



## New York State Migrant Education Program Theory of Action

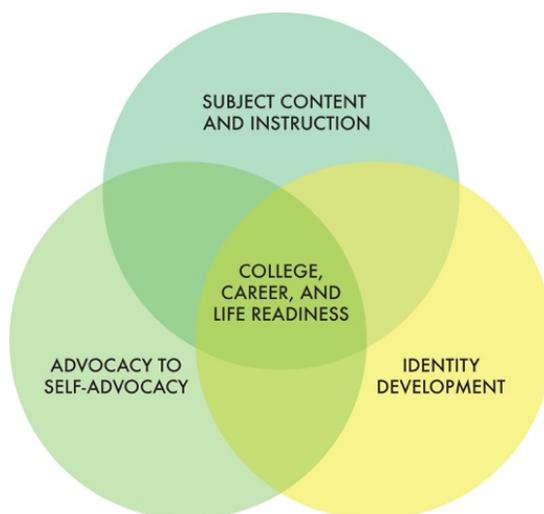
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Migrant students have multiple risk factors, such as cultural and language barriers, educational disruptions, social isolation, high mobility and health related problems that impact their ability to be successful. Working in partnership with parents, schools, and the community-at-large, the New York State Migrant Education Program (NYS-MEP) adopts a holistic approach which addresses each student as a whole person in order to better respond to the myriad and complexity of needs that our migrant students possess.

To do this, the NYS-MEP has developed and implemented a Theory of Action (TOA) which serves to clarify strategies for change in order to increase migrant student achievement. The TOA identifies three, interdependent focus areas that are essential to supporting migrant children and their families. These focus areas are:

1. Subject Content and Instruction;
2. Advocacy to Self-Advocacy; and
3. Identity Development.

These interdependent focus areas serve as the basis of/for NYS-MEP's fundamental competencies, both from the perspective of migrant children and their families as well as Migrant Educators. It is aligned with the realities within the NYS-MEP and seeks to connect strategy to the actions and relationships crucial to improving programs and services to ensure student learning. The focus areas serve to connect the goals and objectives in terms of student achievement to specific strategies and outcome measures that lead to college- and career-readiness.



**New York State MEPS Theory of Action**

## **New York State Migrant Education Program: Service Delivery Plan**

The NYS-MEP is driven by a state Service Delivery Plan (SDP) which is grounded in the Common Core Learning Standards, the Regents Reform Agenda, State and federal requirements under Title I, Part C, as well as the NYS-MEP Theory of Action (TOA) for supporting migrant student achievement and their families.

### **College-, Career-, and Life-Readiness**

A migrant student who is college-, career-, and life-ready demonstrates the knowledge, skills, abilities, and predispositions (attitudes and behaviors) to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing college courses leading to a baccalaureate degree or to succeed in technical or vocational training programs leading to a certificate/diploma without the need for remedial support. This student also has the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully navigate the transition to life after high school as well as the self-awareness and understanding of others to succeed in a diverse, global society.

## **New York State Migrant Education Program Theory of Action**

### **Rationale**

The NYS-MEP utilizes a cohesive and interdependent and, more importantly, holistic approach of subject content and instruction, (self) advocacy and identity development that is grounded in the trusting migrant educator-student -parent relationship. The integration of these key areas create a research informed theory of action that allows Migrant Educators to respond to individual situations based on a common framework and shared goals.

The nine regional METS share a common and inclusive approach that necessitates individualized services based on the menu of programs and services available within the NYS-MEP and seeks to ensure student academic achievement based on levels outlined in the GPRAs. The conditions of migrant students and families are impacted by the type of agriculture, geography, school district, local community, English language proficiency, literacy in home language, and the race/ethnicity, citizenship status, immigration path, age, and gender of the workers. Every program responds to unique situations grounded in the common condition of a migratory agricultural worker, including migratory dairy and fishing. The agricultural industry in New York State is exempt from labor protections afforded to other workers; overtime pay, collective bargaining, disability and day of rest. The agricultural industry has different standards for unemployment insurance, workers compensation, sanitation, youth employment, safety training, and building and lodging codes for employer provided housing. (Grossman, D.A., Minard, J.D. 2002; Telega, S.W., Maloney T.R. 2010). The NYS-MEP operates within the context created by these differences.

Promoting independence is a thread that runs through all facets of the NYS-MEP approach: subject content and instruction, (self) advocacy and identity development. Time and resource

limitations as well as the limited parameters of migrant student eligibility demand that Migrant Educators implement strategies and foster attitudes and behaviors that lead to independence and self-actualization. In recognition of the critical role of parents on student outcomes, working in partnership with parents is a high priority. The NYS-MEP focuses on and supports both parent understanding and influence over their children's learning. The focus on identity development brings together knowledge of the formal curriculum with knowledge of the student's language, culture, and life experiences, together with research- and evidence-informed programs and services, to motivate engagement in learning, commitment to high academic achievement, and a sense of expectation in students and parents for themselves in society. Expectation and independence are critical; the strains of working as a migratory agricultural worker, including dairy and fishing, assures that basic need issues will continue to arise after the limited eligibility period ends, and that educational system barriers will persist.

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### **Subject Content and Instruction**

Subject content and instruction focuses on assuring that in-school students and Out-of-School Youth (OSY), where applicable, have the foundational skills and strategies to succeed in the classroom and on state and other assessments. Subject content and instruction for out-of-school youth is informed by the CCLS and focuses on life skills, career education, vocational training, ESL instruction, High School equivalency instruction, and an array of services that promote responsible literacy and numeracy, citizenship, further learning, productive employment, and college- and career-readiness (where applicable). The focus on learner independence integrates key (meta)cognitive strategies and subject content knowledge with a focus on creating thinkers, problem solvers and self-regulated life-long learners.

### **Advocacy to Self-Advocacy**

Self-advocacy is key to successfully navigating the secondary to post-secondary transition to life after high school, as well as a skill for success in life. Throughout the eligibility period, advocacy services aim to assure that the basic physical, safety and emotional needs required for students to achieve academically. Advocacy is provided in a manner that focuses on parents and students developing the knowledge, skills and behaviors to be successful self-advocates.

Together with parents or other family members, teachers, service agencies and others, the advocacy services provided to and/or on behalf of students and their families are designed to instill the knowledge and skills necessary for both students and their families to advocate for themselves and to ensure that migrant children and their families receive the full range of services available to them. This includes, but is not limited to, school-home linkage, regular education program linkage, health/dental/social service linkage, interstate linkage, and other

connections and resources necessary to assure that basic needs are met in order for learning to occur.

### **Identity Development**

Identity development efforts focus on three critical areas of support: (1) culturally responsive teaching – the ability to make a child’s life and community central to the learning process; (2) assisting students to make connections between the academic content and their life experience; and (3) supporting the social identity development process by providing students an opportunity to process the social contexts and the specific societal divisions based on race, socioeconomic status, gender, immigration status, language, and other such factors that migrant students experience in order to develop an identity that holds high expectations for themselves in society.

### **Integration of the Theory of Action Elements**

The NYS-MEP recognizes that fully integrating these elements ensures that the multiple levels of need required to achieve academic success are addressed. Programming and services focus on the particular needs of preschool children, in-school children, in-school adolescents and out-of-school youth. Along with the overarching goal of high school graduation, we strive to offer migrant-eligible students the opportunity to participate in life skills and career education services, vocational training, ESL instruction, High School equivalency instruction, and an array of services that will promote literacy and numeracy skills, responsible citizenship, further learning, productive employment, as well as college-, career-, and life-readiness.

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