



Idaho at a Glance: MIGRATORY STUDENTS

In the 2016-17 school year, the Migrant Education Program served 4607 migratory Idaho students.¹ Migratory students face unique challenges due to repeated moves; they often miss time in the classroom, must adjust to new schools and graduation requirements and may lack other needed services, such as English language development.² The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 requires that all school districts provide equal educational opportunities to all students, regardless of migratory status. Migratory student education is bolstered by the federal Migrant Education Program, which provides academic and support services to migratory students and their families. Some Idaho programs go a step further to foster migratory students' leadership skills and celebrate their cultural attributes.³

AUTHOR: Christy Dearien, M.S., Research Associate, McClure Center for Public Policy Research

August 2018, Vol. 9, No. 3

Migratory students are a transitional and varied group

A migratory student is any student whose family has moved within the last three years and whose parent(s) or spouse work in the agriculture or fishing industries. Not all migratory students are immigrants or Hispanic, and many have U.S. citizenship.

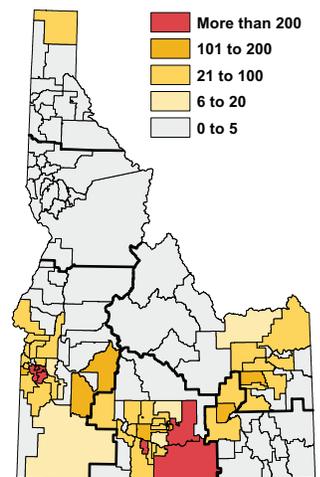
Select challenges faced by migratory students:

- **Academic disruption**
- Adherence to educational requirements of multiple states
- **Barriers to education** like speaking a different language or having low income⁴

Other factors that influence migratory students' ability to do well in school include social isolation and health-related problems. In addition, about 45% are also English Learners, and 9% are disabled.^{1,2}

School districts with the highest number of migratory students are **concentrated in the Treasure Valley** (Caldwell, Nampa and Vallivue) **and southcentral Idaho** (Cassia County, Minidoka County and Twin Falls).⁵

Number of migratory students
 Unduplicated count, 2016-17¹



The Migrant Education Program fills an important niche

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) helps students in migratory families receive the education and support they need as they move from one school to another, often repeatedly. The MEP also serves out-of-school youth and children younger than age 5. Districts with enough migratory students receive federal funding to run their own MEP.

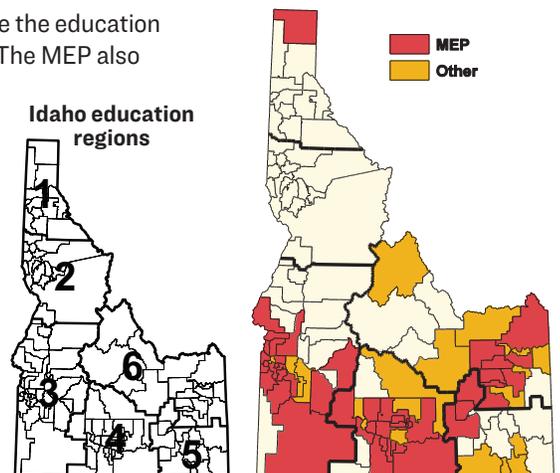
MEPs **serve all students who meet migratory criteria** by providing:

- High quality, comprehensive educational programs
- Advocacy
- Referral to supplementary services as needed²

In 2016-17, **43 public school districts had their own MEP**, and 21 "other" districts were served by State Regional Identification and Recruitment Coordinators.¹

MEP **program priorities** include school readiness, achievement in math and English language arts and high school graduation.²

MEP and "other" districts
 2016-17

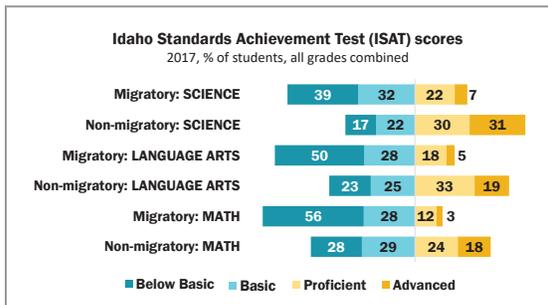


Migratory students are more likely to have gaps in academic achievement and attainment

