

# Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program 2019-20 State Evaluation Report

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*May 2021*



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
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## Introduction

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education’s (PDE) Migrant Education Program (PA-MEP) exists to supplement the education of children of migrant workers. PA-MEP is funded through a federal formula-driven allocation for the state and each project area, based on child count and mobility factors. PA-MEP serves a varied population of children and youth from birth through age 21 and their families in an effort to improve their educational outcomes, which are potentially jeopardized by obstacles such as poverty, high mobility, language barriers, cultural adjustment, and limited access to health care. PA-MEP provides a wide range of services such as: supplemental and enrichment learning opportunities; in-home support services; language and cultural support; preschool services; student leadership programs; postsecondary enrollment support; student advocacy; and efforts to increase parent involvement.

Children and youth are identified and recruited to PA-MEP based on several eligibility criteria. The term ‘migratory child’ means a child or youth (ages 3-21) who made a qualifying move in the preceding 36 months— “(A) as a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher; or “(B) with, or to join/ precede, a parent or spouse who is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher. Components of a qualifying move:

- Across school district lines;
- From one residence to another;
- Due to economic necessity; and
- In the preceding 36 months:<sup>1</sup>

Pennsylvania is divided into nine project areas for the purposes of program implementation and management. Each project area has a manager that oversees operations and reporting responsibilities.

Each project area manager reports to PDE’s Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction and has a staff of individuals handling various aspects of program implementation, including recruiters, student support specialists, and data specialists. The following map illustrates the division of Pennsylvania into the nine project areas.

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<sup>1</sup> From Migrant Education Program 2017 Non-Regulatory Guidance, page 12.



had traditionally. This unexpected, inherent change to this program year influenced the program's ability to operate in three primary ways.

First, the program suffered in terms of identification and recruitment. The PA-MEP relies on several methods to identify potentially eligible students. Schools are a primary source of referrals and identification. Additionally, program staff visit and establish relationships with employers in eligible industries and those employers refer workers and families to the program and/or provide opportunities for PA-MEP staff to come on-site to interview workers to determine eligibility. Finally, PA-MEP staff may go into regions and neighborhoods where migrant families have previously been identified and go door to door to identify families who may be eligible. These employer and field identification methods were hampered by the pandemic as staff were often restricted from workplaces, workplaces may have been closed, and families may have been hesitant to answer unannounced visits to their home. Further, project area staff were, for a portion of the year, not permitted by their employers to be out in the field for such activities until restrictions were eased and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) was provided.

For some of these same reasons, PA-MEP staff faced challenges in serving and supporting children and families, as they were not able to provide in-home services or campus-based programs for a portion of the year, particularly during the summer when the bulk of direct services occur.

Finally, data collection and availability were influenced, as state assessments that were scheduled for spring 2020 were canceled, limiting some of the outcomes information that would normally be available for determining progress on performance measures.

Evaluators will continue to monitor the program's needs, family and student needs, and data collection and evaluation methods to ensure that evaluation remains relevant and useable while minimizing data burden. Program leaders and evaluators will collaborate to identify the best methods of collecting information in light of pandemic conditions and restrictions.

## **EVALUATION DESIGN**

PDE, through Chester County Regional Education Services, contracted with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to conduct a comprehensive external evaluation of PA-MEP for the 2019-20 program year. Pennsylvania is required to evaluate the program in order to fulfill federal requirements under Title I, Part C, Sections 1301(4); 1303(e); 1304(b)(1) and (2); 1304(c)(5); 1304(d); 1306(a)(1)(C) and (D), as follows:

34 CFR 200.84 - Responsibilities of SEAs for evaluating the effectiveness of the PA-MEP. Each SEA must determine the effectiveness of its program through a written evaluation that measures the implementation and results achieved by the program against the State's performance targets in § 200.83(a)(1), particularly for those students who have priority for

service as defined in section 1304(d) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.

The purpose of the evaluation of PA-MEP is to examine program implementation and outcomes and to build capacity within project areas to examine results and make programming decisions based on data. The general questions that this evaluation answers include:

- To what extent are programs being implemented?
- Are migrant students meeting state accountability targets?
- To what extent are programs for migrant students impacting student outcomes?

To examine program implementation, evaluators identified current practices and instruments used to collect implementation information. During and prior to the 2019-20 school year, these sources or practices included data/report completion, program enrollment, demographics, service delivery data, annual monitoring reports, and project area reports. PA-MEP's MIS2000 database is the primary data warehouse that all project areas use to manage, track, and query migrant child and youth information.

To look at program results, evaluators examined individual child and youth data from PA-MEP's database pertaining to needs assessment, service delivery, graduation and drop-out status, state academic assessment results, and postsecondary plans.

Evaluators collected 2019-20 data from the ACCESS for ELLs<sup>2</sup> assessments at the state level to examine migrant student academic achievement.

PA-MEP staff at the state and local level receive information and guidance in advance about what data will be collected, forms and methods of submission, and the purpose of the data/information collection as it relates to state reporting and evaluation. This occurs through annual (or more frequent) training, managers meetings, and ongoing communication. PA-MEP staff have access to PDE, contracted state evaluators, and the contracted state PA-MEP data team in the event that there are questions. Project areas are also provided local program evaluation findings, guidance on how to use evaluation results locally, and directions for running reports from MIS2000 in order to look at their own progress toward federal outcomes measures and state *Service Delivery Plan* goals. This provides a consistent basis for project areas to examine their progress and outcomes using similar terms and methods.

This report addresses the implementation, results, and outcomes of the PA-MEP for 2019-20 and evaluator recommendations for programmatic changes and refinement of the evaluation plan.

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<sup>2</sup> While the name of the assessment is an acronym standing for Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners, ACCESS for ELLs is the formal name of the assessment.

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

The primary audience for this report is the PA-MEP team at PDE, though the results can be useful for other groups. The state evaluation of the PA-MEP for 2019-20 focused on the connection of children and youth identified as migrant to their needs, service receipt, and outcomes. Because of the volume of findings related to needs assessment and service delivery, a selection of findings related to priority areas are shared in this report. Throughout this report, a narrative explanation precedes the graphical representation of results. For ease of reading, percentages have been rounded, which may result in totals not equal to 100 percent. Additionally, in tables or graphs where “0%” appears, the reader should note that these represent values of less than 1 percent expressed as a rounded value. Instances of 0 percent where the item truly represents zero instances or individuals have been removed from graphs. Likewise, where blank cells appear in data tables, the value is zero.

Readers should note the difference between “unknown” and “blank (no entry)” in tables and graphs. “Unknown” means that the PA-MEP staff was unable to determine the proper coding for that individual and marked that item as “unknown.” This is different from counts of “blank (no entry),” which means the staff left that particular indicator blank. Findings cannot be extrapolated from blank fields.

Some graphs contained in this report include both the number of instances (in a data table) along with an illustration of the proportional relationship of those figures. This type of graph is typically used when the categories are mutually exclusive and individual category percentages add to 100 percent. Other graphs only include the percentage of instances. This type of graph is typically used when multiple categories can apply to a single item (respondents could select all items that applied). Data tables that include percentages are also used in cases where the percentage is a more accurate representation of the program or the population being examined. The type of illustration included will indicate to the reader the most appropriate way to examine the findings. Some sections provide ranges (minimum/maximum) of results in order to demonstrate the variability of results.

The findings provided within this report should be used to guide program management and assist PDE in providing technical assistance to project areas in order to improve implementation and outcomes.

It is important to remember that children and youth may receive services from other sources, so it is not possible to attribute outcomes solely to this program's efforts. Further, while comparisons may be made to prior program years, it is important to keep in mind that the PA-MEP population changes to some extent year to year due to the 36-month eligibility window and mobility factors. While some students may continue from one year to the next, new students join the program or leave the program each year. The proportions of continuing, new, or exiting students change annually and throughout the year. Readers should consider this caveat when interpreting results and comparisons.

This report includes detailed explanations of the program’s implementation and outcomes throughout the Findings section. In addition, this report includes sections that use information contained in the Findings section of this report in the context of the Government Performance and Results Act measures and program goals. The report concludes with evaluator reflections and recommendations.

Disclaimer: The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is authorized by Title I, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended. This tool and all its components were developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Migrant Education (OME). The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the ED, and no official endorsement by the ED should be inferred. You are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, alteration, or copying of this tool or its components is strictly prohibited without prior approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, specifically the Pennsylvania Migrant Education Program.

## Executive Summary

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) Migrant Education Program (PA-MEP) exists to supplement the education of children of migrant workers and migrant out-of-school youth. PA-MEP is funded through a federal formula-driven allocation for the state and each project area based on child count and mobility factors. PA-MEP serves a varied population of children from birth through age 21 and their families in an effort to improve their educational outcomes, which are potentially jeopardized by obstacles such as poverty, high mobility, language barriers, cultural adjustment, and limited access to health care. PA-MEP provides a wide range of services such as supplemental and enrichment learning opportunities; in-home support services; language and cultural support; preschool services; student leadership programs; postsecondary enrollment support; student advocacy; and efforts to increase parent involvement.

Children and youth are identified and recruited to PA-MEP based on several specific criteria related to recent qualifying moves, age, high school completion, and type of temporary/seasonal work.<sup>3</sup>

PA-MEP divides Pennsylvania into nine project areas for program implementation and management. Each project area has a manager (three individuals manage more than one project area) who reports to PDE's Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction and a staff of individuals handling various aspects of program implementation, including recruiters, student support specialists, and data specialists.

### EVALUATION DESIGN

The purpose of the PA-MEP state evaluation is to examine program implementation and results and build capacity within project areas to examine results and make decisions based on evaluation findings. PDE, through Chester County Regional Education Services, contracted with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to conduct a comprehensive external evaluation of PA-MEP as required under Title I, Part C, Sections 1301(4); 1303(e); 1304(b)(1) and (2); 1304(c)(5); 1304(d); 1306(a)(1)(C) and (D):

34 CFR 200.84 - Responsibilities of SEAs (State Education Agencies) for evaluating the effectiveness of the PA-MEP. Each SEA must determine the effectiveness of its program through a written evaluation that measures the implementation and results achieved by the program against the State's performance targets in § 200.83(a)(1), particularly for those students who have priority for service as defined in section 1304(d) of the ESEA.

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<sup>3</sup> Migrant Education Program Title I, Part C Guidance; Education of Migratory Children under Title I, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/PA-MEP/PA-MEPguidance2010.doc>

In analyzing the program's implementation and outcomes, evaluators examined extracts from MIS2000 (the PA-MEP database), student results on state academic and English language assessments, student data from the Kindergarten Preparation Inventory (KPI), project area monitoring reports, and other data. Evaluators collected data from state<sup>4</sup> and local sources and then analyzed it overall for the state, for each project area, and by student category, English fluency, and/or Priority for Service status, as applicable.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

A total of 4,824 children and youth were enrolled in PA-MEP for at least one day from September 1, 2019 through August 30, 2020,<sup>5</sup> which is 433 fewer students than the prior year. At 74 percent, the largest group falls into the school-age category, followed by 17 percent who were not yet of school age (birth to age 6, not yet enrolled in a K-12 school), and 9 percent who were out-of-school youth.

Most of the PA-MEP population was made up of individuals who identified themselves using federal race categories as Hispanic (79 percent). Spanish was the most common home language (74 percent), followed by those with a language designation of Nepali (7 percent), Swahili (7 percent), or another language (12 percent).

## **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS**

Project areas conduct a needs assessment for each child and youth in order to identify risk factors that may influence success. Program staff use a variety of data available to them as well as their professional experience to determine a child's status related to each need indicator. The program maintains a data guide that contains definitions and hierarchy for data coding. PA-MEP uses the results of this needs assessment as a tool to link children and youth with services. Needs assessment data was available for 4,588 children and youth (95 percent of children and youth).

Based on needs assessment data, 40 percent of 4,824 students in 2019-20 were identified as "Priority for Service" at any time during the program year. Priority for Service is a designation used throughout the program and its evaluation to indicate individuals who have certain risk factors. PA-MEP staff are to use this determination to serve Priority for Service children and youth first or to prioritize individuals for service when resource limitations exist.

Overall, 83 percent of children and youth age 3 or older were not fluent in English. Based on analysis of service data for nonfluent students age 3 and older, 93 percent received English-related services or support; 96 percent of nonfluent Priority for Service students

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<sup>4</sup> The evaluation team completed the necessary confidentiality protocols for state-level data collection.

<sup>5</sup> The PA-MEP fiscal year runs October 1 through September 30. Evaluators use an adjusted period of September 1 to August 30 in order to capture one full school year and one full summer, as this is how data is attributed.

received English-related services and 90 percent of non-Priority for Service students received English services. A majority of nonfluent K-12 students who were enrolled before June 2020 (93 percent) were coded as receiving English services through their district's English as a Second Language (ESL) program during the school year.

Preschool enrollment has long been a priority of the PA-MEP. Of children age 3 and older and not yet enrolled in K-12 school, 62 percent were enrolled in a preschool program.

According to initial needs assessments, 85 percent of K-12 students needed to improve in reading and 84 percent needed to improve in math. Staff could use state and local assessments, report card grades, teacher determinations, student records, or their professional observation, if no other data sources were available, to make this determination.

Of the K-12 students who were not proficient in reading (2,884), 84 percent received reading-specific supplemental services. Further analysis revealed that 88 percent of Priority for Service students with a reading need received supplemental reading services through at least one category, while 81 percent of non-Priority for Service students received supplemental reading services, providing evidence that Priority for Service students took priority for service delivery.

Of the K-12 students not proficient in math (2,845), 77 percent received math-specific supplemental services. Further analysis indicated that 82 percent of Priority for Service students received supplemental math services, compared to 74 percent of non-Priority for Service students, providing evidence that Priority for Service students took priority for service delivery.

Out-of-school youth have several options for education support and their needs assessment reflects some of these, including interest or participation status related to ESL programs, Adult Basic Education and/or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs, job training, or school entry. Of the 426 nonfluent out-of-school youth, 63 percent attended, enrolled in, were interested in, or had completed an ESL program. Additionally, 17 percent were interested in, enrolled in, attended, or completed a GED program; 19 percent were interested in, enrolled in, attended, or completed job training; and 5 percent were interested in or enrolled in K-12 school.

Evaluators also examined service delivery overall, as this is an element of federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures for PA-MEP. Of the 4,824 students enrolled one day or more during the 2019-20 year, 4,490 (93 percent) were coded as having received services under one or more categories based on service delivery data or action codes indicating delivery of services or materials. Of those individuals not having any service delivery indicated (334), 30 could not be explained by being younger than 3 years old, enrolling at the end of the program year, having a short enrollment or residence, refusing services, or the PA-MEP were unable to contact or locate the student after multiple attempts.

## **STUDENT OUTCOMES**

### **Kindergarten Preparation Inventory (KPI)**

For the 2018-19 program year, PA-MEP instituted a new pre-kindergarten skill development instrument: the KPI. Complementing the KPI was a toolkit of resources, lessons, and manipulatives that staff could use to support students in developing skills that they would need as they transitioned to kindergarten. The 2019-20 year was the second year this resource was used.

KPI data was available for 178 children, which is 38 percent of the 466 children who were age 3 or older and not yet in kindergarten enrolled in PA-MEP during this year. Considering a child's result as of their last KPI administration, regardless of timing, 46 percent of all children included in analysis demonstrated skills at the mastery level, 43 percent were in progress, and 12 percent were considered as not yet meeting expectations. As might be expected, older children had greater percentages reaching the mastery level.

There were 111 children with two data points, or a pre and a post administration. Of these 111 children, 87 percent improved the number of skills demonstrated from pre to post. Additionally, one child demonstrated all 27 skills on both the pre and post administration, and 5 percent demonstrated the same number of skills, but scored in the mastery level. Five percent demonstrated the same number of skills but were not at a mastery level. Three percent declined. Older students were more likely to show improvement.

### **State Academic Assessments**

Pennsylvania annually administers several assessments in core academic areas to public school students: the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) in grades 3-8, the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) to students having significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3-8 and 11, and the Algebra I, biology, and literature Keystone Exams to secondary students, with students re-taking the Keystone Exams until they reach a proficient level. Their score is banked and applied to their grade 11 year, or their grade 11 Keystone Exam is used for accountability if the student had not yet reached a proficient level.

PSSA, PASA, and Keystone Exam data were not available for the 2020 year; they were canceled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and widespread facility and program closures in March 2020.

### **State English Proficiency Assessment**

The ACCESS for ELLs assessment is a language proficiency assessment for K-12 students and is one component of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium's comprehensive, standards-driven system designed to improve the teaching and learning of English language learners. Pennsylvania is a part of the WIDA Consortium. The purpose of the assessment is to monitor student progress in English language proficiency on a yearly basis and to serve as a criterion to aid in determining when students have attained full language proficiency.

ACCESS for ELLs data was available for all students enrolled in a Pennsylvania public school who took the assessment. For the 2019-20 program year, data was available for 2,297 migrant students in kindergarten through grade 12 (959 Priority for Service, 1,338 non-Priority for Service), which is 85 percent of all K-12 PA-MEP nonfluent students enrolled during the school year (2,689) prior to June 2020. Students only have data if they were enrolled in public school in Pennsylvania at the time the assessment occurred.

Overall results indicate a majority of students (88 percent) scored in the lowest three (of six) performance levels. The largest group, at 36 percent, scored in the first level, Entering. The second and third levels, Emerging and Developing, were the same (26 percent each).

Priority for Service factors influences results, as 94 percent of Priority for Service students scored in the bottom three levels compared to 85 percent of non-Priority for Service students.

Slightly more than half (61 percent) of these nonfluent students with 2019-20 ACCESS for ELLs data also had 2018-19 ACCESS for ELLs data for comparison. Based on a comparison of each student's composite scale score as directed by the ACCESS for ELLs Interpretive Guide, 71 percent of students with two consecutive years of data improved, 8 percent maintained the same level, and 21 percent declined.

### **Graduation, Promotion, GED, and Dropout**

Migrant students have a higher risk of not graduating from high school because of the mobile nature of the migrant lifestyle. One of the areas of focus for the PA-MEP is to keep students in school and ensure that they graduate. A total of 143 students were enrolled in grade 12 during the 2019-20 school year and had graduation information available, of which 90.2 percent (129) graduated, which is higher than the prior year, where 87.7 percent graduated. In addition to grade 12 students graduating, analysis revealed that one student enrolled in grade 11 successfully graduated in 2019-20 by earning additional credits and meeting requirements. This brings the total 2019-20 graduate count to 130 students.

Overall, 96 percent of the 2,578 K-12 students whose status was known graduated or were promoted. According to promotion information for secondary students (grades 7-12) whose graduation and promotion status could be determined (1,047 students), 95 percent were promoted to the next grade or graduated.

Four out-of-school youth earned their GED credential during 2019-20, which is three more than the prior year. Additionally, 11 youth were listed as pursuing their GED, which is five more than the prior year.

Evaluators identified 32 students as dropping out either during the 2019-20 year (15) or between 2018-19 and 2019-20 (15); one additional student dropped out during 2019-20 but then re-enrolled before the end of the year. This provides a net dropout count of 31 students, which is fewer than the prior year's net count of 35. Two students who dropped out were coded as pursuing their GED credential.

