



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Dear Chief State School Officer:

I want to take this opportunity to inform you of a new national initiative designed to improve the electronic exchange, among the States, of critical educational and health information for migrant children. This initiative implements a statutory requirement found in Section 1308(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. I ask for your assistance and support in the implementation of this initiative.

The timely transfer of education and health records for migrant children between schools has been a longstanding challenge. Migrant children often enroll in multiple schools and school districts for varying amounts of time each year as their families migrate in search of temporary or seasonal work in agriculture or fishing. State Migrant Education Program (MEP) staff continue to find it difficult to share and consolidate student information that schools, local educational agencies, and States, collect on migrant children in a timely and meaningful way that helps school personnel make appropriate decisions when the students arrive. Without timely access to the critical information contained in these records, school personnel often struggle to enroll migrant students, make appropriate grade and course placement decisions, and ensure the accrual of secondary course credits.

In response to these needs and the congressional mandate in Sec. 1308(b) of the ESEA of 1965, as amended by NCLB of 2001, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) is implementing a Migrant Student Record Exchange Initiative. This initiative will (1) establish standards for the minimum education and health data that each State must collect and maintain in its existing electronic State migrant student record system; (2) develop an "electronic exchange" that will link all States' migrant student record systems to facilitate the consolidation of migrant students' education and health information; and (3) create a web-based consolidated migrant student record that can be used by authorized school personnel to facilitate school enrollment, grade/course placement, and the accrual of secondary course credits.

At the heart of this initiative is the Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX). On September 30, 2006, the ED contracted with Deloitte Consulting and its partners to design, develop, and deploy the MSIX. The MSIX does not replace existing State migrant student record systems, rather it will link them in a minimally invasive manner to collect, consolidate, and make available critical education and health data. The MSIX will also leverage available information provided by the States to ED's Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) system to ease the data collection burden on States.

Deloitte will develop the MSIX in accordance with the federal requirements for ensuring the privacy and security of health and educational data as set forth in the Privacy Act of 1974, the

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Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (“HIPAA”), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition, the Department will provide managerial oversight to ensure and verify the MSIX remains in compliance with all current federal privacy statutes and is modified accordingly to reflect any changes to those statutes.

In order to facilitate information-sharing between your State and the team leading the MSIX effort (i.e., staff from the ED’s Office of Migrant Education and Deloitte Consulting), we will designate each State’s Director of Migrant Education as the State MSIX Lead. We expect each State MSIX Lead will facilitate information sharing between his/her state and the MSIX project team by:

1. Serving as the designated point of contact between your State and the MSIX project team;
2. Coordinating with State experts (such as local school officials and state educational agency personnel) to gather information that will help to address student record exchange policy questions and procedural issues;
3. Disseminating information about the MSIX and the records exchange initiative to stakeholders within your State; and
4. Designating a MSIX Technical Lead who will be responsible for providing technical information and expertise about your State’s existing migrant student record system.

OME staff will contact your State MEP Director to request that he/she designate a State MSIX Technical Lead by **December 21, 2006**.

As the MSIX is designed, developed, and implemented, States can anticipate that the MSIX Team will reach out to them for consultation and for volunteers to participate in MSIX pilot projects, user groups, focus groups, and special interest meetings. I strongly encourage your State’s full participation in these opportunities as your staff’s input will provide invaluable insight on how the MSIX can best be designed to meet the needs of educational personnel in your State to provide coordinated educational and health services to your State’s migrant children.

Additional information on the Migrant Records Exchange Initiative can be found on the OME website at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/recordstransfer.html>. If you or your State Migrant Education Program staff have any questions regarding the Migrant Student Records Exchange Initiative, please do not hesitate to contact Francisco Garcia at 202-260-1127 or Jennifer K. Dozier at (202) 205-4421.

Sincerely,



Henry L. Johnson
Assistant Secretary

cc: State Directors of Migrant Education

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