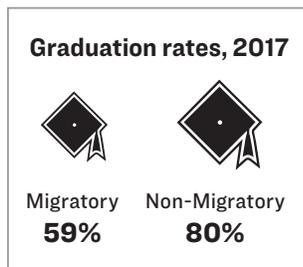
Due to frequent moves and other challenges, migratory students often lag behind their peers. Disparities can be found in standardized test scores, as well as graduation and go-on rates.

The Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) is a literacy skills assessment that is administered bi-annually to Idaho's students in kindergarten through 3rd grade. In 2016-17, migratory students were **about half as likely as others to have reading skills at grade level**: 33% compared to 59%, respectively.⁵

The Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) measures proficiency in science, language arts and math. The ISAT is administered annually in grades 3-8 and 10. In 2017, migratory students were **less likely than others to have proficient or advanced scores** in all tested subject areas.⁵



Migratory students are **less likely to graduate** from high school,⁵ but **about a third go on** to some form of postsecondary education within one year of graduation. About half of all migratory students who go on attend a four-year college or university.⁶



Educators address the gaps in many ways

Educators help migratory students meet their full potential through a variety of programming, services, referrals and more. A wide range of programs serve both students and their families, with a focus on school readiness, academic achievement, college and career readiness and more.

In MEP districts, migratory students who meet specific criteria related to educational disruption and academic risk are eligible to receive **Priority for Service**. Under the ESSA, these students are given priority and must be served before other students or with greater intensity.⁷ An example of greater intensity would be the addition of coordinated case management plus frequent mentoring. In 2016-17, **1241 migratory students** were eligible.¹ Due to migratory students' frequent moves, **summer programs** for migratory students fill instructional gaps and are **critical to educational success**. In 2017, 25 MEP districts offered summer programs and served 1428 migratory students.¹

Idaho Department of Education programs that provide unique services to migrant students and families include:

- Parent Advisory Council**
Supports parents of migratory students and involves them in planning, implementation and evaluation activities at both the state and local level.
- Migrant Student Leadership Institute**
Teaches leadership skills, provides students with a jump start to success after high school and helps them explore career interests; the institute is an intensive week-long program for migratory students finishing their sophomore or junior year in high school.

“Now that I have been through this program, I do see myself as a leader. I have learned so much about myself that I never [saw] in me before.”

— Participant in the Migrant Student Leadership Institute

Migratory students also have access to federal programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education:

- Migrant and Seasonal Head Start**
Provides bilingual education and socialization for migratory children between the ages of 0 and 5; there are ten centers across the state.
- High School Equivalency Program**
Serves migratory dropouts and out-of-school youth to help them complete a GED; services offered at Boise State University and Community Council of Idaho include class instruction, alternate language instruction and service referral programs.
- College Assistance Migrant Program**
Provides outreach, scholarships and academic support programs to migratory students during their freshman year of college; it is available at University of Idaho, Lewis-Clark State College and Boise State University.

SPECIAL THANKS: Sarah Seamount, Kelly Everitt and Dr. Christina Nava (Idaho Department of Education); Tenley Burke (map creator, University of Idaho's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Office of Grant and Project Development) and our external reviewers and Advisory Board.

SOURCES:

- Idaho State Department of Education, Consolidated State Performance Report: Parts II, 2016-17
- Idaho State Department of Education, Idaho Migrant Education Program Manual
- US News and World Report, “Canyon County Migrant Students Find Support in Local Schools,” <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/idaho/articles/2018-04-14/canyon-county-migrant-students-find-support-in-local-schools>
- Idaho State Department of Education, Migrant Education Program website, <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/el-migrant/migrant/>
- Idaho State Department of Education, Migrant Student Information System
- Idaho State Board of Education, Go-on Rates, 2017
- Title 1-C Sec1304 (d) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