Analysis also examined the frequency with which students who dropped out – in this or a prior year – re-enrolled in school. Nine students who previously dropped out re-enrolled in school during 2019-20, which is one greater than the prior year.

## **CONCLUSION**

PA-MEP provides a variety of services to migrant children and youth and nearly all children and youth receive services through PA-MEP or another source in line with their needs. Migrant children and youth face a unique set of challenges, including mobility and limited English fluency, which influence student outcomes. Based on evaluation findings, evaluators offer the following recommendations:

- Continue to focus efforts on: 1) nonfluent and Priority for Service students, 2) any student who is identified as declining on academic measures, 3) students who may be at risk of dropping out or being retained, particularly at the secondary level. Special focus should be placed on Priority for Service students who are not achieving success on key program areas as identified by performance indicators.
- While PA-MEP attempts to serve all eligible children to some extent, when resource limitations exist, ensure that children and youth who are Priority for Service, nonfluent, over age 3, and/or have a need in a particular area are served first.
- PA-MEP should continue to focus efforts on preventing secondary students from dropping out.
- As the program considers how to best support migrant children and youth during and following the pandemic, PA-MEP staff should consider elevating the needs of those with the greatest challenges.
- Evaluators and PDE should continue to collaborate to review program components and new initiatives to ensure alignment and efficiency.

## Program Highlights

In a lengthy report it is easy to get lost in the numbers, percentages, and graphs, no matter how helpful they are in understanding the program and its outcomes. Additionally, the evaluation report is mostly a presentation of the program year as a snapshot without much perspective of program progress. In this section, evaluators present several program highlights that showcase program success and progress. Program areas for improvement are addressed in the Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations section at the end of this report.

- Year to year, PA-MEP consistently serves nearly all eligible students who are at least 3 years old.
- Evidence consistently indicates that Priority for Service students are served first.
- Both graduation rate and dropout counts improved over the prior year.
- Of graduates, 72 percent indicated that they planned to attend a two-year or four-year college.
- Of 1,047 students in grades 7-12, 95 percent were promoted to the next grade or graduated. Overall, 96 percent of the 2,578 K-12 students whose status was known graduated or were promoted.
- A total of 2,507 children and youth received summer instructional services (reading, math, ESL, other instruction, and preschool), with more than 2,000 of these being K-12 students. These data indicate that 79 percent of 3,178 present and eligible children and youth (excluding graduates) received summer instructional services. Specifically for K-12 students, data indicate that 82 percent of K-12 students who were believed to be present in the state during summer received summer instructional services.
- Four out-of-school youth earned their GED credential during 2019-20, which is three more than the prior year. Additionally, 11 youth were listed as pursuing their GED, which is five more than the prior year.
- Of students having 2019 and 2020 ACCESS for ELLs data, 71 percent improved.
- Of the 779 high school students with information available related to their completion of higher-level math courses, 49 percent had successfully completed Algebra I or a higher-level math course as of their earliest needs assessment for the year. Particular to grade 11 [for which the program has a performance indicator] (163 students), 76 percent had successfully completed Algebra I or a higher-level math course as of their earliest needs assessment.

## Goal Achievement

Information in this section answers the evaluation question: “To what extent is Pennsylvania’s Migrant Education Program meeting established implementation and outcome expectations?”

### **MEASURABLE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES FROM THE *SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN***

Through the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process, PA-MEP established a *Service Delivery Plan* that included measurable performance objectives (MPOs). In 2017, PA-MEP released its updated *Service Delivery Plan*, with new goal areas established beginning with the 2019-20 program year. The status of these objectives is outlined here and show PA-MEP’s progress toward these targets as of the end of the 2019-20 year.

**Reading Target:** Close 50 percent of the gap between migrant students and all students by increasing the percent proficient in English Language Arts to 39.3 percent by 2021, increasing the percent proficient by 3.7 percentage points annually.

Pennsylvania has historically examined this indicator using state reading assessment data as there are no other consistently available reading assessments across the commonwealth. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all state assessments normally scheduled for the spring were canceled in 2020. As such, no results can be determined for the 2020 year. State assessments administration, and thus state evaluation analysis, is expected to resume for 2021.

**Reading Objective A:** Beginning in spring 2018, 50 percent of Priority for Service students in grades 3-8 receiving supplemental academic instruction in reading will make PSSA Reading gains of one proficiency level or more over the prior year PSSA results.

**Reading Objective B:** Beginning in spring 2018, 60 percent of non-Priority for Service students in grades 3-8 who are below proficient in reading and receive supplemental academic instruction in reading will make PSSA Reading gains of one proficiency level or more over the prior year PSSA results.

**Mathematics Target:** Close 50 percent of the gap between migrant students and All Students by increasing the percent proficient in mathematics or Algebra I to 26.7 percent by 2021, increasing the percent proficient by 2.7 percentage points annually.

**Mathematics Objective:** Beginning in spring 2018, 50 percent of Priority for Service students in grades 3-8 receiving supplemental academic instruction in mathematics will make PSSA Mathematics gains of one proficiency level or more over the prior year PSSA results.

**Reading and Math Targets and Objectives:** Pennsylvania has historically examined this indicator using state reading assessment data as there are no other consistently available reading assessments across the commonwealth. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all state assessments normally scheduled for the spring were canceled in 2020. As such, no results can be determined for the 2020 year. State assessment administration, and thus state evaluation analysis, is expected to resume for 2021.

**High School Graduation Target:** By 2021, increase the percentage of grade 12 migrant students who graduate by five percentage points from the 2015-16 baseline of 87 percent.

The 2019-20 PA-MEP grade 12 graduation rate was 90.2 percent, which is higher than 2018-19 rate of 87.7 percent (difference of 2.5 percentage points). Cumulatively, PA-MEP's 2019-20 graduation rate represents an improvement of more than 3 percentage points over the 2015-16 baseline.

**High School Graduation Objective:** By the end of 2020-21, 80 percent of migrant students who complete the Diploma Project or other supplemental college readiness activities will graduate after four years of high school.

In order to examine this measure, evaluators looked at the students who were in grade 12 for the 2019-20 school year and 1) their graduation status, 2) participation and completion status for the Diploma Project and college readiness activities, and 3) grade progression to determine their number of years in high school.

Because of changes to the Diploma Project's structure, data are not entirely comparable to prior years. In 2017-18 and before, the Diploma Project included five student units and 5 parent units. Because of this change and that graduation requirements may change over time, evaluators focused on Diploma Project status and college readiness for the 2019-20 and 2018-19 years, which would be the period of time where such information would be most relevant to students (grades 11 and 12).

There were 143 grade 12 students whose graduation status could be determined, with 129 graduates and 14 non-graduates. Of the 129 graduates, five completed all units of the Diploma Project in 2019-20 or 2018-19 and another 46 participated in the Diploma Project but did not complete it. Of the remaining 78 graduates, 54 participated in other college preparatory activities in 2019-20 or 2018-19. In total, 105 students completed or participated in the Diploma Project or participated in college readiness activities (81 percent). Of these 105, 78 followed an expected grade progression based on the data available (74 percent), six (6 percent) appeared to have skipped one or more grades in the past four years, 15 (14 percent) had data indicating a retention at some point during the past four years, and six could not be determined.

Of the 14 students who did not graduate, eight (57 percent) participated in the Diploma Project or college readiness activities in the most recent two years; none completed the Diploma Project. Also, eight students had data indicating an expected grade progression while six had data indicating a retention or interruption in schooling in the past four years.

The multiple variables and configurations of graduation, participation in or completion of the Diploma Project, participation in college readiness activities, changes to the Diploma Project structure, grade progression, small numbers of students in grade 12, and missing data for students not present in Pennsylvania for all of the past four make it impossible to draw conclusions about the potential impact of program efforts on graduation. Further, the small number of non-graduates – while a positive finding in itself – does not really provide for an appropriate comparison group for graduates. Current data available suggest that graduation may be influenced to a greater degree simply by presence in Pennsylvania and typical high school grade progression than by participation in any particular services. Additional variable isolation and focus on a single combination of factors might improve the identification of an influential relationship.

## **GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS ACT MEASURES**

The Office of Migrant Education at the U.S. Department of Education (ED) established recommended performance measures for the Migrant Education Program under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).<sup>6</sup>

1. The percentage of PA-MEP students (grades 3-8) proficient or higher on their state's reading/language arts achievement test: Of 1,343 migrant students taking the 2019-20 state reading assessments in grades 3-8, 19.7 percent scored in the proficient or advanced levels, which is a slight increase over the prior year's 18.4 percent. By Priority for Service status, 9.4 percent of Priority for Service students scored in the proficient or advanced levels in reading/language arts, while 24.1 percent of students without this designation scored at these levels. This is a slight decline for Priority for Service students but an improvement for students without the Priority for Service designation (2017-18 results showed 9 and 22 percent, respectively).
2. The percentage of PA-MEP students (grades 3-8) proficient or higher on their state's mathematics achievement test: Of the 1,500 migrant students taking the 2019-20 state math assessments in grades 3-8, 10.7 percent scored in the proficient or advanced levels, which is slightly higher than the prior year (9.2 percent). By Priority for Service status, 5.0 percent of Priority for Service students scored in the proficient or advanced levels in math, while 14.1 percent of students without this designation scored at these levels. This is a slight improvement for both Priority for Service students and students without the Priority for Service designation (2017-18 was 4 and 14 percent, respectively).

Reading and Math GPRA: Pennsylvania has historically examined this indicator using state reading assessment data as there are no other consistently available reading assessments across the commonwealth. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, all state assessments normally scheduled for the spring were canceled in

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<sup>6</sup> Programs are required to report on specified measures under Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 80.40(b): <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/searchECFR?idno=34&q1=80&rqn1=PARTNBR&op2=and&q2=&rqn2=Part>

2020. As such, no results can be determined for the 2020 year. State assessment administration, and thus state evaluation analysis, is expected to resume for 2021.

3. The percentage of PA-MEP students who entered grade 11 and had received full credit for Algebra I or a higher math class: Of 163 grade 11 students enrolled during the 2019-20 school year and having math course data available, 76 percent entered grade 11 having already passed Algebra I or a higher math class based on their earliest needs assessment for the 2019-20 year, which is an improvement over the prior year's 68 percent. By Priority for Service status, 60 percent of grade 11 Priority for Service students entered grade 11 having already passed Algebra I or a higher math class, while 85 percent of grade 11 students without this designation entered grade 11 having already passed Algebra I or a higher math class based on their earliest needs assessment for the 2019-20 year.
4. The percentage of PA-MEP students who were enrolled in grades 7-12 and graduated or were promoted to the next grade: Of the 1,362 students in grades 7-12 whose graduation or promotion status could be determined, 95 percent (992 students) either graduated or were promoted, which is an improvement over the prior year's 92 percent. For both Priority for Service and students without this designation the promoted or graduation rate was the same: 95 percent.

## LEADING INDICATORS

The Office of Migrant Education at the ED also established leading indicators.

1. *An increasing percentage of migrant children ages 3-5 will receive instructional services.*<sup>7</sup> For 2019-20, 91 percent of migrant students in the preschool category who were at least 3 years old as of Sept. 1, 2019 received instructional services, which is a slight decline over the prior year's 98 percent.
2. *An increasing percentage of Priority for Service migrant children will receive services.* For 2019-20, 96.8 percent of Priority for Service students received services according to service delivery data, which is slightly lower than the prior year's 97.8 percent.
3. *An increasing percentage of grades 7-12 migrant children will receive instructional services.* For 2019-20, 92 percent of students in grades 7-12 received instructional services, which is a slight decline from the prior year's 95 percent.
4. *An increasing percentage of grade 8 migrant children will score proficient or higher in mathematics.* As the 2020 state math assessments were canceled because of

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<sup>7</sup> Instructional services include reading, math, credit recovery, ESL, Diploma Project (student, those with values of instruction or completed), leadership programs, preschool, other instruction, or 21<sup>st</sup> Century programs from PA-MEP or other sources.

the COVID-19 pandemic, this indicator is not measurable this year. Analysis for this indicator will resume with the 2021 state math assessment.

## Findings

### DEMOGRAPHICS

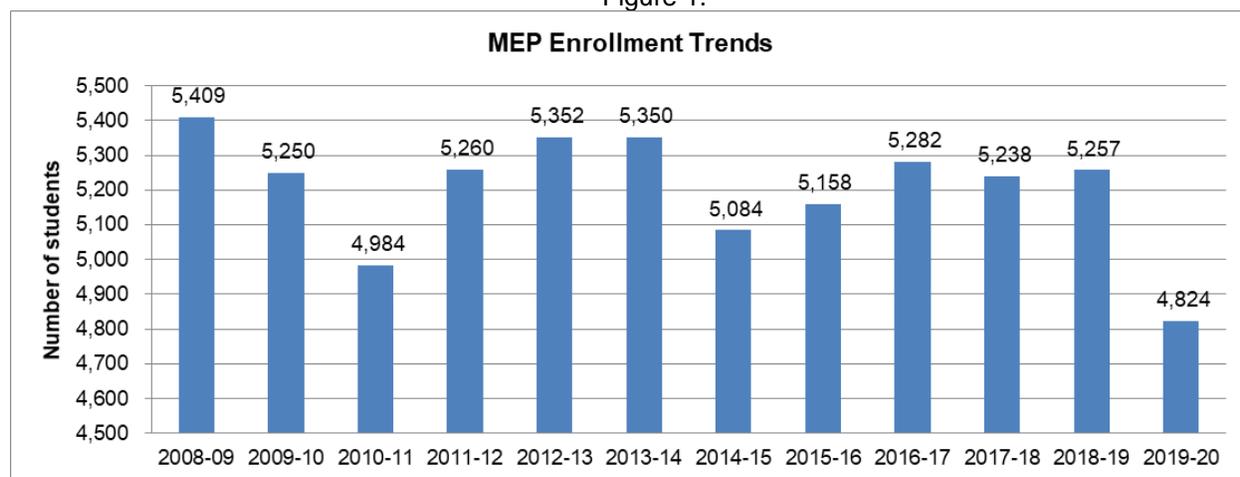
Information in this section answers the evaluation question: “Who are the children and youth that PA-MEP enrolled in the 2019-20 program year?”

In addition to examining outcomes, it is important to look at the demographics of the population included to contextualize results. The 2019-20 evaluation included any migrant child or youth eligible and enrolled for at least one day at any time Sept. 1, 2019 through Aug. 30, 2020.<sup>8</sup> Depending on the type of analysis and data element, results provided in the Findings section may include all children and youth, all individuals within a category, all individuals having data available, or all individuals enrolled within a certain date range. When findings are provided for a sub-set of children and youth, an explanation is provided. Many findings are disaggregated by PA-MEP’s student categories: birth-preschool age, school age, and out-of-school youth. Throughout the remainder of this report, “student” will be used for individuals in any category, as learning activities occur for all groups.

The culture of the migrant population often includes frequent moves and changes in status. Additionally, students gain and lose eligibility throughout the program year. Demographic analysis is provided for all migrant students in Pennsylvania having data (a unique and unduplicated count) and also by category and project area. Demographics are reported by the individual’s earliest enrollment record for the school year or the summer record if the student was not enrolled until summer 2020.

A total of 4,824 eligible children and youth were identified as migrant for 2019-20, which is 433 less than the prior year (2018-19). Enrollment has been fairly stable in recent years, so this decline is attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

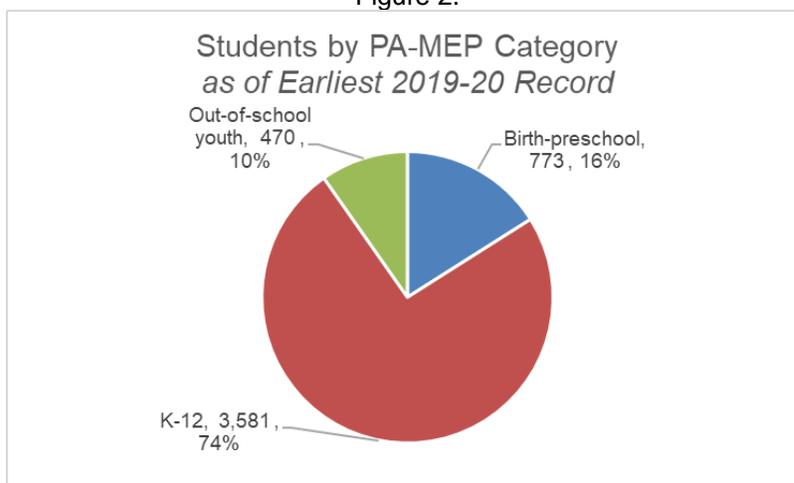
Figure 1.



<sup>8</sup> The PA-MEP fiscal year runs October 1 to September 30. Evaluators use an adjusted period of September 1 to August 30 to capture one full school year and one full summer, as this is how data is typically attributed.

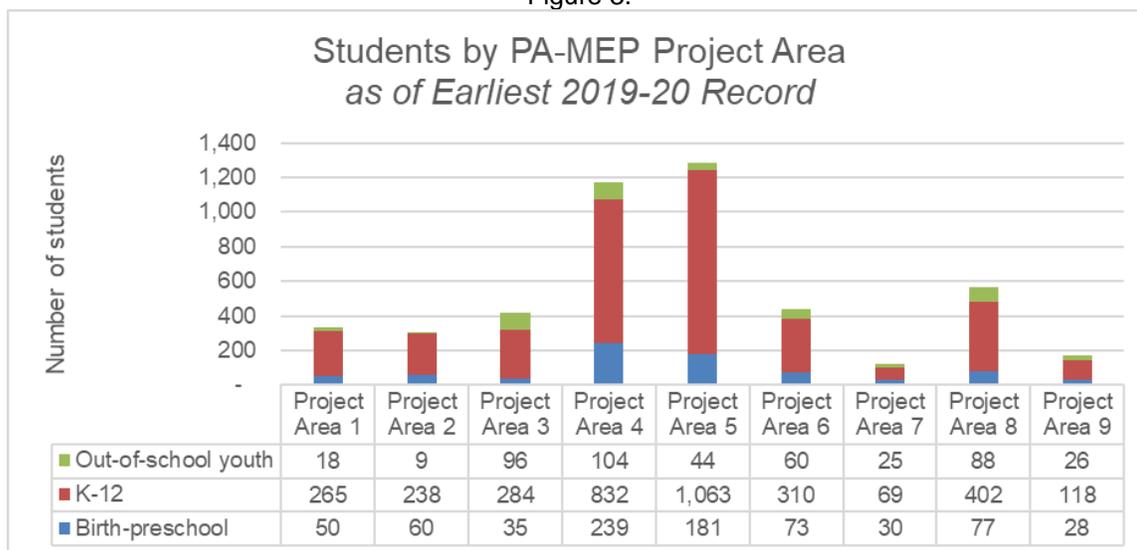
School-age students were the largest group (74 percent) based on students' first 2019-20 enrollment record. Students may change category during the year due to timing of the enrollment record, dropping out of school, enrolling in kindergarten, or out-of-school youth re-enrolling in K-12 school.

Figure 2.



