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“**Our migrant children...**
they are our only hope...
Like seedlings, they have been sown in your school.
It is our wish they blossom into harvests of hope.”

-Author unknown
Program Description

The federally-funded Migrant Education Program (MEP) has provided educational and supportive services to migrant children across the nation since 1966. The Illinois State Board of Education administers the MEP in Illinois, and funds services in local school districts where farmworker children live. The MEP attempts to locate all eligible children across the state to ensure that they are identified and recruited.

During the summer the MEP offers academic and supportive services. Summer projects focus on reading, mathematics, and English as a Second Language (ESL) to improve student achievement. The MEP also works through local school districts during the regular academic year to support the education of migrant students.

Program Goals

Migrant children who move frequently may have difficulty in school. MEP services help migrant children adjust to their new school and keep up with their schoolwork. As a result of these services, children are better prepared to enter school and succeed. They are also more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college or employment.

Who the Program Serves

Children and youth through the age of 21 who have not graduated from high school may be eligible for the MEP if they have moved:

- across school district lines
- within the last three years
- with a parent/guardian or on his/her own
- to obtain qualifying temporary or seasonal agricultural or fishing employment.

The work must be directly related to the planting, cultivating, harvesting or processing of crops, the processing of dairy products, meats, fish or shellfish, or caring for livestock. There are no ethnic, national origin, income or language requirements for the MEP.

Services Provided

Each local MEP project offers services based on the needs of the migrant children it serves.

Educational services may include:
- Preschool programs to prepare migrant children for success in school
- Summer school and tutoring during the regular school year for grades K-12
- Services to help high school students graduate
- Continuity of instruction between and among school districts and states

Supportive services include:
- Statewide recruitment of eligible migrant children
- Sharing of student information among the states when students move
- Medical, dental and nutritional services