were aligned to measurable objectives (TEA, 2007a). Based on the CNA, Texas developed a state plan for service delivery to migrant students that outlined services and supplemental programming that local education agencies (LEAs) could implement to address the identified needs. The Texas state plan also provided a set of state-level recommendations to support local implementation efforts.

To assess the state and local MEPs as part of this evaluation, a literature review was conducted with input from national and state experts in migrant education. Results of the literature review indicated that efforts to identify best practices in migrant education were limited by a lack of empirical research and large-scale studies of effectiveness. However, the literature did include ethnographic studies and investigations of local programs with qualitative results indicating positive outcomes. In addition, the literature included efforts by policymakers, researchers, and practitioners in the field to characterize the barriers to educational attainment for migrant students. Much of this work was focused on providing recommendations for improving migrant education based on a deep understanding of the challenges faced by these students and their

---

<sup>1</sup> The preliminary identified needs and areas of concern identified through the pilot CNA process and reflected in the 2007 service delivery plan (SDP) will be revised with a planned state revision to the CNA and SDP.

families. Finally, best practice research from other fields could be applied, to some extent, to migrant education, especially in the area of early childhood education, language and literacy development, dropout prevention, and parent involvement.

The findings of the literature review identified a set of interrelated themes that reflect what is known about effective programming from the migrant education community. These themes, or best practice principles—responsiveness; communication, collaboration and relationships; adequate and appropriate staffing; instructional quality and high expectations; and focus on language issues—could be used as the basis for assessment of local MEPs. Specifically, as indicated in the literature, programs should reflect the following:

- Innovative and flexible programming that reflects intentional knowledge of the particular needs of the community, families, and students served;
- Coordinated data and information sharing systems and networks, partnerships between service providers, and personal relationships built on trust and caring;
- Adequate and appropriate staffing to provide the level of advocacy and individualized services migrant students require;
- High quality and relevant instruction focused on high expectations; and
- Attention to the language needs of migrant students and families.

Figure E-1 illustrates the relationship between the OME's seven areas of concern, the strategies in the state's plan of recommended and supplemental services, and the five best practice principles. This framework will guide portions of the next phase of the evaluation, which will include site visits to representative local MEPs to collect information about local practices and programming and expert review of the state and local programming and services for migrant students in Texas. This framework will also guide the development of a perceptual survey designed to address the perceived effectiveness of the Texas MEP.

Figure E-1: OME Seven Areas of Concern, Texas SDP Services, Best Practice Principles



Prior to the current study, there had been no documentation of what instructional and support services are actually being implemented within the state of Texas and therefore no way of understanding whether and how those services might fit within the components of the framework shown in Figure E-1. Independent Project District (IPD) and Shared Service Arrangement (SSA) member district (SSAD) grantees must specify the migrant services they plan to provide in their Texas MEP grant application. To meet the second objective of this evaluation study, Texas MEP coordinators of each of the IPDs and SSADs participating in the MEP throughout the state of Texas were surveyed to identify the instructional and support services or activities currently being provided. Findings from the Texas MEP Instruction and Support Services Survey and the literature review will be used to accomplish the third objective of the study: alignment of Texas MEP instructional and support services to best practices.

The MEP Coordinator Survey findings were organized around the following collapsed areas of educational concern:

- 1) *Educational Continuity/Instructional Time*;
- 2) *School Engagement/Educational Support in the Home*;
- 3) *Health/Access to Services*; and
- 4) *English Language Development*.

For each service, migrant coordinators from each IPD or SSAD were asked to indicate whether the service was provided within their district and the perceived level of priority (high, moderate, or low) for each service provided. In addition, survey respondents indicated whether provided services were supported through MEP funds or non-MEP funds.

Survey data were analyzed across all districts and by district size and type. Districts were categorized as small, medium, or large and as IPDs or SSADs. The medium and large district subgroups were collapsed given the substantial overlap in the pattern of services provided by medium and large size districts and because there was a small number of medium (n=50 ) and large districts (n=24 ). Most of the districts were small districts (n=358). Table E-1 below shows the most and least commonly provided services. The most common services were those that were provided by over 70 percent of districts and the least common services were those that were provided by fewer than 20 percent of the districts.