Project Area 5 had the largest enrollment, followed by Project Area 4. Project Area 7 had the smallest number, which has been consistent for several years. Like a student's classification, project area can also change during the year. Mobility is a part of the migrant lifestyle and individuals often move. Unless otherwise specified, students are reported based on their earliest project area for the year. The Pennsylvania Migrant Education Counties map illustrates project area geographic location. Overall and in each project area, school-age migrant children and youth were the largest group. Project Areas 4 and 8 had the largest numbers of out-of-school youth. Project Areas 4 and 5 had the largest numbers of students in the preschool category (birth to age 6, not yet in kindergarten).

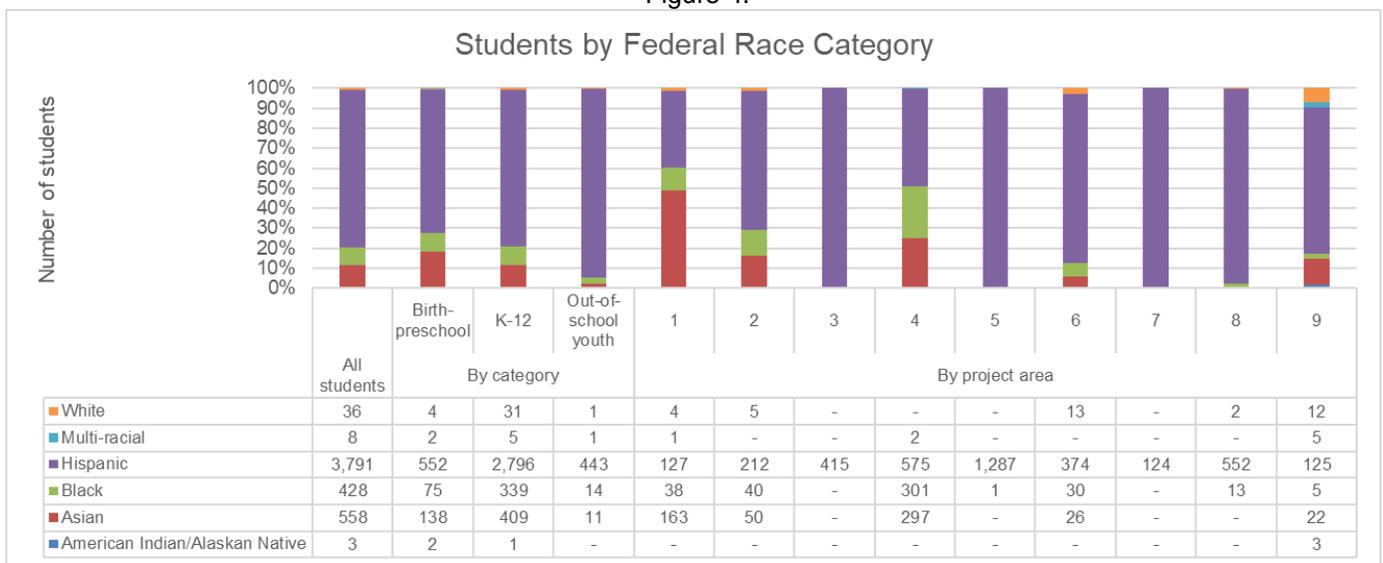
Figure 3.



Of all students in 2019-20, 55 percent of students were male and 45 percent were female. While the birth-preschool age and K-12 categories were approximately half male (53 percent) and half female (47 percent), the majority of out-of-school youth were male (78 percent of out-of-school youth).

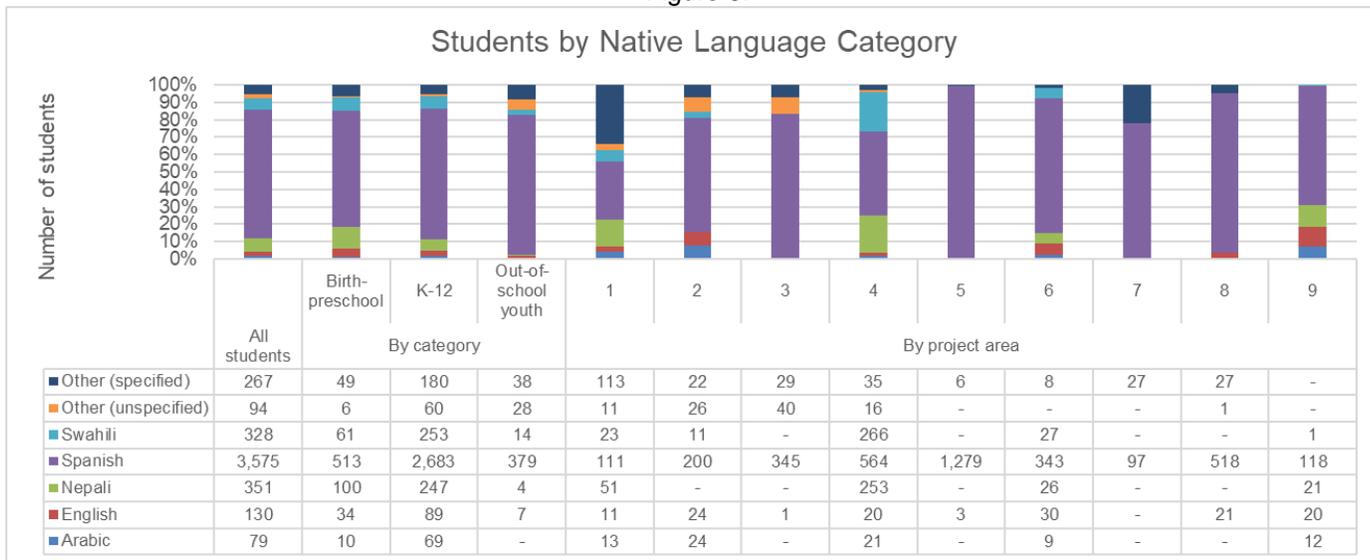
Most of Pennsylvania’s migrant students identified themselves (using federal race options) as Hispanic (79 percent of 4,824 students). While the K-12 student category was similar to the state, out-of-school youth had a higher percentage of Hispanic students (94 percent of out-of-school youth) and birth to preschool age had a lower percentage of Hispanic students (71 percent) and a higher percentage of Asian students (18 percent) than the other two categories. Individual project area racial demographics differed from the state, reflecting a cultural and ethnic diversity.

Figure 4.



Spanish was the most common home language (74 percent of 4,824 students), which is nearly the same percentage as the prior year (73 percent of 5,257 students). The next largest groups included students speaking Nepali as their home language (7 percent) or Swahili (7 percent).<sup>9</sup> These percentages were similar for all three student categories, though out-of-school youth had a higher percentage for Spanish and the birth-preschool population had a higher percentage of students speaking Nepali. Project area differences in race and ethnicity noted previously were also reflected in home language.

Figure 5.



In examining the migrant population that falls into the birth through preschool category, it is important to note that the category includes all children not yet of school age or not yet enrolled in kindergarten. PA-MEP separates these children into two age ranges: those from birth through age 2 and those who are 3 years or older but not yet enrolled in kindergarten. For the purposes of needs assessment and service provision, PA-MEP focuses on those children who are at least 3 years old, though all children may be served. Evaluators calculated age based upon the child’s birthdate and Sept. 1, 2019, as September 1 is a common cut-off date for kindergarten enrollment in Pennsylvania. Children ages 3 or older made up 60 percent of the 773 migrant birth-preschool children.

Age is also an important element for out-of-school youth. For the 2019-20 school year, compulsory school attendance was “until age 17 or graduation, whichever occurs first.”<sup>10</sup> However, there are certain exceptions for children under that age (and as young as 14) for work purposes, particularly farm work purposes, with appropriate school permits. Like the preschool category, evaluators calculated out-of-school youth age as of Sept. 1, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Other languages (specified) include: Burmese, Chin, Creole, French, Indigenous Guatemalan, Indonesian, Karen, Khmer, Kinyarwanda, Mam, Portuguese, Pushtu/Dari, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. These languages are coded in PA-MEP’s MIS2000 database but are not broken down in the graph because of the small percentages of each language (less than 2 percent of students each).

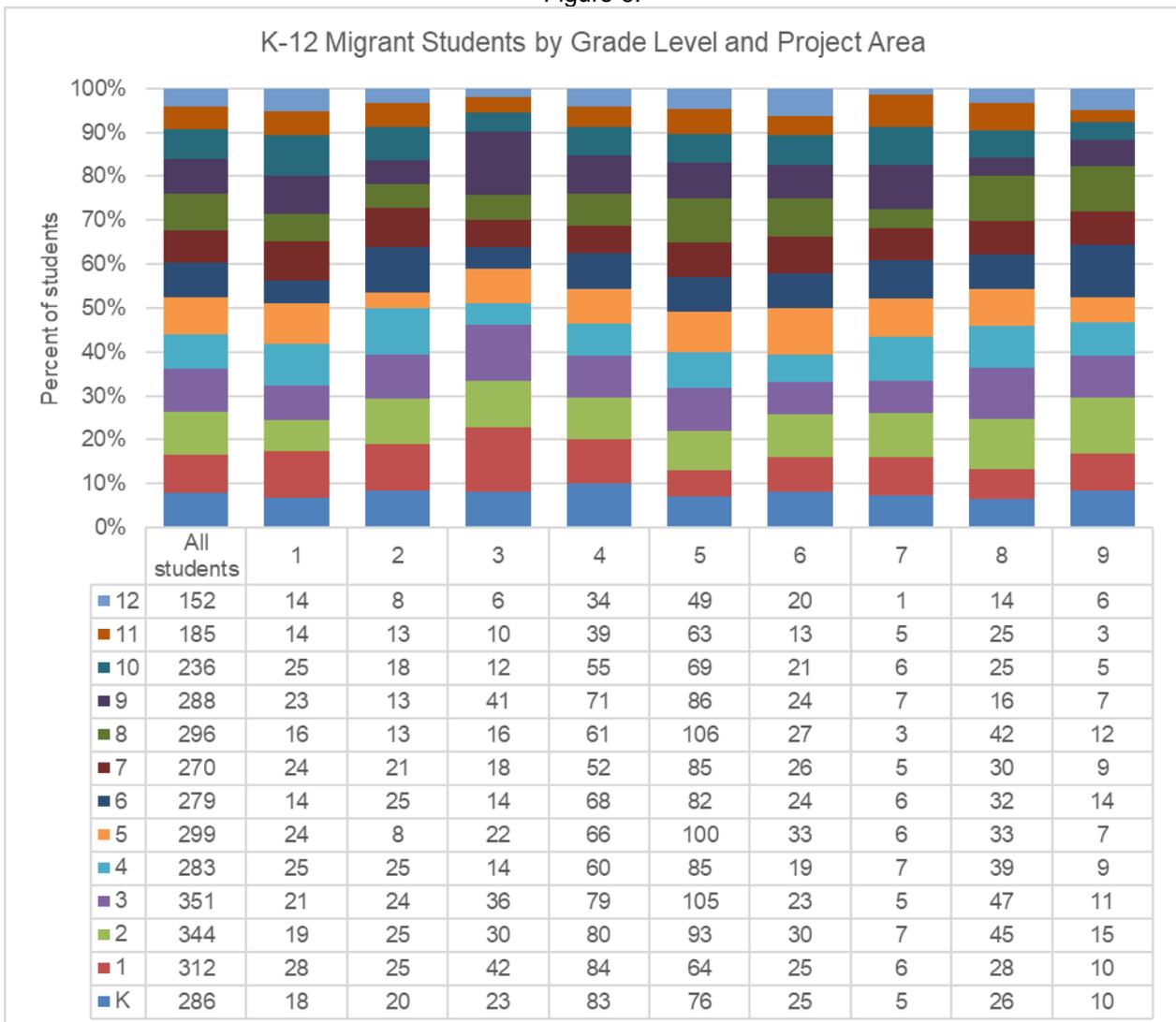
<sup>10</sup> <https://www.education.pa.gov/Policy-Funding/BECS/Purdons/Pages/Truancy.aspx>

Evaluators included those students who were identified as out-of-school youth at the start of the year as well as those students who were initially categorized as K-12 students but later in the year became out-of-school youth (see dropout prevention, page 93).

More than a third of out-of-school youth were 20 years old or older (38 percent) and another 40 percent were 18 or 19 years old; in total, 78 percent were 18 or older and 22 percent were 17 or younger. While these children may have been engaged in qualifying work as permitted in Pennsylvania law, the extent to which these individuals had such valid exclusions and permits is unknown.

Students within the K-12 category made up the majority of migrant students for the 2019-20 program year, with grade distribution relatively similar across grade levels. Percentages by project area were similarly evenly distributed.

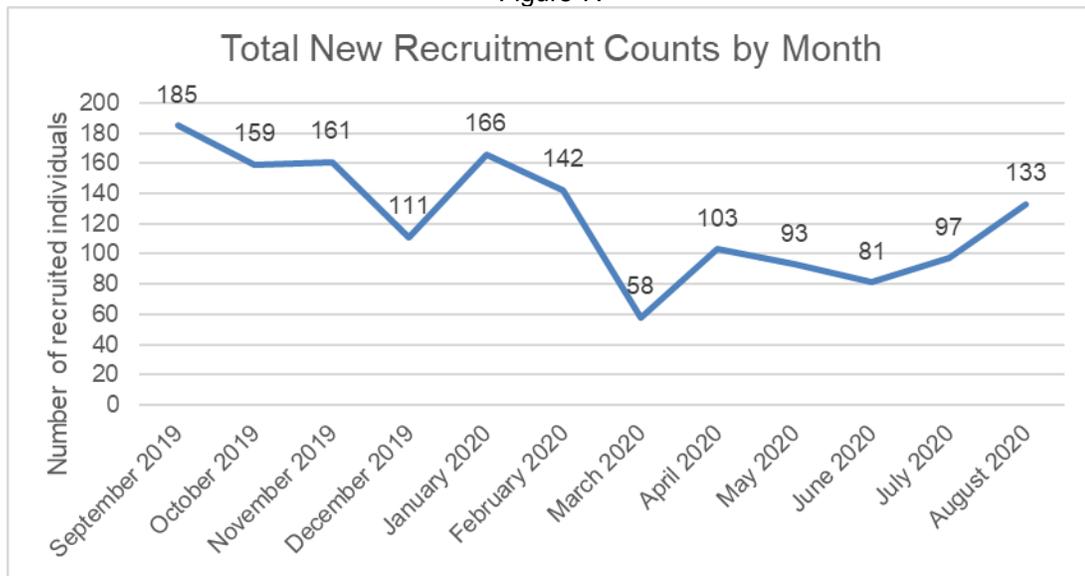
Figure 6.



## RECRUITMENT

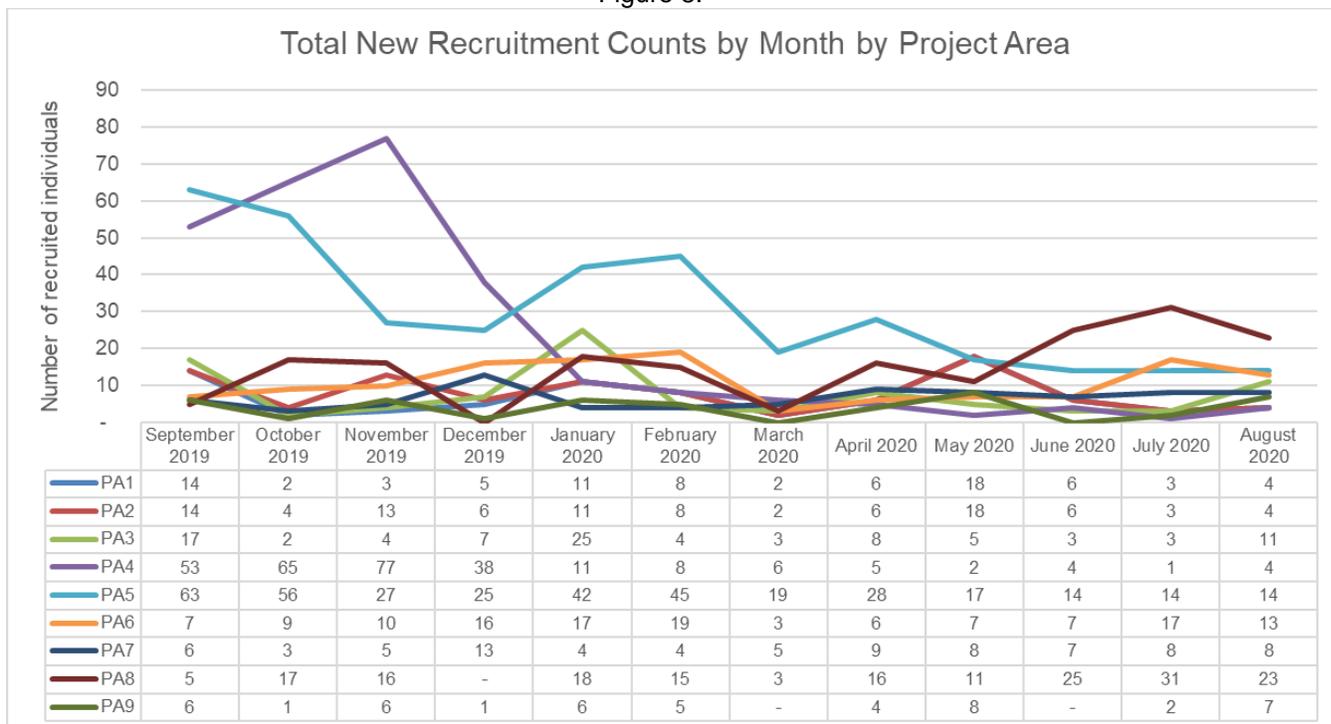
To examine recruitment trends, evaluators examined recruitment counts by project area and month using a report that the state data team provides to the state and project managers on a regular basis. The following graphs provide information about the volume of new identifications and arrivals a project area receives throughout the year. These graphs include any new identification or move into a project area, which may originate from another Pennsylvania project area or from outside Pennsylvania. This means that a family may be duplicated in a graph if they made two or more moves across project area lines during the year. Only moves and new arrivals or identifications are included. Previously identified families who stayed in one project area for the entire year are not shown. Overall, the greatest numbers of identification and recruitments occurred in fall 2019 through January 2020, with the lowest recruitment count of the year in March 2020. This is not surprising, as most of Pennsylvania was effectively shut down in mid-March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and programs had delays in resuming typical recruitment because of external restrictions.

Figure 7.



These counts were also available by project area and month and show the variability in migratory patterns and counts across the project areas.

Figure 8.



## STUDENT NEEDS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Information in this section answers the evaluation question: “What needs did children and youth exhibit at their earliest needs assessment and to what extent did they receive services related to those needs during the program year?”

Once confirmed as eligible, PA-MEP conducts a needs assessment for each student. The purpose of this needs assessment is to identify risk factors that may influence student success. Some of these risk factors are unique to the migrant lifestyle. PA-MEP staff use the results of this needs assessment as a tool to match students with services related to their individual needs. Additionally, if a student moved from one area of Pennsylvania to another, PA-MEP staff in the new area can review previously documented needs in order to serve them more efficiently. The results of the needs assessment determine whether a student is identified as Priority for Service. Students are to receive their needs assessment as soon as possible after being identified and recruited: by October 31, or within 10 working days of eligibility verification and enrollment. The needs assessment may be updated throughout the year.

