Preface

Purpose

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) National ID&R Manual is designed to assist state educational agencies (SEAs) in developing state identification and recruitment (ID&R) systems for the MEP, thereby correctly implementing the MEP statute and regulations. The SEA is responsible for the proper and timely ID&R of all eligible migratory children in the state, including documenting the reason why each child has been determined to be eligible for the MEP. Part I of this manual provides general information and advice regarding the recruiter’s role in the ID&R process and in ensuring the correctness of eligibility determinations. Part II of this manual provides general information and advice regarding the state and/or regional administrator’s role.

This manual is not intended to be prescriptive. The examples provided in this document should not be viewed as the "only" or the "best" way to identify migratory children. Instead, they are provided as tools to help practitioners consider the range of options available and to stimulate thinking about this topic. This document is one of many resources for SEAs and local operating agencies (LOAs) to use as they determine how best to identify and recruit eligible migratory children in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). While users of this manual may wish to utilize or adapt the information presented here, they are free to develop their own approaches that are consistent with applicable federal statutes and regulations.

This manual is meant to be read in conjunction with the following companion documents:

* the authorizing statute
* the applicable regulations
* the Non-Regulatory Guidance for Title 1, Part C, Education of Migratory Children (NRG)
* the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) guidance on other federal programs that are relevant to the MEP (such as Title I, Part A, and Title III)
* state requirements, policies, and guidance

The statute and regulations are binding on both ED and its grantees and cannot be changed outside of the reauthorization and regulatory processes. By comparison, policy guidance is not binding on grantees. Therefore, SEAs may adopt policies and procedures other than those found in the MEP’s NRG or this technical assistance manual, provided that they reflect reasonable interpretations of the MEP statute and ED regulations. Words in the NRG and this manual like “must” and “shall” are used to indicate statutory and regulatory requirements. States are responsible for making decisions regarding the best way to operate the MEP consistent with federal and state regulations. It is critical that staff at the SEA and local level realize that they should not continue practices simply because they are based on longstanding policy, but rather should adjust to current needs, research and experience with what works.

The National ID&R Manual is meant to provide general advice on ID&R.

Audience. The primary audience for this manual is SEA administrators. However, it should also be of interest to ID&R coordinators, ID&R contractors, regional administrators (the individuals who administer ID&R within each state), local administrators, recruiters, home-school liaisons, and advocates for migratory children and youth. Part I of this manual explains the major duties and responsibilities of the recruiter. Part II discusses the administration of an ID&R system. Recruiters and administrators should read their own section of the manual as well as their counterpart’s in order to understand the full scope of responsibilities. Although Part I and Part II can be read separately, reading both parts together helps to provide a more complete understanding of a MEP ID&R system.

Organization. This manual is organized as follows: Chapter, Section, Subsection, and Paragraph Header. Below is an example of how information is visually organized:

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| Chapter 1.  Section  Subsection. The recruiter is responsible for interviewing children, families, and youth to determine if they are eligible for the Migrant Education Program.  Paragraph Header. The recruiter is responsible for interviewing children, families, and  youth to determine if they are eligible for the Migrant Education Program. |

Style. This manual follows the conventions of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

Background

Every Student Succeeds Act. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reauthorized the ESEA. A key purpose of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, is to provide all children with the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education that will enable them to meet the same challenging academic standards in their state that all children are expected to meet.

The Migrant Education Program. The MEP is authorized by Title I, Part C of the ESEA, as amended. Under the MEP, ED provides formula grants to SEAs to establish or improve education programs for migratory children. The general purpose of the MEP is to ensure that migratory children fully benefit from the same free public education provided to non-migratory children. To achieve this purpose, the MEP provides financial support to SEAs and LOAs to address the unique educational needs of migratory children, including preschool migratory children and migratory children who have dropped out of school. In order to meet the goal of supporting the academic success of eligible migratory children, the MEP must first identify and recruit these children.

Primary Goal of the MEP. The primary goal of the MEP is to help ensure that all eligible migratory children meet challenging academic standards AND graduate with a high school diploma or complete a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.

ID&R Initiatives and Research. Since the MEP began in 1966, many states and educational organizations have produced publications that describe the ID&R process and provide useful suggestions and tools. Some of the most well-known national efforts include:

* 1981. The Migrant Education Recruitment and Identification Taskforce Project (MERIT) developed tools for ID&R, such as a national identification document and other training materials. ED provided funding for this effort through a grant awarded to the Indiana Department of Education under former section 143 of the ESEA.
* 1986. The Louisiana Department of Education published the Systemic Methodology for Accountability in Recruiter Training Manual (the SMART Manual). ED provided funding for this effort through a grant under former section 143 of the ESEA.
* 1989. The Pennsylvania MEP produced four ID&R publications: (1) a guide for recruiters, (2) a guide for administrators, (3) a reference supplement, and (4) a research report entitled The Effects of Migration on Children: An Ethnographic Study. ED provided funding for this effort through a grant under the former section 143 of the ESEA.

How to Use the Manual

Language. Although ease of reading and clarity were important in the development of this manual, the text may present some difficulties, particularly for those who speak English as their second language (ESL). Because this is a technical manual, the language has not been modified; however, language accessibility has been taken into consideration in developing the National ID&R Curriculum, which supplements this manual.

Chapter Learning Objectives. Learning objectives are included at the beginning of each chapter. The lists of objectives will offer the reader a preview of the material covered in each chapter as well as a tool to enable the reader to self-check to see if he or she has understood the major concepts in the chapter. Checklists that mirror the learning objectives in each chapter and depict concrete action steps that recruiters and administrators should take after mastering the material in the National ID&R Manual are provided in Appendix XVI.

Lessons Learned. In recognition of the experience of the ID&R community, OME has interspersed “lessons learned” from veteran ID&R staff throughout the manual. Lessons learned reflect advice regarding both strategies to adopt and pitfalls to avoid. These lessons learned help new and veteran recruiters benefit from the experience of others.

Tips from MEP Staff. Throughout the manual, the reader will see quotations that are indented and italicized. These quotations are often tips, pieces of advice, or “good ideas” from MEP practitioners. Some are taken from state and past federal manuals, which are referenced. Others represent powerful ideas heard from recruiters and administrators at meetings and forums. In some cases, the wording has been changed to make the idea clearer.

Resources and References. Appendix XVII: Resource and Reference List includes citation information for and links to resources referenced in the manual, including general resources, useful websites, and resources referenced in specific chapters and appendices of the manual. While hyperlinks are included in the chapters and appendices, readers will find a complete listing in Appendix XVII.

Children and Youth. For purposes of this manual, the term “child” refers to any individual who is not older than age 21 or is not yet at a grade level at which the local education agency provides a free public education as defined in section 1115(c)(1)(A) of ESEA, as amended, and 34 CFR § 200.103(a).[[1]](#footnote-2) **However, readers should be aware that the term “child” as it is used in the manual includes children, youth, and perhaps even young adults**.

Recruiter. For purposes of this manual, the term “recruiter” refers to any individual who gathers facts for a determination of a child’s eligibility for the MEP.

1. Section 1304(c)(2) of the ESEA requires each SEA to implement its MEP program and projects in a manner consistent with the objectives of section 1115(b) and (d) of the ESEA. To be consistent with 1115(b) and (d), a MEP participant must also meet the eligibility requirements described in 1115(c)(1)(A) of the ESEA. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)