Table E-1: Most and Least Commonly Provided Services Across All Districts

Educational Continuity/Instructional Time	School Engagement/Educational Support in the Home	Health/Access to Services
<b>Most Common Services (Above 70%)</b>		
Providing records transfers through the NGS	Establishing a PAC	Providing school supplies
Coordinating with programs offering options for partial and full credit accrual and recovery including accessing and reviewing academic records from NGS	Providing childcare and light snack during PAC meetings	Providing clothing
Attending state and national conferences for MEP staff	Providing translation services	Providing referrals to community programs
Providing in-school tutoring and TAKS tutorials	Providing information on requirements for graduation	Providing referrals to health providers
Monitoring student progress toward meeting graduation requirements	Providing family/home visitation regarding students' academic progress	Providing vision screenings
Identifying preschool-age children for enrollment	Collaborating to provide timely and appropriate interventions for academic and non-academic issues	
Coordinating, monitoring, and documenting progress regarding learning and study skills	Coordinating resources and information for homework assistance/tools for students and parents	
<b>Least Common Services (Below 20%)</b>		
Providing distance learning programs (NovaNet, Work Study, and PASS) Providing out-of-state TAKS training, testing, and remediation Coordinating with Even Start Providing out-of-state summer migrant program coordination		

Source: MGT Texas MEP Instructional and Support Survey, Winter 2009.

Note. *English Language Development* related services were provided by approximately 50% to 60% of all districts (only two survey items were included for this need area).

Priority was typically rated as medium or high across services. However, there were a few services for which a relatively high percentage of districts rated the priority as low. The services with the lowest priority ratings (below 70%) across all districts included:

- Providing Distance Learning programs including NovaNet and Work Study;
- Providing out-of-state Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) remediation;
- Providing out-of-state Summer Migrant Program Coordination;
- Providing the Building Bridges center-based program;
- Providing migrant extracurricular or leadership club/organization; and
- Offering school retreats or workshops.

Generally, the pattern of provision and priority of services found for the small districts was similar to the pattern found across all districts. Overall, more variation was found for provision and priority ratings for smaller as compared to medium or large districts, with medium or large districts tending to indicate consistently higher ratings.

Regarding findings broken down by service delivery model, there were many similarities between the services provided by small IPDs and SSADs. However, there were some notable differences in the pattern of services provided by these two groups. The largest differences in provision of services between small IPDs and SSADs were found for the following services:

- Providing extended-day tutoring;
- Providing migrant package records transfer;
- Providing secondary credit accrual workshop;
- Providing TMIP services;
- Providing graduation plan support beyond a regular high school counselor;
- Coordinating with Head Start;
- Providing childcare and transportation for parent involvement and Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings;
- Conducting outreach activities for out-of-school youth and their parents; and

- Providing the University of Texas at Austin Student Graduation Enhancement Migrant Program.

Extended-day tutoring and migrant package records transfer services were more likely to be provided by IPDs than SSADs. For the other services listed above, SSADs were more likely to provide the service.

A high percentage of IPDs reported medium or high priority ratings across nearly all of the services. There was substantial variation in the percentages of SSADs that provided medium or high priority ratings across services within the area of *Educational Continuity/Instructional Time*. In other need areas, the priority ratings provided by most of the SSADs were typically medium or high.

In addition to provision and priority of services, survey participants reported on the source of funding for provided services. MEP funds are used to supplement funds from other sources to ensure migrant services provided to students are as comprehensive as possible. Migrant related services may be funded entirely by MEP funds or by other non-MEP funds. Overall, a substantially higher percentage of services were reported to have been funded by funds other than MEP funds. The services most likely to have been funded by MEP funds were related to tutoring, instruction, and instructional support.

Findings from the literature review and the Texas MEP Instructional and Support Services Survey will be utilized in the next steps of this evaluation study. Specifically, these findings will guide the expert panel review of alignment of Texas services with best practices, evaluation of the effectiveness of Texas migrant programs, and comparing achievement of migrant and non-migrant students.

For additional detail and discussion, the complete report is located at the following website: [http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/opge/progeval/Other/MEP\\_Interim\\_0809.pdf](http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/opge/progeval/Other/MEP_Interim_0809.pdf)

## Glossary of Acronyms

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)  
Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)  
*Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA)  
Independent Project Districts (IPD)  
Local Education Agency (LEA)  
Migrant Education Program (MEP)  
MGT of America, Inc. (MGT)  
*No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB)  
Office of Migrant Education (OME)  
Parent Advisory Council (PAC)  
Priority for Services (PFS)  
Resources for Learning (RFL)  
Shared Service Arrangement (SSA)  
Shared Service Arrangement Member Districts (SSAD)  
Texas Education Agency (TEA)  
United States Department of Education (USDE)