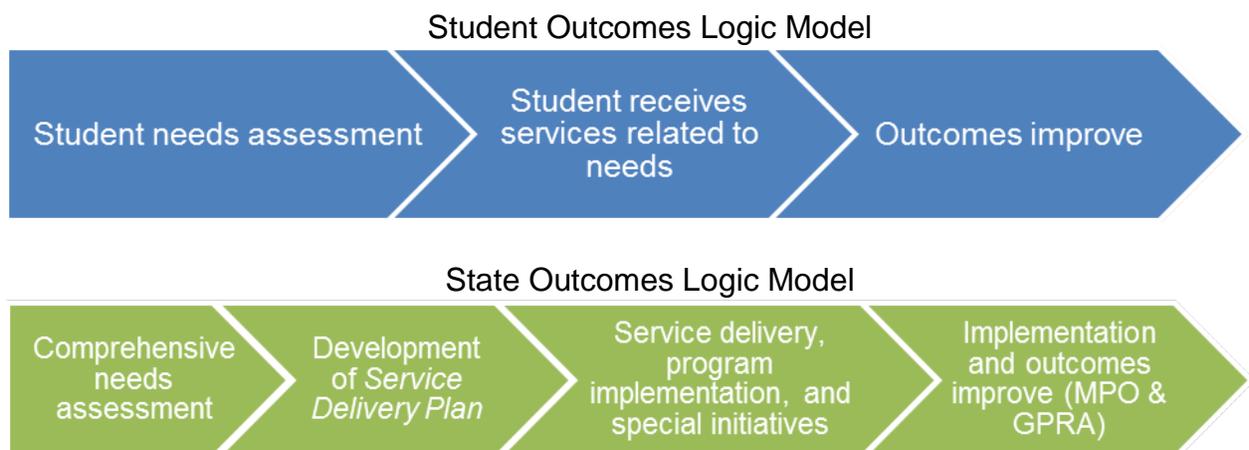
Needs assessment findings in this report provide information based on a student’s needs during the year. Some needs elements are examined for their status at the beginning of the program year or the start of a student’s enrollment before any services or support were

provided during the program year (usually academic-related needs), while others reflect whether or not a student met certain conditions at any point in the year to determine the prevalence of that condition in the population. For example, reading needs are examined as of the first needs assessment in order to determine if a student had an initial reading need identified and then received related services over the course of the year. Alternatively, all needs records are examined to determine if a student experienced homelessness at any point during the year. In some cases, evaluators took into consideration staff comments and needs element value changes to determine a student's status. Students may receive new or updated needs assessments when new information becomes available or when students move or change category. For some elements, both initial and later needs results are considered for need elements. Program staff use a variety of data available to them as well as their professional experience to determine a child's status related to each need indicator. The program maintains a data guide that contains definitions and coding hierarchy to support staff in identifying the best evidence or source information to determine a child's or youth's status on each need indicator.

The information that follows provides an overview of the challenges that migrant students faced during 2019-20 and provides context for the services and support that students received as a result of needs being identified.

The needs assessment is a critical piece in the operation of the PA-MEP as it provides the background necessary to determine what programming and services should be delivered. Needs data are used on a larger scale to develop the *Service Delivery Plan* as part of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process. The *Service Delivery Plan* directs the program at the state and project area levels and provides a framework for examining the program. All programs, special initiatives, services, and decisions should support the statewide *Service Delivery Plan*, which in turn supports improved student outcomes. The need to improve student outcomes is the reason that the PA-MEP exists. The following logic model illustrates how these elements are connected.

Figure 9.



Needs assessment data was available for 4,588 students (95 percent of all students). Of the 236 students not having a needs assessment, 199 (84 percent) had recognized explanations documented such as having a very brief enrollment or eligibility period, refusing services, or being younger than 3 years old. The remaining 16 percent may also have valid exception reasons, but such reasons were not evident in the data available to evaluators. As staff had more limited access to eligible children and youth under the pandemic conditions, it is possible this may have contributed to the challenges with conducting needs assessments as well.

While the evaluation focuses on service delivery with regard to specific need categories, evaluators also examined service delivery overall, as this is part of federal GPRA measures for PA-MEP. Of the 4,824 students enrolled during 2019-20, 4,490 (93 percent) were coded as having received services under one or more categories based on service delivery data or action codes indicating delivery of services or materials. Of those individuals not having any service delivery indicated (334), 30 could not be explained by being younger than 3 years old, enrolling at the end of the program year, having a short enrollment or residence, refusing services, or the PA-MEP were unable to contact or locate the student after multiple attempts.

Students received services from PA-MEP sources, PA-MEP in partnership with other organizations, or through other sources, through campus-based and in-home programming, during regular term (school year) and summer term. Students received services through a variety of combinations of these elements under various content areas or program types.

Each project area offers a variety of approaches, programs, activities, and curricula to each category of students that reflects the different and varied population of students from different backgrounds and having different needs.

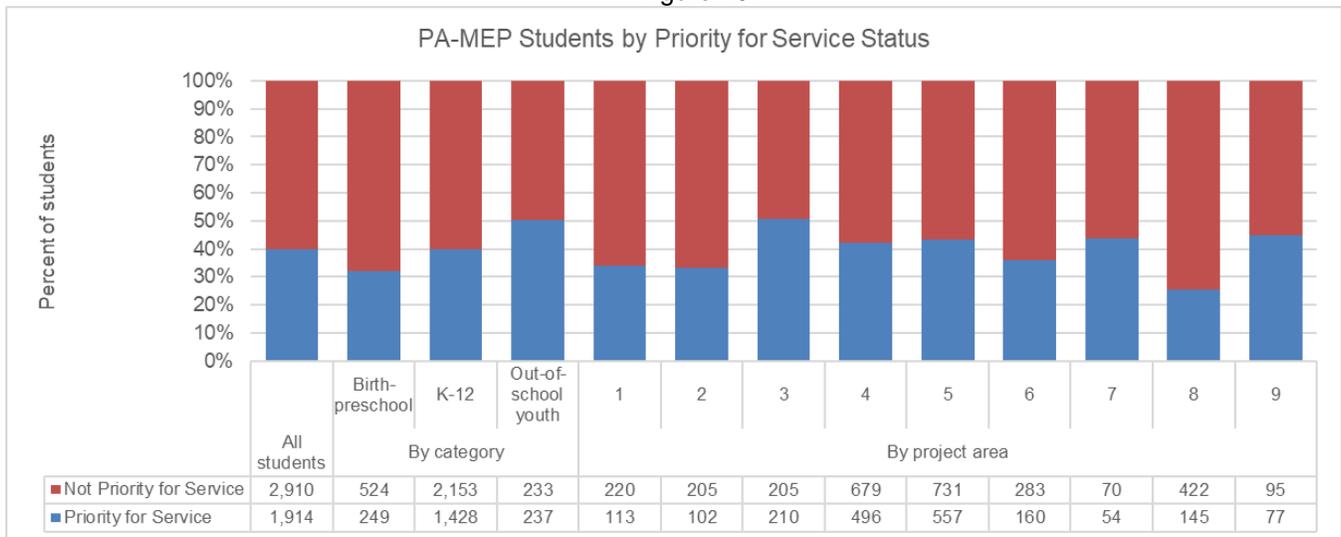
### **Priority for Service**

In addition to identifying risks for each student to facilitate connections with services, risk factors are used to prioritize students for service – a classification called Priority for Service. Criteria exist for each of the student categories and Priority for Service status was determined on an ongoing basis during 2019-20. If a student was not Priority for Service initially and later found to fit the criteria-based needs assessment updates, the student became Priority for Service. If a student was Priority for Service initially and later found to change their status in one or more of the Priority for Service criteria, the student remained Priority for Service for the remainder of the program term.

The Priority for Service designation does not determine if a student receives services. As a supplemental program with limited resources, Priority for Service is a mechanism designed to assist PA-MEP staff in identifying which students are to be served first and/or ensure that such students are given priority for programs or services when limited resources exist. All students meeting PA-MEP eligibility criteria may be served.

Priority for Service status is determined based on several age and needs assessment criteria. As the name implies, Priority for Service students were to receive priority for services and support over students not having this designation in situations where not all students could be served. A total of 1,914 students (40 percent of 4,824 students) in 2019-20 were identified as meeting Priority for Service criteria at any time during the program year. Out-of-school youth had the highest percentage of students designated as Priority for Service (50 percent). The preschool category had the lowest percentage of students determined to be Priority for Service (32 percent). Project Areas 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9 showed percentages of Priority for Service greater than the state. For the purposes of the state evaluation, any student having a Priority for Service designation at any time during the year was treated as Priority for Service for all analyses. Based on service delivery data, 97 percent of Priority for Service students received services.

Figure 10.

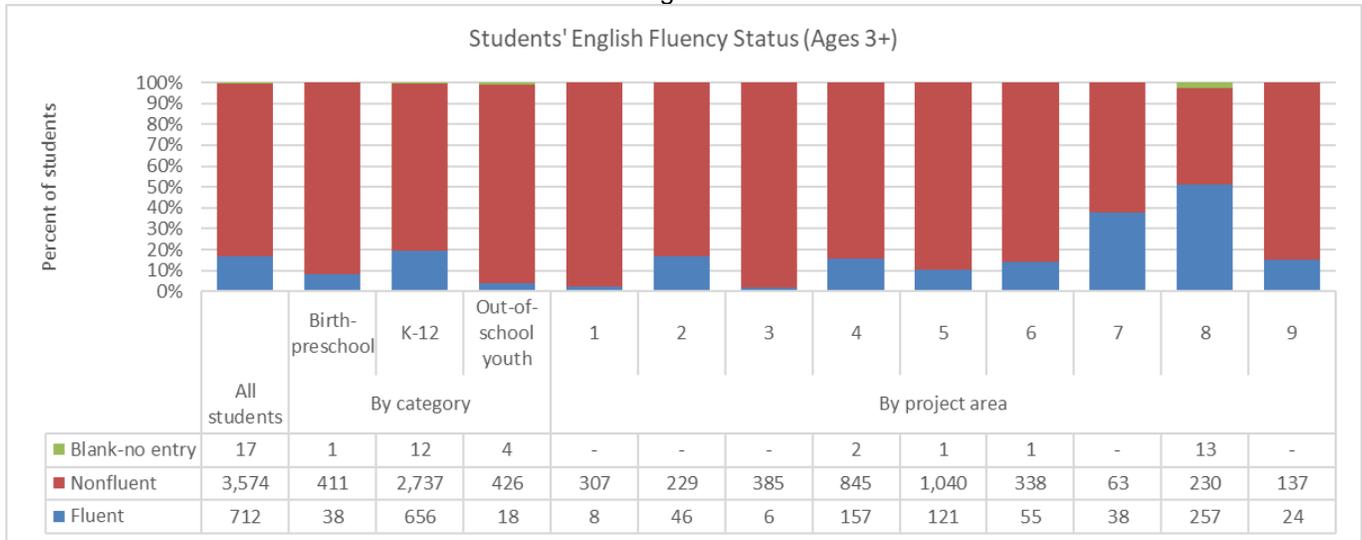


## English Language Fluency

Overall, 83 percent of students age 3 or older were designated as not fluent in English during the program year, which is a factor in determining Priority for Service status. These results exclude children under 3 years old, as they are still developing their language skills. Examining fluency by student category, out-of-school youth had the largest percentage of students not fluent (95 percent) and school-age students had the smallest percentage (80 percent).

Project area percentages varied considerably. Project Areas 1 and 3 had the highest percentages of students who were not fluent (98 and 90 percent, respectively). Project Area 8 had the largest percentage of fluent students (51 percent).

Figure 11.



Of the 2,737 nonfluent K-12 students enrolled during the 2019-20 program year; 2,551 (93 percent) either received school year English services through their district's ESL program or they were summer enrollments where school-based ESL would not be available.

Based on past findings indicating that English fluency is a known influence on student outcomes, evaluators examined the service receipt for nonfluent students using service delivery data as evidence of implementation. This showed that 93 percent of nonfluent students 3 years old or older received English-related services in some form, with 96 percent of Priority for Service students receiving services compared to 90 percent for students without the Priority for Service designation. The high percentage of non-Priority for Service students served may be a result of nonfluent students participating in school-based ESL programming in school, receipt of which is not a factor of Priority for Service status, as enrollment in such instruction is determined by students' schools. Regardless of the difference in service receipt for Priority for Service students, it is a positive result that nearly all nonfluent students over age three across categories received English support.

### Special Needs

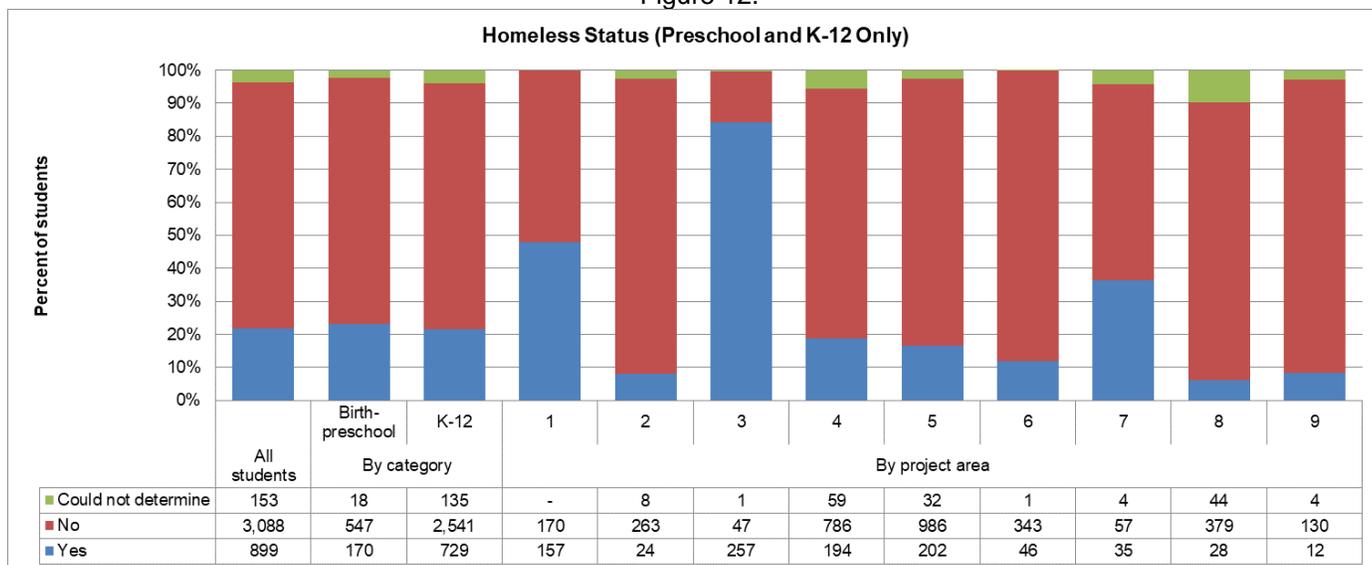
Less than 6 percent of students were designated as having special needs (not gifted). School-age students had the highest percentage of students with such a designation (7.0 percent of 3,405 K-12 students having needs data), which may be because of the formal protocols available for this population related to special needs.

## Homeless and Unaccompanied Youth

Just under a quarter (22 percent) of PA-MEP students (birth-preschool and K-12 only) were identified as homeless at any point during 2019-20 based on the definition of homelessness included in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.<sup>11</sup> Out-of-school youth were not considered homeless and eligible for McKinney-Vento Act-supported programming for the 2019-20 year due to a change in the official definition in 2017.

Project Area 3 had the largest percentage (84 percent) of students experiencing homelessness, followed by Project Area 1 (48 percent). Project Area 8 had the smallest percentage (6 percent). Differing numbers of migrant children and youth in each area contribute to variability in the percentages of individuals identified as experiencing homelessness.

Figure 12.



Related to homeless status, PA-MEP also collected information about whether or not students were unaccompanied youth – students who were not in the physical custody of their parent or legal guardian. Less than 5 percent birth-preschool and K-12 individuals were designated as unaccompanied youth.

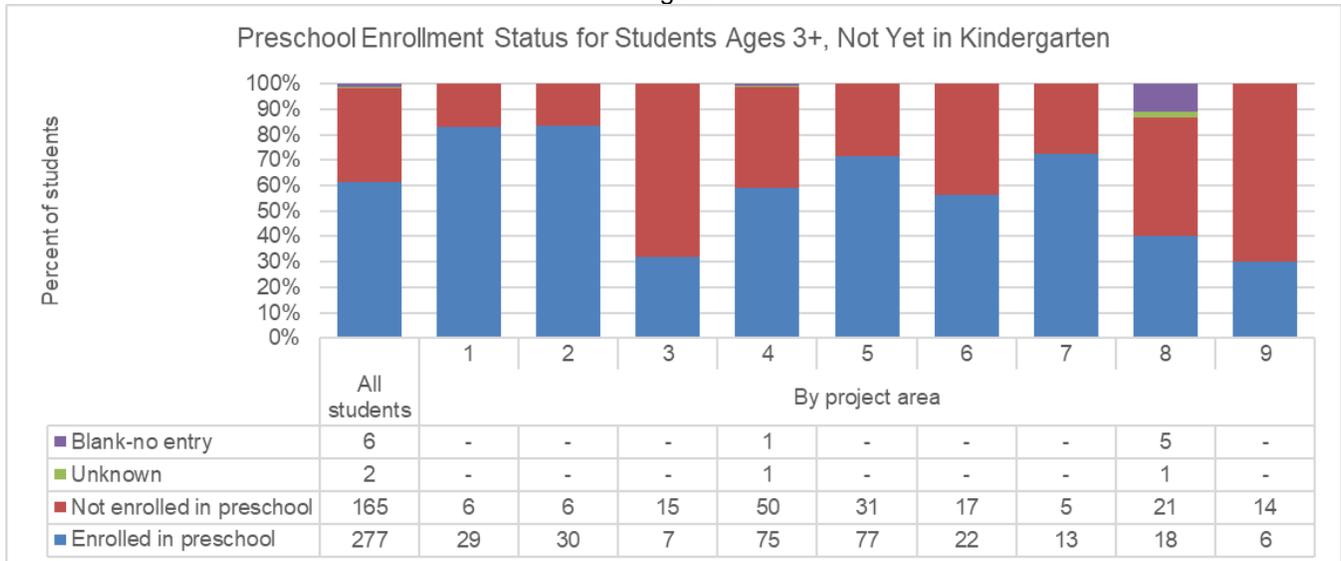
## Preschool Enrollment

Preschool enrollment is an area of priority for the PA-MEP. Of all students in the birth through preschool-age category, 42 percent were enrolled in a preschool program for at least part of the program year. However, of those students most likely to enroll in preschool (students ages 3 or older and not yet enrolled in kindergarten), 62 percent were enrolled in a preschool program for at least part of the year.

<sup>11</sup> Other programs may use a different definition or criteria to determine homelessness.

However, factors related to Priority for Service status may influence preschool enrollment, as 35 percent of Priority for Service preschool students ages three or older were enrolled in preschool, compared to 77 percent for students without this designation.

Figure 13.



Information was also available related to the reasons that preschool-age students were not enrolled in preschool programs. This data element assists the program in understanding whether non-participation in preschool programs was a choice or a factor of external influences. Non-participation appeared to be related mostly to program availability. For 61 percent of non-enrolled students, the recorded reason for not being enrolled in preschool was not a matter of choice: there were no programs in the area, no open slots, or they had transportation barriers that kept them from participating. Only 13 percent of non-enrolled children had data indicating that their family chose not to enroll them in preschool.

Service delivery data provided information about the types of preschool programs students attended. Of the 277 students over three years old who were enrolled in preschool, 221 had preschool type data available. Of these 221, the largest portion was enrolled in Head Start (45 percent). Another 18 percent were enrolled in a Pre-K Counts program. Eleven percent were enrolled in a district preschool program; 9 percent were enrolled in a formal Migrant Education preschool program; 5 percent were enrolled in a Keystone Stars Program (3 or 4 stars), and the remaining 12 percent were in another type of program. Priority for Service students (37 students) were most likely to be enrolled in a formal MEP preschool program (27 percent) or Pre-K Counts (22 percent) while students without the Priority for Service designation (184 students) were most likely to be in Head Start (50 percent).

## Reading and Math Needs

According to needs assessment entries, 85 percent of school-age students needed to improve in reading and 84 percent needed to improve in math. Proficiency could be determined using a number of indicators, including state and local assessment data, report card grades, the student's school staff professional determination, or PA-MEP staff professional determination, when other data sources were not available. Reading and math proficiency based upon PSSA, PASA, or Keystone Exams or state-approved assessments are factors in determining a student's Priority for Service status. Project Area 6 had the highest percentages of proficient students for both reading and math.

Figure 14.

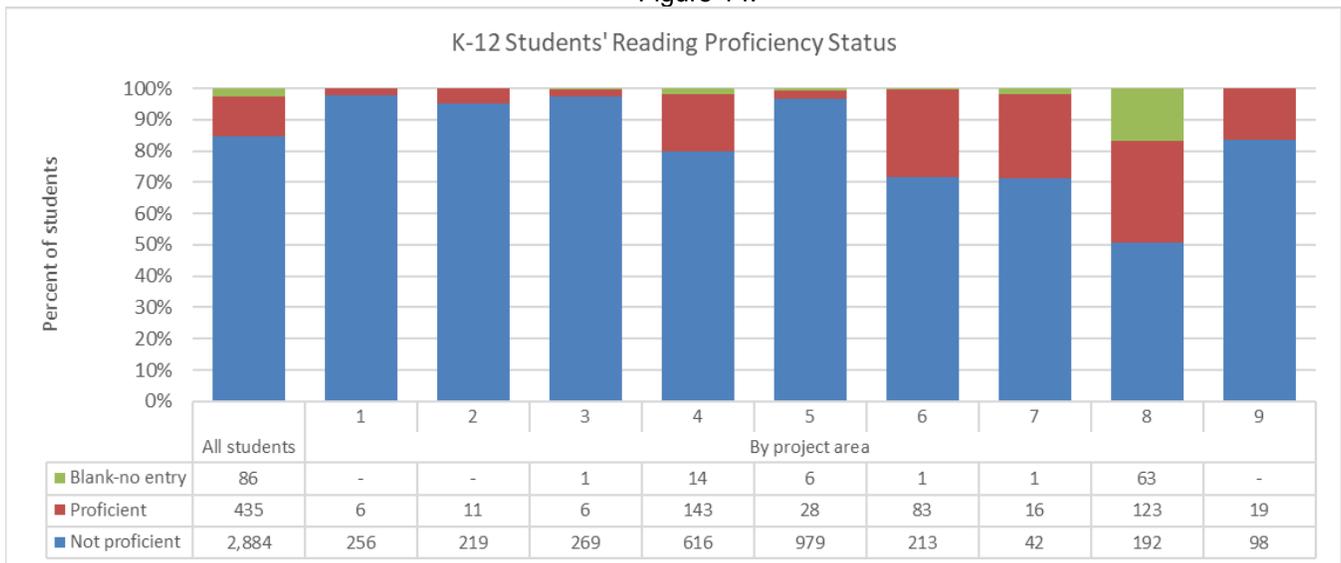
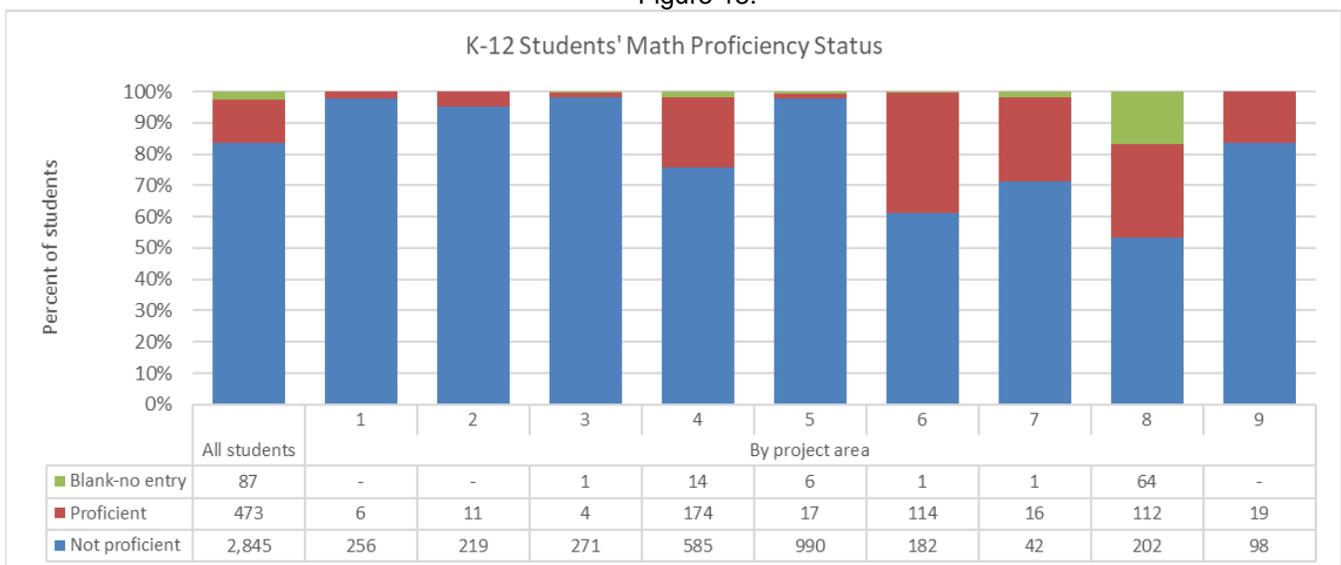


Figure 15.



After examining the needs data, evaluators incorporated service delivery data to determine if students with needs received services in line with those needs. Reading and math service delivery data provided evidence that students with reading or math needs received services in line with those needs.

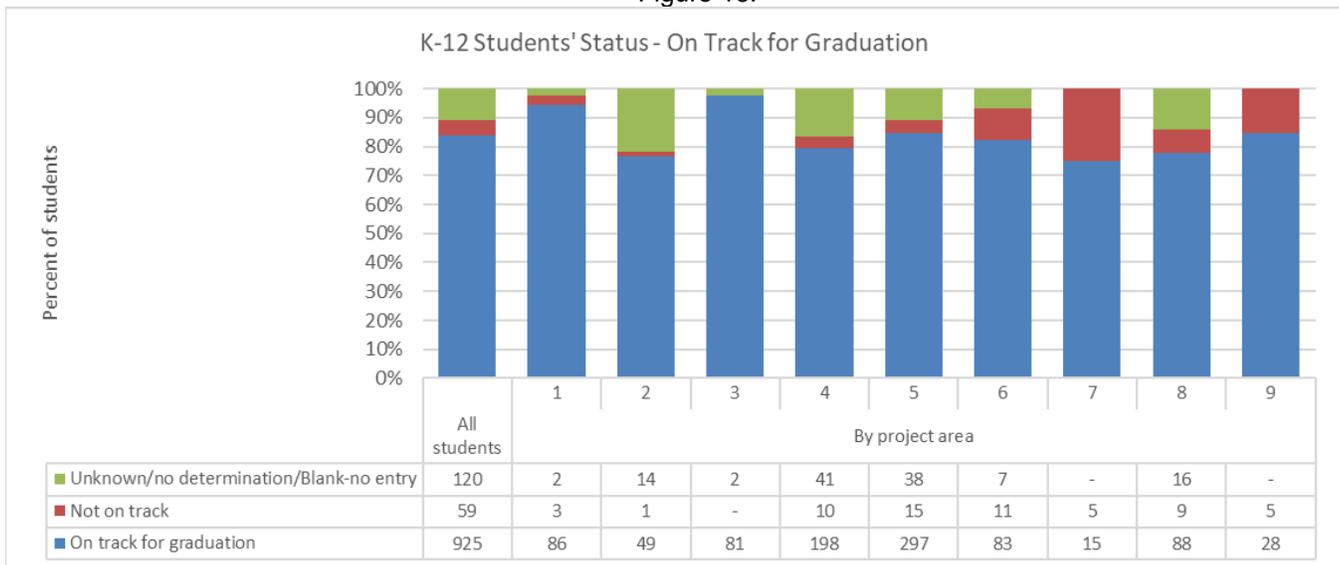
Of K-12 students who were not proficient in reading (2,884), 84 percent received reading-specific supplemental services. Further analysis revealed that 88 percent of Priority for Service students with a reading need received supplemental reading services through one or more category, while 81 percent of non-Priority for Service students received supplemental reading services, providing evidence that Priority for Service students took priority for service delivery.

Of K-12 students not proficient in math (2,845), 77 percent received math-specific supplemental services. Further analysis indicated that 82 percent of Priority for Service students received supplemental math services, compared to 74 percent of non-Priority for Service students, providing evidence that Priority for Service students took priority for service delivery.

### On Track for Graduation

The K-12 needs assessment also examined a student’s progress toward graduation for students in grades 8-12, which is a factor in determining Priority for Service status; 84 percent of 1,104 students in grades 8-12 were on track for graduation. Project Area 3 had the highest percentage of students on track for graduation (98 percent).

Figure 16.



## **Student Concerns**

Behavior, attendance, and other concerns are also part of the K-12 needs assessment, as these factors may influence academic success; 80 percent had no concerns indicated and 12 percent had no value entered.<sup>12</sup> Of students having a concern indicated (8 percent), the largest group had an “other” concern, among other options that included attendance concerns, discipline concerns, both attendance and discipline concerns, and multiple concerns. Results by project area varied widely.

## **Health and Wellness**

Migrant student health and wellness is an interest area for the PA-MEP, as health and medical concerns may interfere with a student’s educational success. PA-MEP has several needs assessment indicators related to health and wellness. For each of the five health-related needs assessment indicators (health need, dental need, medical alert, mental health need, and vision need), a majority of individuals did not have such needs identified (90-96 percent). The medical alert indicator, which is the only required health-related field in the needs assessment, had the highest affirmative response percentage: 9 percent of students were reported as having either an acute or chronic medical concern. K-12 students had the highest percentage of individuals with such concerns needs identified (11 percent, compared to 4 percent for each of the preschool and out-of-school youth categories). While the percentages varied, K-12 students had the highest percentages of students identified with related needs for each separate category.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is an area of interest as evidenced by service delivery measures and parent survey efforts. PA-MEP tracks which students have one or more parents participate in parent involvement and Parent Advisory Council activities. Of the 4,824 students, 1,738 (36 percent) had one or more parent (or an adult in the household in a parental role) participate in parent involvement activities (1,312), the Parent Advisory Council (70), or both (356).

## **Educational Programs and Reasons for Leaving School for Out-of-School Youth**

The majority of out-of-school youth reportedly left school because they needed to work (77 percent of 448 youth).

Out-of-school youth have several options for education support. Several elements of the out-of-school youth needs assessment examine student interest or participation status related to ESL programs, Adult Basic Education and/or GED programs, job training, or school entry. With the exception of English programs, where 63 percent of the 426 nonfluent out-of-school youth attended, enrolled in, were interested in, or had completed an ESL program, out-of-school youth were somewhat uninterested in educational programs; 17 percent were interested in, enrolled in, attended, or completed a GED program; 19

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<sup>12</sup> Student concern is not a required needs assessment field.

percent were interested in, enrolled in, attended, or completed job training; and 5 percent were interested in or enrolled in K-12 school. The balance of youth was either not interested or their interest status was unknown.

Nearly all out-of-school youth were not fluent in English (95 percent); 75 percent of these youth had English language services indicated in service delivery data. Also of nonfluent youth, 4.5 percent completed a formal English language programs and 34 percent were attending on a regular basis.

## STATE-PROVIDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

While individual project areas provided professional development and training to their own staff, PA-MEP staff at the state level provided various training opportunities. Information in this section answers the evaluation question: “To what extent did professional development occur at the state level to support program implementation?”

In spring 2020, PA-MEP held its annual statewide conference. For 2020, this was held over multiple sessions that totaled 12 hours with workshop topics relevant to all staff roles.

In addition to the state conference, PDE provided or sponsored 15 training opportunities. All project areas were represented at each opportunity unless otherwise noted.

PDE also provided information, professional development, and technical assistance through monthly project area managers’ meetings and annual monitoring site visits.

Table 1: 2019-20 PDE Training Opportunities.

Opportunity and Description	Total Duration	Audience
<b>Migrant 101</b> , Orientation for new employees.	5 hours	New staff
<b>Diploma Project</b> Introduction to the Diploma Project. Diploma Project Follow-Up and Introduction to Preparing for College PASS Guide and ABCs of Graduation.	1.5 hours 2 hours	Refugee staff All staff
<b>Learning Kits workshop:</b> To provide instruction in PI Consortium Learning Kits and how to use them with children and parents.	2.5 hours	Philadelphia PA-MEP staff
<b>MEP STEM Initiative</b> , Staff learned from an award-winning instructor and were separated by age group for hands-on STEM activities.	5 hours	All student support staff
<b>Recruitment Training Walk-through of Graduation and Outcomes for Success for Out-of-School Youth (GOSOSY) Website</b> , Training to look through the GOSOSY website and highlight useful materials.	45 minutes	Recruiters, out-of-school youth staff
<b>Family Literacy Training</b> , Preschool consortium’s family literacy workshop, adapted for PA staff and provided hands-on activity packets that staff could use with children and families.	5 hours	Pre-K student support specialists, parent coordinators
<b>Preschool Consortium Webinar on Family Literacy</b> , Presentation of family literacy materials.	1.5 hours	Pre-K staff, open to all consortium member states

Opportunity and Description	Total Duration	Audience
<b>An Introduction to Pennsylvania's Family Engagement Network</b> , Self-paced introduction to PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Resource "Pennsylvania's Family Engagement Birth through College, Career, Community Ready Framework."	1 hour	Parent coordinators, student support specialists
<b>Service Delivery Plan</b> , Walk through for staff.	1 hour	All staff in project areas 6, 7, 8, and 9
<b>Finding Meaning and Navigating a New Normal: Self-care While Supporting Others</b> , Self-Care webinar for staff.	1.5 hours	All staff
<b>Preschool Consortium Instructional Unit Review/Training</b> , Provided information on how to implement instructional units.	1 hour	2 staff from project areas 7 and 8
<b>Stress and Trauma on Young Learners</b> , Provided information on training materials.	1 hour	Pre-K staff, open to all consortium member states
<b>Instructional Unit Training</b> , Provides an overview of preschool instructional units and how to use them.	1.5 hours	Pre-K student support specialists
<b>Training on Goal Setting, Using iSOSY Goal Setting Materials, and SMART Goals</b> , Shared resources for goal setting with out-of-school youth.	1.5 hours	Secondary student support specialists, parent coordinators
<b>Out-of-School Youth Providers Training</b> , Introduced the training package for personal wellness, which includes ACES Lessons, trauma, cultural responsiveness, resilience, mindfulness, self-care, and trauma-informed best practices.	1 hour	Out-of-school youth providers, open to all GOSOSY states

## Professional Development for Data

From Oct. 1, 2019 through Sept. 30, 2020 PA-MEP data specialists and others received various professional development from Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit 16, PDE's contractor for data and systems management. This included an institute at the annual migrant conference in March 2020 as well as a data security session for all attendees during that conference and two sessions for Tablet users. A two-day data specialists' training occurred in October 2019 and, due to COVID-19, a virtual two-day training was held in April 2020.

Additional training opportunities included the following.

- A mini session in January 2020 covered changes to data recording to improve alignment with the national Migrant Student Records Exchange Initiative (MSIX).
- In February 2020, staff provided data training for Project Areas 7 and 8 with additional follow-up in September.
- Also in February 2020, staff provided MIS2000, data security, equipment use, and MSIX training statewide and for a regional recruiter. A developer-provided training covered managing the MIS2000 web environment.

Topics of trainings included:

- Overviews of general PA-MEP changes, including an emphasis on how updates to the Needs Assessments must happen
- Discussion on MSIX related to child count reconciliation including various changes that were necessary to align to MSIX's child counting algorithms
- Course collection
- Demonstrations of new reports
- General techniques related to checking data quality and error checking
- Timelines for accurate federal reporting
- Issues that staff were experiencing related to getting access to data as a result of the pandemic
- Tips and tricks for using Zoom
- Using Excel to randomize lists
- How to use Excel to help find errors
- Using Google Drive to share instructions and other non-PII information
- Cleaning up code lists
- Clarifying standardization of procedures
- General technology issues such as updating all computers to Windows 10, making sure updates are installed and instructions with assisting field staff with Acrobat, and discussion of general hardware issues such as portable scanners

As part of personal development to deal with the stress of the pandemic, an outside presenter was brought in at no expense to the program to provide meditation and mindfulness techniques.

Sessions also always included in-depth question and answer sessions to address any issues the data specialists might have. Staff also continued working with various national MSIX groups and projects to enhance knowledge and pass that on to PA-MEP staff.

In addition to the four staff members of the statewide data team, data specialists and backup staff from all regions were represented at the trainings.

Professional development was held informally all year long working with data specialists and field staff on various aspects of the data and data system. Data updates were also provided at state recruiter trainings during the year.

### **Professional Development for Recruitment**

The state recruitment coordinator reported holding two professional development series during the program year – one series of trainings for recruitment coordinators (three per year and during the state PA-MEP conference) and one series of trainings for recruiters (three times per year and during the state PA-MEP conference). Coordinators also attend recruiter trainings. These training sessions focused on implementation of PA-MEP recruitment in line with state and federal policies and guidance. Each project area was required to have its recruitment coordinator and recruitment staff members participate in each training opportunity offered.

## Professional Development for Parent Involvement

The PA-MEP parent involvement coordinator held several parent involvement professional development opportunities for PA-MEP staff and others during 2019-20. The state parent involvement coordinator is responsible for not only providing training and support to regional parent coordinators, but also supports and facilitates the statewide Parent Advisory Council (PAC).

Training and professional development opportunities included the following. Opportunities included state-wide participants unless otherwise noted.

- **Be Strong Parent Café Site-based Module:** Session prepared staff to be certified to deliver Parent Café sessions; to build family leadership and provide an environment in which parents and family members can build protective factors through self-reflection and peer learning, based on the principals of adult learning and family support. (3 days, Project Area 5)
- **State Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Officers' Conference:** Topics included social emotional development, becoming aware of ESL services, parent understanding of their rights, advocacy, STEAM stations, motivational speakers, art and poetry, journal writing, and table games to do at home with recyclables. (3 days, Elected state PAC members, assigned support staff, and guest parents from all nine project areas, including students)
- **PAC Workplan Training:** Covered information and expectations relative to the new PAC Workplan template. (2 hours, Project Areas 1 and 3)
- **Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life in Your Work:** Collaborative session with PA Strengthening Families covering resilience, social connections, support, development, and social emotional factors. (1.5 hours)
- **PAC officers' calls:** Individual monthly check-in calls March-June 2020 to provide instruction and support throughout the pandemic.
- **Ways to Connect with Students and Families Virtually with Dr. Monica Burns** Session provided strategies and tools for using technology and communication channels to connect with students and families virtually. (1.5 hours)
- **Hispanos Unidos para Niños Excepcionales (HUNE):**<sup>13</sup> Session provided an overview of HUNE, a nonprofit organization that provides free bilingual English and Spanish support to families of children with disabilities. (1 hour)

Additionally, the PA-MEP parent involvement coordinator provided formal and informal technical assistance and training on an ongoing basis upon request, at state managers' meetings, and during project area monitoring visits.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.huneinc.org/>

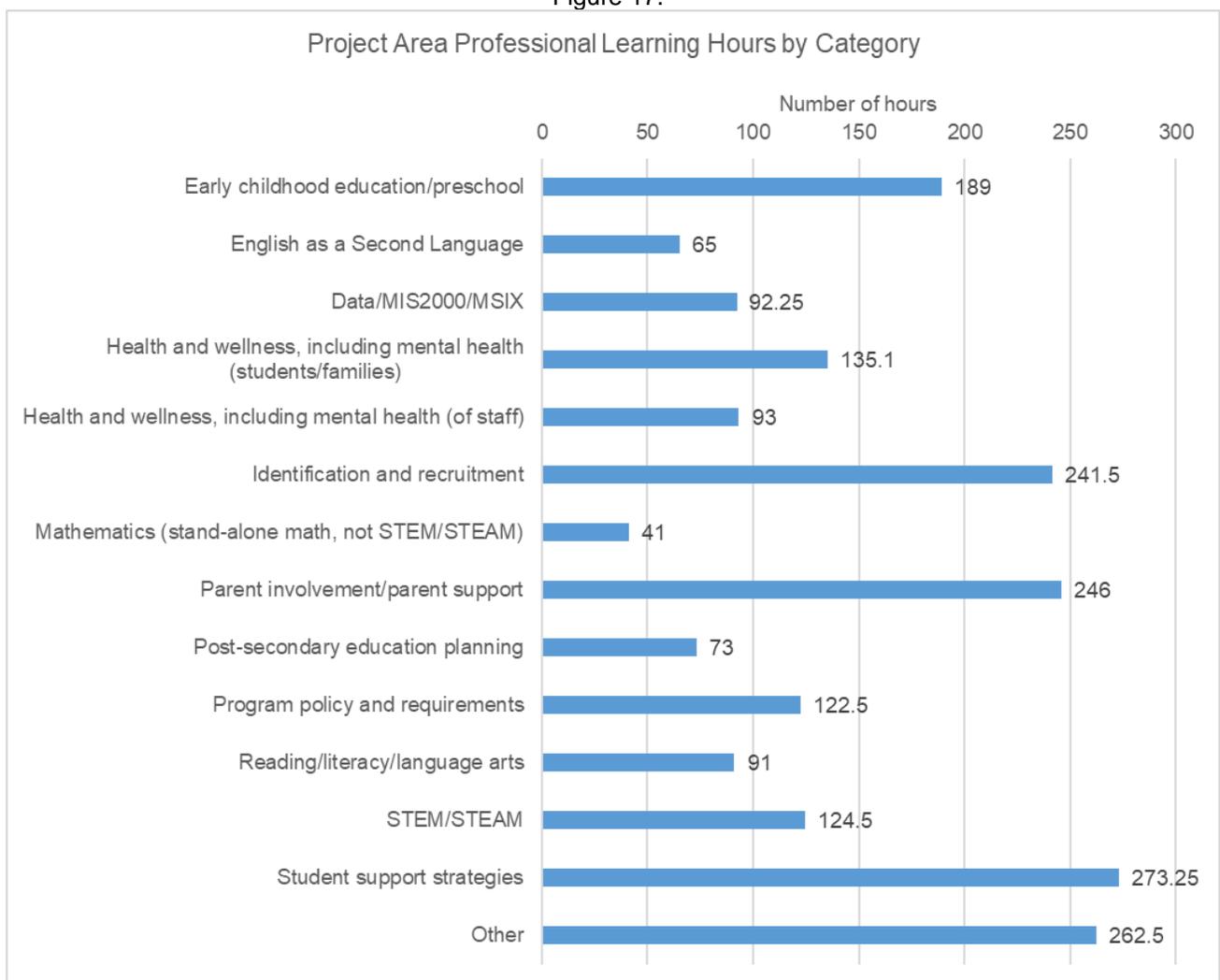
## PROJECT AREA MONTHLY REPORTS

The purpose of the monthly project area reports was for project areas to report on various implementation elements and provide information to the state PA-MEP office that is needed for compliance and program planning. Monthly reports covered information that was not or could not be collected or examined in other ways.

### Professional Development and Training

Project areas provided details about training and professional development in which their staff participated. Project areas collectively reported more than 2,000 hours of professional development with the largest volumes of time in the parent involvement and identification and recruitment categories. Project areas were instructed that they should not include in these submissions any state-provided training, as they were captured and reported by the state team. Therefore, these hours represent training occurring at the local or regional levels.

Figure 17.



Project areas reported with greater detail on preschool and out-of-school youth population-related trainings because of Pennsylvania's participation in national consortium projects for these populations.

Project areas reported more than 105 training events concerning preschool-age related content at the project area level, though this includes some duplication across project areas where more than one project area may have participated in the same training. Trainings lasted 30 minutes to 16 hours (average 3.3 hours). Typically, one or two staff per project area participated.

Project areas reported more than 60 professional learning opportunities related to out-of-school youth, ranging from 15 minutes to 12 hours (average 2.2 hours). Typically, two staff participated in each activity, which most often lasted two hours. Content was of a general nature related to this population, though specific topics addressed include the GOSOSY consortium, the COVID-19 pandemic and working remotely with students, and trauma and mental health.

To some extent, project areas continued to report state-level professional development opportunities, despite instructions to exclude such trainings from their reports since these items are reported in the aggregate at the state level. Also, project areas might have offered one opportunity and staff from multiple areas participated but reported it separately. So, these counts and volumes may be slightly inflated as a result. Evaluators will continue to refine directions and training to project areas to ensure common understanding of expectations and reporting accuracy.

## **Partnerships**

PA-MEP staff are not employees of school districts. This arrangement has made partnerships a critical component to PA-MEP success. Project areas reported having 805 partners during the course of the 2019-20 program year<sup>14</sup> with counts by project area ranging from eight to 317 (average 92). Partner types varied, though the largest numbers of partners were community organizations and schools or districts, followed by businesses and higher education, which is consistent with the distribution of partners by type in prior years. Partners contributed in various ways, though services for students, parents, or families far outnumbered other supports, such as services for PA-MEP staff or professional development, facilities/space/funding, goods or materials, volunteers, or other services.

On a monthly basis, individual project areas reported involving between one and 127 partners per month, average 16.8 partners per month per project area.

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<sup>14</sup> Some organizations were listed as partners in more than one project area; this is a unique count by name. This count may still include some duplication, as variations in names reported may not allow for some duplication to be identified and some partners reported were subdivisions or different locations of an umbrella organization.

## **Parent Support and Training**

In the parent training and support section, project areas reported on elements such as PAC meetings and activities, home visits, parent engagement and support activities, trainings and workshops for parents, and parent-related staff trainings.

Some project areas reported greater levels of detail than others, with some project areas, in the perception of evaluators, attempting to report on all parent-related activities and services rather than in a categorical manner. As such, it is difficult to glean quantitative findings from this evidence source. However, what is very clear is that project areas are providing a great volume of services, supports, training, and other programs to parents via a variety of venues. Content of parent engagement and support included services related to individual family needs; provision of welcome packets and other resources; educational Parent Cafés; advocacy services; translation support; support at student team meetings; information-sharing sessions; connections to community resources; in-home instruction and support; phone calls; family engagement activities; and covering additional topics of interest. Attendance or participation varied dramatically for individual items reported, and in some cases, attendance was not available or was approximated. Evaluators will continue to work with project areas to clarify and improve reporting as the PA-MEP moves to an online monthly report data collection for the 2020-21 program year.

## **SUMMER PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION**

One of the summer programming opportunities the PA-MEP provides is a program that combines additional instructional and language support as well as recreational and cultural experiences. In some cases, PA-MEP summer programming is in collaboration with school ESL programs, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers programs, or other state-wide or local initiatives. Summer programming is generally PA-MEP's most comprehensive and intensive supplemental support, though summer 2020 programs looked different than prior years as a result of the pandemic and physical proximity restrictions. Nearly all summer 2020 programming and services were conducted virtually, individually, or one to one.

Summer 2020 program implementation varied by region. While evaluators historically collected individual student participation data for summer campus-based programs, most project areas operated modified summer programs where individual attendance was not necessarily relevant. Instead, the program had prescribed a minimum of two separate service provision sessions. Some project areas formalized this into a virtual summer program while others simply provided virtual/remote or modified in-person services individually or in groups. Some did a combination of these approaches.

To examine the extent to which students were connected with summer instructional services, evaluators consulted service delivery data, focusing on summer in-home (as virtual services were coded as in-home) instructional services within the reading, math, ESL, other instruction, and preschool categories (together, instructional services). A total of 2,507 children and youth received such services, with more than 2,000 of these being K-

12 students. Based on enrollment data, 3,178 eligible children and youth were (believed to be) present June 1 through August 15, the period of time where summer services would be most prevalent, after excluding students who graduated at the end of the school year. These data indicate that the PA-MEP provided instructional services to 79 percent of present and eligible children and youth. This ranged by project area from 58 percent to 94 percent. Specifically for K-12 students, data indicate that 82 percent of K-12 students who were believed to be present in the state during summer received summer instructional services. By project area, this ranged from 49 percent to 97 percent.

PDE program officers reviewed summer 2020 programming at all project areas, completing a summer program checklist for each of the four regional project area groupings (1 and 3; 2, 4, 5; 6 and 9; 7 and 8). The checklist included 22 items identified as best practices and important to the PA-MEP program.

- Advance planning
- Behavior management
- Checks for learning
- Collaborative learning
- Creativity/creative thinking
- Critical thinking
- Daily learning objectives
- Flexible workspace
- Forward-thinking activities
- Inquiry/investigation
- Multiple grouping strategies
- Physical environment
- Positive reinforcement
- Program principles
- Program spirit
- Shared facilitation
- Skill building
- Staff/youth interaction
- Thematic learning
- Youth engagement
- Youth voice
- Youth-produced work

For each program each of these indicators received a rating: exceptional, evident, not evident, or not applicable. Additionally, some checklists showed multiple ratings for a single review area because of differences by classroom or grouping.

The summer program visitors provided comments on each indicator, overall highlights, and program recommendations. Each program received a copy of its checklist so that comments, highlights, and recommendations could be used for program improvement.

Summer Site Visit Checklists showed a mix of ratings with each checklist showing not evident, evident, exceptional, and not applicable items. For each checklist, between 27 and 36 percent of items were rated as not applicable. There were no discernable trends in the summer checklist data.

## **SUMMER PROGRAM STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK**

With PA-MEP's supplemental purpose, most of PA-MEP's direct services to students occur during the summer when students have fewer options for academic and support programs and services. Information in this section answers the evaluation question: "What feedback did stakeholders provide related to PA-MEP summer programs?"

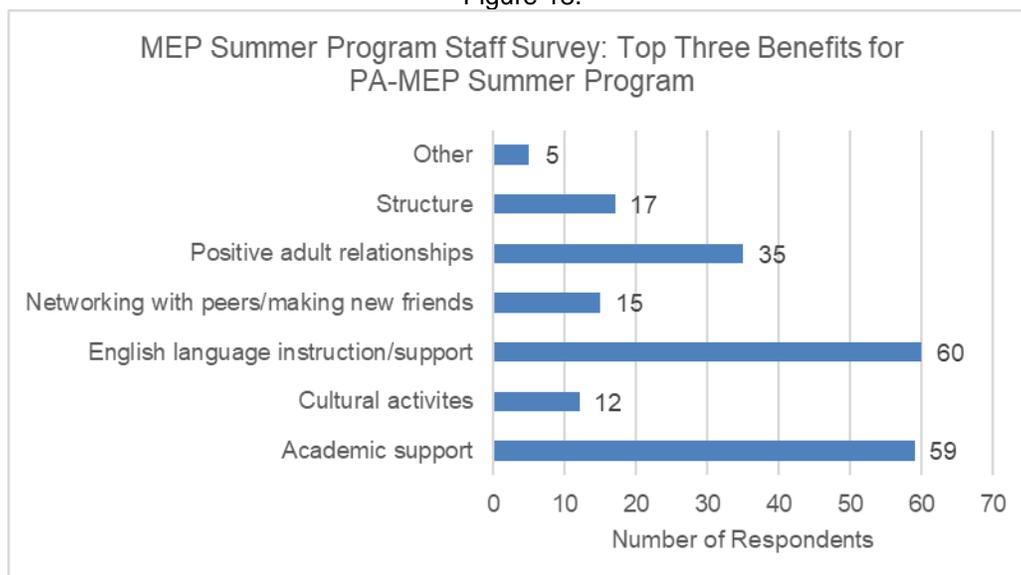
## Staff Survey

A total of 66 individuals completed a staff survey at the conclusion of the summer program, reflecting responses from all nine project areas. Project area responses varied, however, ranging from two respondents to 15 respondents per project area. Survey respondents were a mix of new and veteran summer staff, with 48 percent being with the program five or more years, 16 percent being involved for the first time, and the balance being involved between two and four years (36 percent). More than half of respondents (58 percent) were classroom teachers during the summer, with the rest being made up of in-home instructional staff (23 percent), instructional aides (9 percent), or other staff (11 percent). Half of respondents indicated they held teaching certificates in Pennsylvania or elsewhere. However, of the 38 staff who selected “classroom teacher” as their role, 76 percent held teaching certificates.

Fourteen percent of respondents indicated that they were a former migrant student or parent of a migrant student, indicating a first-hand understanding of the migrant lifestyle and related challenges. This also allows participating students to more easily relate to or identify with summer program staff.

The survey asked respondents about different aspects of the summer program. Content included their opinions on benefits for students, areas of possible improvement or enhancement, and items or support that would be helpful for the summer program. As to the top three benefits of the program, the largest numbers selected English language instruction and support and/or academic support. These answers were the top two selected choices in previous years.

Figure 18.



The survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with statements related to summer program implementation. These statements are shown in the following table along with the percentage of respondents selecting each agreement level. All 66 respondents answered each item. Most respondents selected one of the agree options, though notable portions of respondents indicated that they somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed that teachers had enough information about students at the beginning of the program, adequate training was provided, or the program being well organized. Statements with the highest percentages of strong agreement were related to the program having a positive and encouraging environment and collaboration among staff. The top three most positive responses are bolded in Table 2.

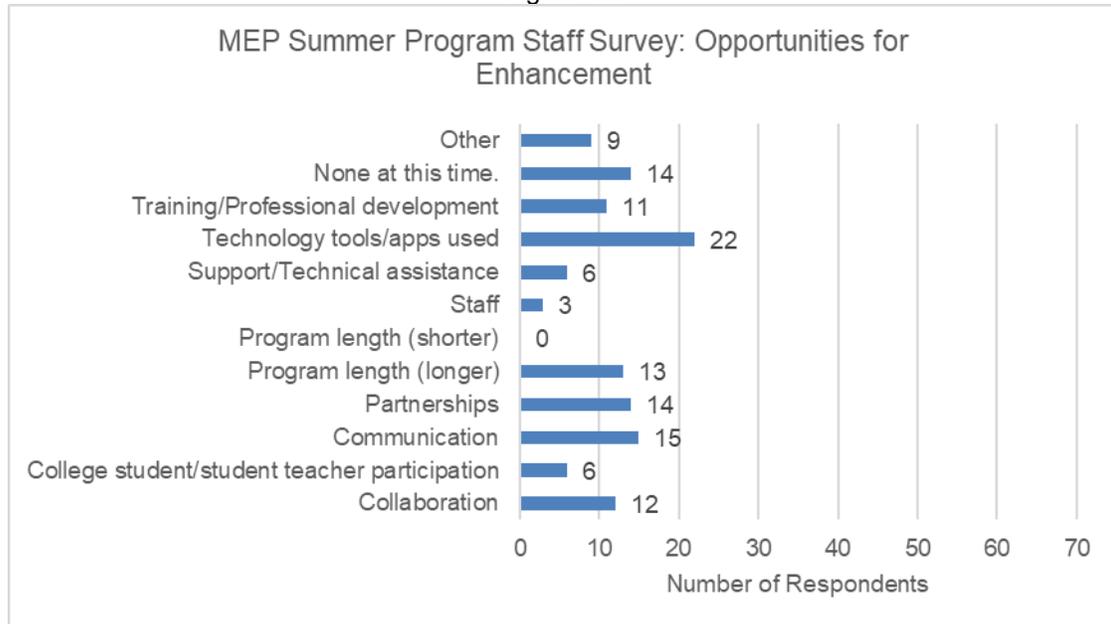
Table 2: Summer Staff Survey Results.

Statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Does not apply
The virtual implementation of the MEP summer program went smoothly.	35%	56%	8%	2%	--
The collaboration between MEP and partners was positive.	59%	32%	2%	--	8%
The summer program environment was positive and encouraging for students.	<b>71%</b>	29%	--	--	--
The summer program environment was positive and encouraging for staff.	<b>68%</b>	30%	2%	--	--
Collaboration among summer program staff was positive.	<b>76%</b>	20%	3%	2%	--
The level of communication from MEP summer program administrators was adequate.	61%	35%	5%	--	--
MEP provided adequate training for summer program staff.	47%	38%	11%	3%	2%
Teachers had sufficient information about students at the beginning of the program in order to plan instruction.	35%	33%	17%	9%	6%
The summer program was well-organized.	44%	45%	9%	2%	--
Summer program activities provided both academic and enrichment opportunities for students.	61%	33%	5%	2%	--

In addition to benefits and needs, respondents selected from a list the ways in which the program or its implementation could be improved or enhanced. Respondents most frequently indicated technology tools or apps used, followed by communication and partnerships. Fourteen respondents indicated they did not see a need for any improvement or enhancement. "Other" responses included different methods of publicizing the program, training on technology tools, ensure all staff receive the same information, facilitation of homework, having the summer program the entire month of July, guest speakers to

motivate students, more general support for students and parent awareness of needs in preparing for school, hands-on experiences when the program is not virtual, and opportunities to co-teach with other teachers.

Figure 19.



Summer program staff indicated using a variety of tools or apps in the summer program, with the most common of these being Zoom, WhatsApp, phone calls, FaceTime, Talking Points, Google Meets, and others. Respondents also suggested other tools for next time, including SeeSaw, Quizzizz, Padlet, and Google Classroom. Respondents were asked to share any suggestions related to technology; they offered:

- Consistently reliable tools
- A method of posting assignments
- A learning package for students in advance
- Better coordination with families, aides
- *“Students are more familiar with Zoom rather than Google Meets; however, students are easily adaptable.”*
- YouTube *“truly enhanced the program for the Kindergarten and First Grade students. They loved the songs, exercises, and books.”*
- *“Google slides worked really well for providing a platform for students to work collaboratively or individually with text, images, and presentation.”*

Staff did not indicate any significant challenges with recruitment or attendance; however, a few respondents indicated that lack of devices or Internet access was a barrier for some students.

One of the greatest assets of the PA-MEP summer program is the staff. When asked why they choose to work for the program, 73 percent indicated wanting to help the students,

which was the most prevalent response. Enjoyment, student diversity, cultural enrichment, and past positive experience(s) with the program were also selected by many respondents (45-59 percent each), among other reasons.

Despite the needs and challenges mentioned in survey responses, respondents were generally very positive about the students and/or the program and their summer program experience. Shared here are a selection of staff survey comments:

*“I think that this is a great program. The staff is personable and hardworking. The students are great and it is awesome to see them learn/grow throughout the summer. I truly enjoy working with this program every summer.”*

*“Even though this have been a unique way to bring a Summer Camp with not physical interaction, we have had a great experiences despite the technology difficulties.”*

*“Working for MEP Summer Program is always the most rewarding experience.”*

*“The staff are great people. They really care about the education and enrichment of our students. If they have ideas, they share. They are not afraid or timid to contact me to do something different or add a little bit at the same time. I love the challenge.”*

*“I cannot ask for any more support! This was the first time we used the virtual classroom and I thought it was done well. Some of the students have not been in class since March, so this made our program even more essential ... Good leadership is so important to making our program a success!”*

Respondents also shared what would help them next time:

- More flexibility with partnerships
- Rewards, incentives for students
- Training in coding or robotics
- More opportunities to learn from or collaborate with other program teachers
- More direct, clear communication about expectations, logistics
- Better Internet connections
- Professional learning on virtual instruction best practices
- More staff
- Clarity about who to contact for what purpose
- Better student cooperation
- Translation support
- Student roster in advance
- Earlier training
- More communication with families
- More information about different tools
- More basic supplies sent home (paper, pencils, etc.)
- Better organization

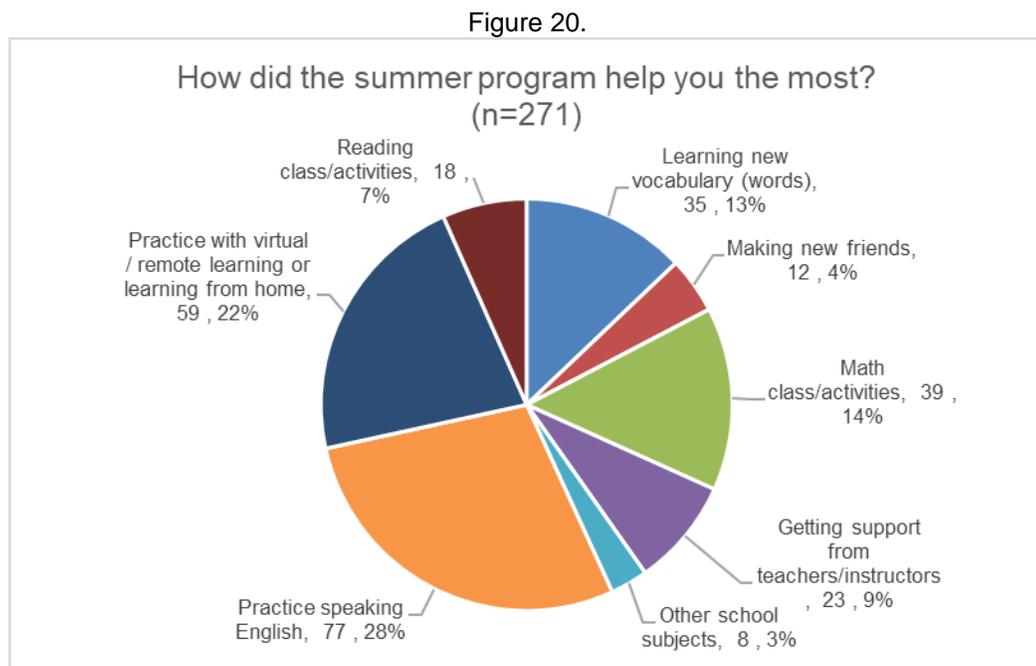
- Google accounts for students
- Assistance with family contact
- Resources for parents
- More information about participating students
- Knowledge of what resources and devices students have access to at home

## Student Survey

In addition to the staff survey, participating students completed a brief online survey about their experience in PA-MEP summer programs. A total of 271 students age 7<sup>15</sup> or older completed the survey with 79 percent of respondents being 14 years old or younger. All nine project areas were represented, though project areas 2 and 3 made up 45 percent of all student respondents.

In the graphs that follow, the total number of respondents is indicated in each graph (*n*), as not all respondents answered each question.

Students indicated the summer program components that helped them the most from a provided list. Practice speaking English (28 percent) topped the list, followed by practice with virtual learning (22 percent).

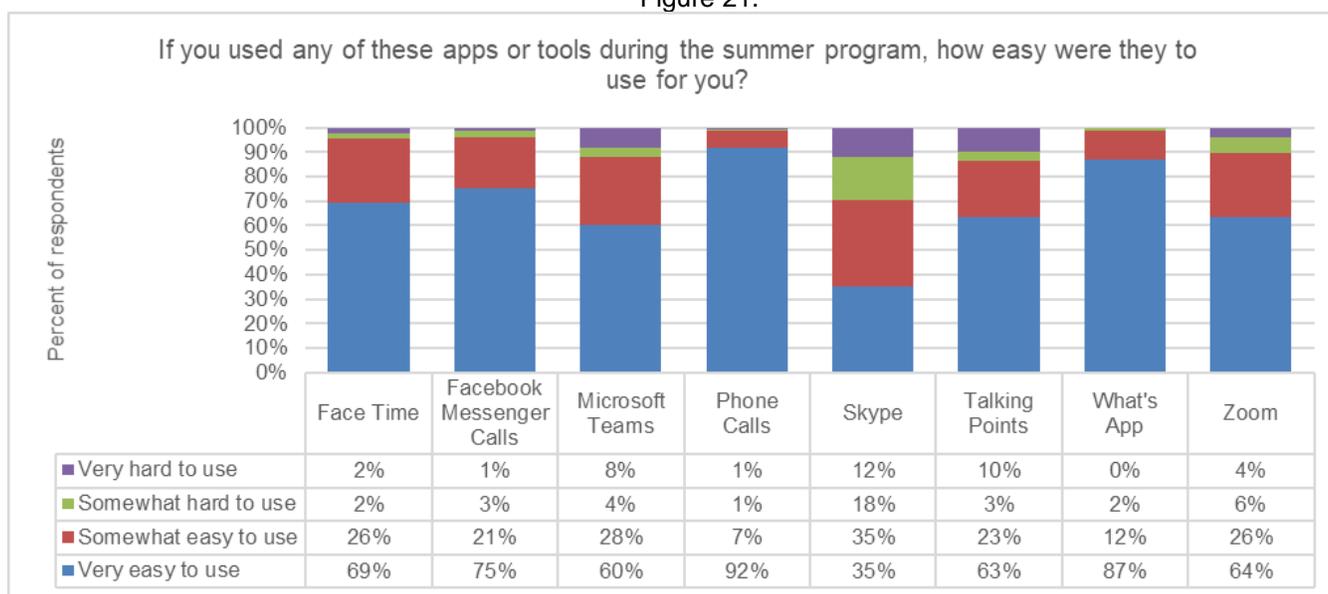


<sup>15</sup> Evaluators discouraged programs from surveying students younger than 7 years old for language and comprehension reasons.

Nearly all students indicated that they thought the summer program helped them to some degree to feel ready for school in the fall; 39 percent reported that the program helped a lot, 41 percent indicated the program helped some, and 16 percent indicated it helped a little. Three percent indicated that the program did not help.

Of particular interest this year was how well students were able to understand their summer instructors. More than half of student respondents (54 percent) shared that they did not have any difficulty understanding their summer teacher(s); 37 percent indicated that they ‘sometimes’ had difficulty and 10 percent indicated that they had ‘a lot’ of difficulty. Similarly, PA-MEP was interested to know about the tools and connection methods used in the program and how easy or difficult they were for students. After excluding students who answered that they did not use a tool or method, evaluators determined the proportion of students who found these easy to difficult. Phone calls and WhatsApp were the easiest methods of connection while Skype was the most difficult.

Figure 21.



Students were positive about the program, commenting that they liked the program, had fun, learned new things, made new friends, and practiced English, among other responses. Students noticeably commented on liking the math and science activities. Some students shared that they enjoyed the virtual program while others commented that they hoped for an in-person program next year. Student responses for why they would come back again and how they would describe the program to a friend followed similar trends.

Nearly all surveyed students (96 percent of 269 respondents) indicated that they would participate in the program again if given the opportunity to do so.

The survey asked students what they would add to the PA-MEP summer program if they were asked to help plan the program. Students shared that they would like an in-person

program, more science, more activities and games, field trips, more program time, more math, more reading, more English practice, translation, sports, and more opportunities to connect with other students.

### **BRAIN STEM Youth Empowerment Program**

During summer 2020 PA-MEP, in partnership with the program implementer CoolSpeak, offered a week-long middle school student leadership program called BRAIN STEM Youth Empowerment Camp.<sup>16</sup> The BRAIN STEM program (Brilliance, Resilience, and Achievement in STEM) affords students standards- and research-based opportunities to build the effective mindsets (e.g. confidence, collaboration, iterating to learn from failure) and skillsets essential to succeeding in STEM fields. The program was implemented virtually as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. PA-MEP staff managed logistics and supported program implementation. According to the program's post-implementation report to the PA-MEP, BRAIN STEM's core objectives were for students to:

- Analyze global and community-based challenges using qualitative and quantitative criteria and formulate solutions to address these issues;
- Collaborate as a team to experience multi-faceted STEM projects that utilize inquiry and innovation;
- Develop analytical skills to gather data and develop evidence to make claims about questions in science;
- Develop a positive STEM identity; and
- Develop a critical consciousness (awareness of and agency to address equity-based and real-world issues).

Pennsylvania opened up its Camp Connect program opportunity to other states, effectively creating a multi-state virtual summer leadership program. A total of 55 students attended the summer 2020 program: 15 from Pennsylvania, 5 from Alaska, 10 from Colorado, 10 from Nebraska, 5 from Iowa, and 10 from Arkansas. To participate, students completed an application that included an essay and a staff recommendation.

Students responded to surveys from CoolSpeak; as such, PA-MEP did not ask students to complete a separate survey. CoolSpeak provided summary information about student feedback to the state PA-MEP staff as well as survey data, which state evaluators reviewed. Report and pre/post survey results indicated that students enjoyed and gained knowledge through the summer BRAIN STEM program. Data indicate that students not only learned content but also experienced personal growth and had meaningful conversations about social concepts such as equity.

### **Camp Connect High School Student Leadership Institute**

For summer 2020 the Camp Connect program was a four-day virtual program designed to encourage college attendance among migrant students who have demonstrated leadership potential in high school. The experience is supposed to enhance participants' leadership

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.coolspeak.net/portfolio-item/brain-stem/>

potential through a series of interactive workshops, lectures, and discussion groups that promote academic development, verbal communication skills, civic engagement and responsibility, research skills, STEM/STEAM (STEM plus Arts) learning, college enrollment and retention, and personal development. Workshops covered topics such as bioethics, creating a webpage, coding, public speaking, astronomy, science experiments, genetics, and mindfulness.

High school students who were interested in participating in the week-long residential program completed an application and submitted personal essays. A team of contracted educators and PA-MEP state staff managed and implemented the program. PA-MEP staff used these essays, student report cards, ACCESS for ELLs data (students had to score at least at the developing level), and a recommendation letter from each student's teacher, counselor, or PA-MEP student support specialist to select students to participate.<sup>17</sup> For summer 2020, like BRAIN STEM, Pennsylvania opened up its Camp Connect program opportunity to other states, effectively creating a multi-state virtual summer leadership program. Also like BRAIN STEM, a total of 55 students attended the summer 2020 program: 15 from Pennsylvania, 5 from Alaska, 10 from Colorado, 10 from Nebraska, 5 from Iowa, and 10 from Arkansas.

Student participants completed a daily survey and a final survey to reflect on the activities, experiments, workshops, and their expectations and feelings. Survey respondents were very positive about the experience and their learning, with nearly all respondents indicating that they strongly agreed or agreed that the activities and experiments were enjoyable, educational, and impactful. When asked to indicate their favorite workshops and activities, coding, science experiments, and webpage development stood out as particular favorites and where student reported learning the most. Nearly 90 percent of respondents shared that they believed the Camp Connect content would be helpful for their future.

### **Interstate Migrant Education Summer Leadership Program Survey**

Following the conclusion of the BRAIN STEM and Camp Connect programs, PA-MEP surveyed the educators from the collaborating states for their feedback about their and their students' experience; 25 educators responded to this survey.

The largest portion of respondents (16, 64 percent), participated in both programs, while 20 percent participated in the BRAIN STEM camp and 16 percent participated in Camp Connect.

The survey asked respondents to indicate their agreement with a series of statements about their virtual camp experiences. For each statement, most respondents chose "strongly agree," indicating positive opinions about the virtual summer camps. No one chose "strongly disagree"<sup>18</sup> and only one statement (Q4) had a "somewhat disagree"

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<sup>17</sup> Priority for Service is not a factor in selection for the Student Leadership Institute, though such students may participate. The Student Leadership Institute is intended to be an enrichment opportunity. Priority for Service elements are more explicitly addressed through the other PA-MEP summer programs.

<sup>18</sup> Not shown in table due to zero responses.

selection. Overall, respondents agreed that the programs were well organized, the staff was helpful, and that the programs were valuable learning opportunities for both themselves and their students.

Table 3. Interstate Migrant Education Summer Leadership Program Survey

Item	Prompt	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Not applicable or did not experience
Q1	The introductory presentation on STUDENT REGISTRATION delivered to all MEP contacts was helpful.	19	5	--	1
Q2	The introductory presentation on MEET AND GREET for STAFF contacts was helpful.	21	4	--	--
Q3	The introductory presentation MEET AND GREET for STUDENTS was helpful.	19	3	--	3
Q4	The student registration process for MIDDLE SCHOOL was smooth and efficient.	11	9	1	4
Q5	The student registration process for HIGH SCHOOL was smooth and efficient.	15	5	--	5
Q6	The Interstate Coordinator (Ines Vega) provided relevant and timely program guidance.	23	2	--	--
Q7	I received timely technical support when I asked for help.	20	3	--	2
Q8	My students enjoyed the program.	23	2	--	--
Q9	This was a valuable learning experience for my students.	24	1	--	--
Q10	The program content was aligned with the stated goals and objectives. <sup>19</sup>	21	4	--	--
Q11	The program was well organized. <sup>19</sup>	21	2	--	1
Q12	I would recommend this program to colleagues.	23	1	--	--
Q13	The STEM kits for students were received/delivered in a timely manner.	21	4	--	--
Q14	The virtual summer camp(s) provided an interactive experience for students.	24	1	--	--

<sup>19</sup> One respondent did not provide a response for this item.

When given the opportunity to clarify or add to their responses, a few educators shared comments. Three of the most substantive comments are shared here.

*“In the beginning we didn't have the list of information that would be required on the registration from so I needed to go back to the families to get more information. There were also some technical glitches with the registration software. Ines was fantastic at getting things straightened out quickly.”*

*“Thank you [to] all staff involved and dedicated to delivering quality services and engagement for all students participating in the camps. It took additional organization and energy to do so virtually. A special thanks to Ines for her continual efforts of communication to keep participating states informed of all aspects of the Camps. Some of the students have mentioned they learned so much and their participation [is] a [lifelong] memory.”*

*“The students and their parents loved the opportunity for [to] learn especially through the virtual zooming. The parents said that their children are more comfortable with navigating the browsers and doing virtual lessons and activities. For the students they loved the program and hope to get another opportunity to sign up for the program. Thank you.”*

Student kits included technology for student use in the programs. Security features and controls were installed on those devices to ensure a safe and secure online learning experience for students. The survey asked whether participants felt that the security features and tools included in the provided technology were necessary and appropriate and for any suggestions (17 of 25 responded to this question). Most agreed that the security features were adequate, had no issues, or had no opinions about these features. Other comments about technology indicated there were some control issues with using Google, that the information requested on the registration form and the supplies form was very similar, there was some confusion and difficulty logging in at the middle school level as a result of students using their own devices, and that the program information shared and billing reflected that students would receive an iPad but in fact received an Amazon tablet, and that an adjustment should be considered.

Respondents were asked to share some aspect of their students' participation that was particularly positive (18 of 25 answered this question). Several respondents stated that the virtual camps were valuable experiences for their students because they allowed them to interact with students from other states and cultural backgrounds. Respondents mentioned the importance of these types of programs during the pandemic, so that students may continue to be connected to their peers. A selection of respondent comments is included here.

*“Some participating students resided in extreme rural areas. The CAMP provided a connection for students academically, socially, and emotionally. Students reflected their involvement in the CAMP and connection to students across the states will be an experience they will always remember.”*

*“The use of the technology was great practice for remote learning. The kids were having fun while learning and the positive aspects of practicing virtual participation was remarked upon a number of times by parents.”*

*“Students were excited to be part of something ‘National.’”*

*“...Students really enjoyed the hands on activities and felt like they grew scientists. They were appreciative to have activities during this COVID season. They were sad when the camp ended and were thankful [for] the staff that worked [so] hard so they could have this camp.”*

*“During family visits, my student presented herself as a shy, disinterested student. Over time, I felt the need for her to be a part of Camp Connect to help her gain more confidence and be self-assured. And it provided what she needed!! I hope to have her involved next year.”*

Respondents were asked to reflect on and share any challenges that they experienced (17 of 25 responded to this question). In these comments, respondents mentioned confusion about the registration process and internet access as the most common issues. Some specific feedback is shared here.

*“The main challenges experienced by participants: 1) understanding that they needed to register more than once (one time with MEP and then again with Cool Speak), 2) logging on, 3) understanding the Brain STEM Hub. Once they got started things were fine.”*

*“There were a few minor issues with communicating to the students how to register. My high school student almost backed out. In situations where students might hesitate to participate, perhaps some marketing material (video?) could help convince a reluctant student to join.”*

*“COVID was one of the biggest challenge because we had to deliver the materials to the students. It was risky!”*

*“The only challenges was last minute changes. Some students were not able to participate and I had to find a different student. Also, internet connection was a challenge.”*

*“Ensuring the parents were aware of the importance of the program. In the beginning there was a lack of communication between daughter and parent.”*

Finally, respondents had the opportunity to share any additional feedback or suggestions with the program team (15 of 25 responded). Most responses were general comments of appreciation. One was hopeful that more students could enroll. A final suggestion was: *“I am aware that with the rapid changes in technology, students are interested in working with*

*more tech devices and less experiments with food. For example, video gaming and graphic design, coding, drone management and animations. It is imperative that students learn to operate these devices to be prepared for the near future. Schools are already experimenting the usage of this technology in all forms, since STEM started going through a developing stage and more advance level.”*

## **STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Information in this section answers the evaluation question: “To what extent are migrant students performing at expected levels and/or showing improvement?”

Note: In this section, the color scheme for some graphs has been changed to more easily illustrate results at a glance. Improved results are shown in green, declined is shown in red, and middle categories are shown in yellow and/or orange. This illustration may make results easier to interpret.

### **Kindergarten Preparation Inventory (KPI)**

For the 2018-19 program year, PA-MEP instituted a new pre-kindergarten skill development instrument: the KPI. Complementing the KPI was a toolkit of resources, lessons, and manipulatives that staff could use to support students in developing skills that they would need as they transitioned to kindergarten.

Staff were to conduct the KPI with children who were at least three years old and not enrolled in a formal pre-k program and also all children four years old and older who were not yet enrolled in kindergarten. The KPI was intended to be done initially in fall 2019 or at the time of the child’s initial enrollment in PA-MEP and again the following late summer/fall.

The 2019-20 year was the second year that the program used this instrument.

The KPI included 27 skills in five categories. Students proficient in 20 to 27 of the skills were considered to be at a mastery level. Students proficient in 11 to 19 of the skills were considered in progress, and students with 10 or fewer skills were considered to be below kindergarten expectations and coded as “not yet.” Determination of skill proficiency was left to the professional opinion of the student support specialist working with the student, based on their observation. If a child successfully demonstrated all 27 skills, the child did not have to repeat the KPI.

KPI data was available for 178 children, which is 38 percent of the 466 children who were age three or older and not yet in kindergarten enrolled in PA-MEP during this year.

It is important to note that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, PA-MEP recommended that staff focus their efforts on conducting the KPI with children at least four years old, as these children were most likely to enroll in kindergarten in the next year. This, coupled with

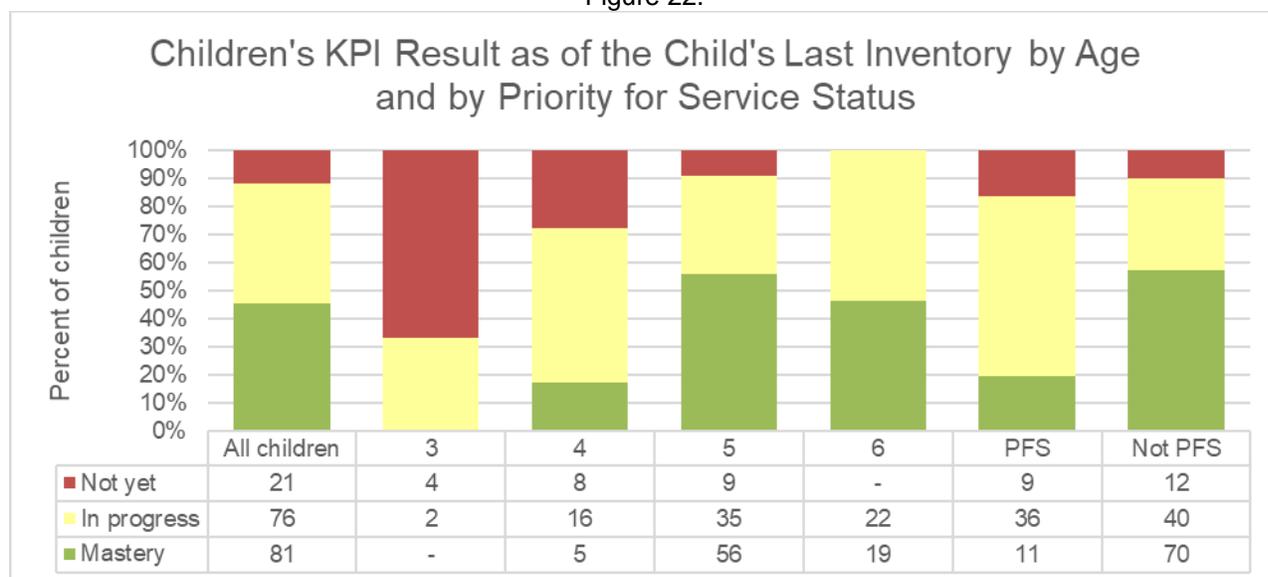
challenges engaging with families because of pandemic restrictions and physical distancing, may contribute to lower response rates than in the past.

Considering a child’s result as of their last KPI administration, regardless of the timing of the KPI, 46 percent of all children included in analysis demonstrated skills at the mastery level, 43 percent were in progress, and 12 percent were considered as not yet meeting expectations. As might be expected, older children had greater percentages reaching the mastery level:<sup>20</sup> none of the three-year-old children were at mastery, 17 percent of four-year-old children were at mastery, 56 percent of five-year-old children were at mastery, and 46 percent of six-year-old children were at mastery. Likewise, the percentages in the “not yet” category decreased with each greater age category. Of all children aged four or older, 47 percent scored in the mastery level.<sup>21</sup> These results are almost exclusively for children identified as not fluent in English; only two children included in KPI data were fluent in English.

Priority for Service status, or more accurately the factors that qualify a child as Priority for Service, also shows differences in results. Nearly a third of children (31 percent) included in analysis qualified as Priority for Service, and of these, 20 percent scored in the mastery category. Children who were not Priority for Service had a mastery percentage that was nearly three times higher than students with the Priority for Service designation: 57 percent.

The following figures illustrate these results.

Figure 22.



<sup>20</sup> 32 children’s ages at the time of their last administration could not be determined based on the data available. Because of the small number, a separate results category for these students would be misleading. These children are included in the overall results, but not in age-specific results.

<sup>21</sup> Age at the time of the last KPI could not be determined for two children. These individuals are included in ‘all children’ results but are not included in any age disaggregations.

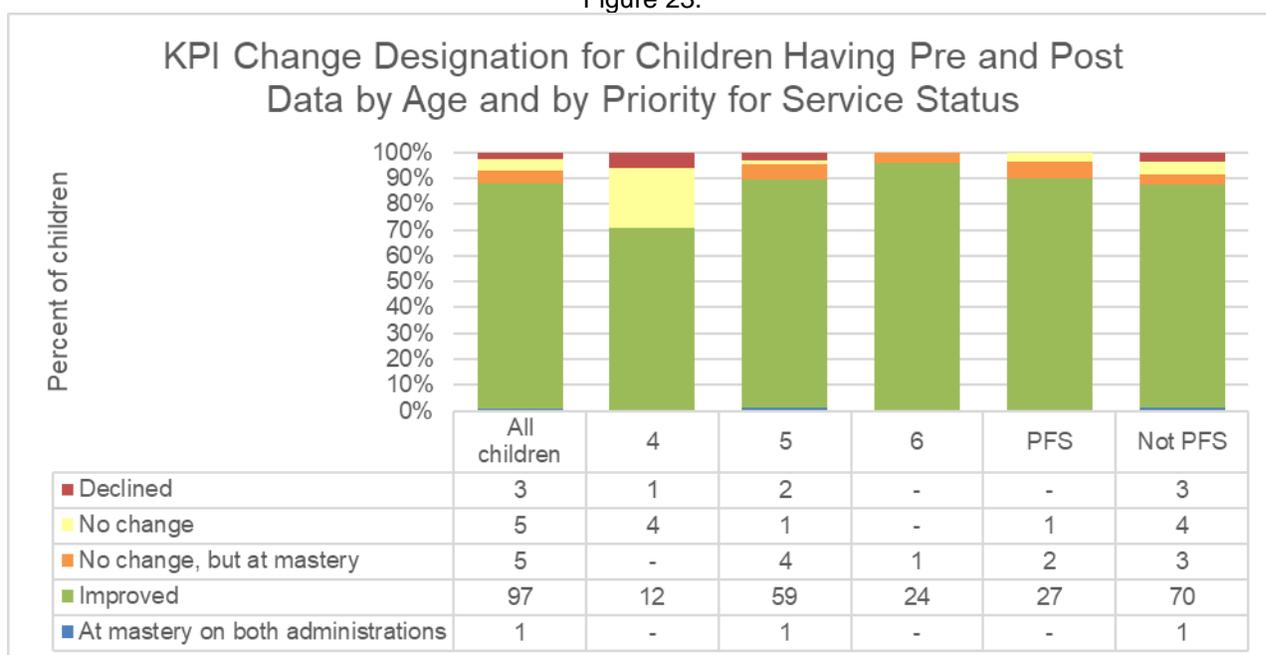
It is also helpful to know how many children were able to demonstrate all skills: 22 children (12 percent of all children with data), including one four year old, 15 five year olds, five six year olds, and one child whose age was not available, were able to demonstrate all 27 skills.

There were 111 children with two data points, or a pre and a post administration. Of these 111 children, 87 percent improved the number of skills demonstrated from pre to post. Additionally, one child demonstrated all 27 skills on both the pre and post administration,<sup>22</sup> and 5 percent demonstrated the same number of skills, but scored in the mastery level. Five percent demonstrated the same number of skills but were not at a mastery level. Three percent declined. Older students were more likely to show improvement: 71 percent of four year olds improved, 88 percent of five year olds improved, and 96 percent of six year olds improved.

The difference was not dramatic between Priority for Service and children without this designation; 90 percent of Priority for Service students improved and 86 percent of children who were not Priority for Service improved.

The following figure illustrates these results.

Figure 23.

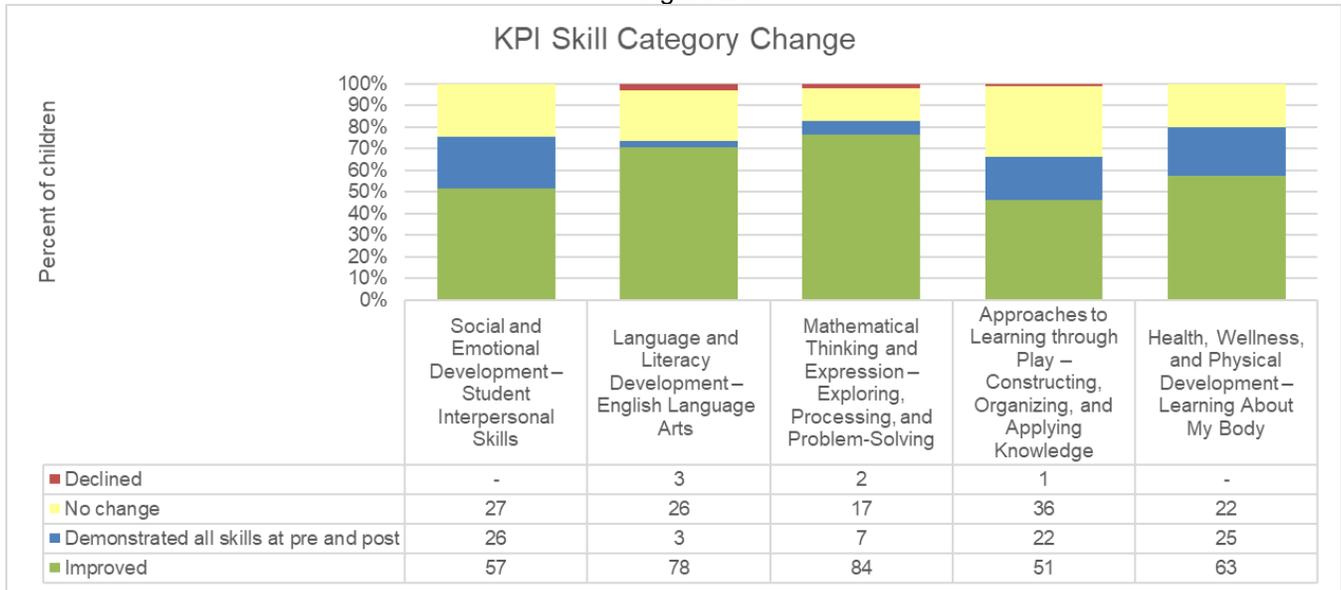


At this time, it is not possible to determine the extent to which these outcomes are the result of the expected natural development of skills as children get older or if other factors influenced the outcomes.

<sup>22</sup> Staff were advised generally that if a child demonstrated all 27 skills, the KPI did not need to be repeated the second time. It is not clear if there was a reason that this child completed the KPI twice.

Additionally, evaluators considered the extent to which students showed change within individual skill categories. To do this, evaluators determined how many skills children demonstrated at the first and second administrations, for children having two, but excluding those students who demonstrated all 27 skills at pre and post (110 students). Based on this comparison, more than half of children with two KPI administrations showed improvement in the number of skills demonstrated within each category or demonstrated all skills at both administrations (66 to 83 percent).

Figure 24.



Overall, the greatest portions of children improved or demonstrated all skills in the mathematical thinking category (83 percent). Children appear to have the greatest need related to the approaches to learning through play category, with 34 percent declining or showing no change from pre to post.

### Academic Achievement

Each year, students in certain grades take one of Pennsylvania’s literacy and/or math state assessments (PSSA, PASA, or Keystone Exam). The PSSA is administered to the most students and is given in March or April<sup>23</sup> in grades 3-8. Students in grades 8-11 take the Keystone Exam, which may be administered up to three times per year. Once a student scores at or above the proficient level, whether before or while enrolled in grade 11, the score is banked and applied to the student’s grade 11 year. Keystone Exam results may not be used for accountability purposes before grade 11. The PASA is Pennsylvania’s alternative state assessment and is administered in grades 3-8 and 11 for students with cognitive disabilities. The Keystone Exam and PASA are aligned to the PSSA and use the same performance levels (below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced).

<sup>23</sup> Writing PSSA data are not included in state or federal migrant education reporting at this time.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state-ordered physical facility closures, including schools, the 2019-20 state assessments were canceled. As such, no state assessment data were collected for the 2019-20 year. Once state assessments resume, they will be again included in PA-MEP data collection and analysis.

For the 2019-20 program year, state academic achievement analysis included the ACCESS for ELLs. The ACCESS for ELLs<sup>24</sup> assessment is a language proficiency test for K-12 students and is one component of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium's comprehensive, standards-driven system designed to improve the teaching and learning of English language learners. Pennsylvania is a part of the WIDA Consortium.

The purpose of ACCESS for ELLs is to monitor student progress in English language proficiency on a yearly basis and to serve as a criterion to aid in determining when students have attained full language proficiency. The test was designed to represent the social and academic language demands within a school setting as outlined in the assessment's *English Language Proficiency Standards, Kindergarten through Grade 12*. Pennsylvania administers the assessment between late January and late February to all K-12 students enrolled in public school districts who were identified by their school or district as not fluent in English.

Since the assessment is given once at mid-year, it cannot be used to determine the impact of current year programming, but it can provide insight into current year English language learner status. Also, it can be compared to the prior year's assessment to look at gains from the prior year, much like the state academic assessments.

ACCESS for ELLs data were available at the state level and matched to PA-MEP enrollment data. In the graphs that follow, ACCESS for ELLs results<sup>25</sup> are provided for all nonfluent migrant students having data and then disaggregated by Priority for Service status and grade level. Language proficiency levels include entering, emerging, developing, expanding, bridging, and reaching. A student's composite scale score is used to determine the extent and kind of English services a child receives from the district in which they are enrolled. The composite scale score is a factor used to exit a child from district-provided ESL services. Percentages were calculated based on the number of students having data and included in analysis, and do not represent all K-12 students. For each assessment, the number of students included in the analysis is provided (overall and by Priority for Service status).

ACCESS for ELLs data was available for all students enrolled in a Pennsylvania public school who took the assessment. For the 2019-20 program year, data was available for

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<sup>24</sup> While the name of the assessment is an acronym standing for Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners, ACCESS for ELLs is the formal name of the assessment.

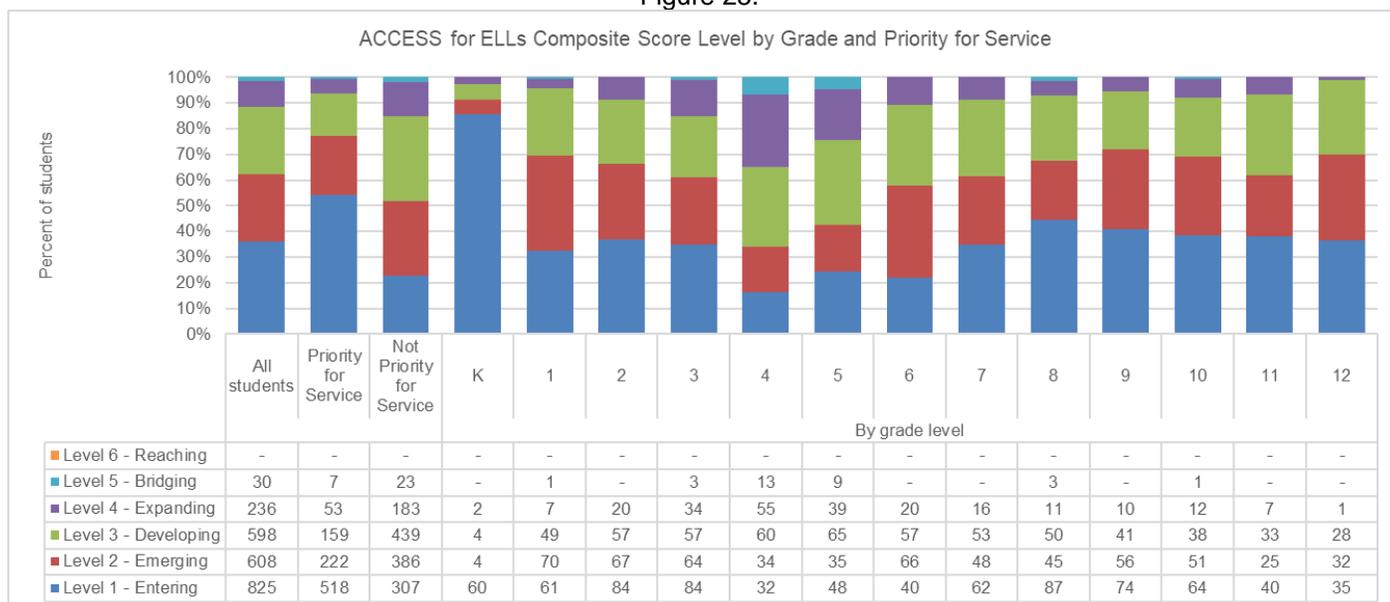
<sup>25</sup> The ACCESS for ELLs *Interpretative Guide* is available from the WIDA Consortium's website: <http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/index.aspx>.

2,297 migrant students in kindergarten through grade 12 (959 Priority for Service, 1,338 non-Priority for Service), which is 85 percent of all K-12 PA-MEP nonfluent students enrolled during the school year (2,689) prior to June 2020. Students only have data if they were enrolled in public school in Pennsylvania at the time the assessment occurred.

Overall results indicate a majority of students (88 percent) scored in the lowest three (of six) performance levels. The largest group, at 36 percent, scored in the first level, Entering. The second and third levels, Emerging and Developing, were the same (26 percent each).

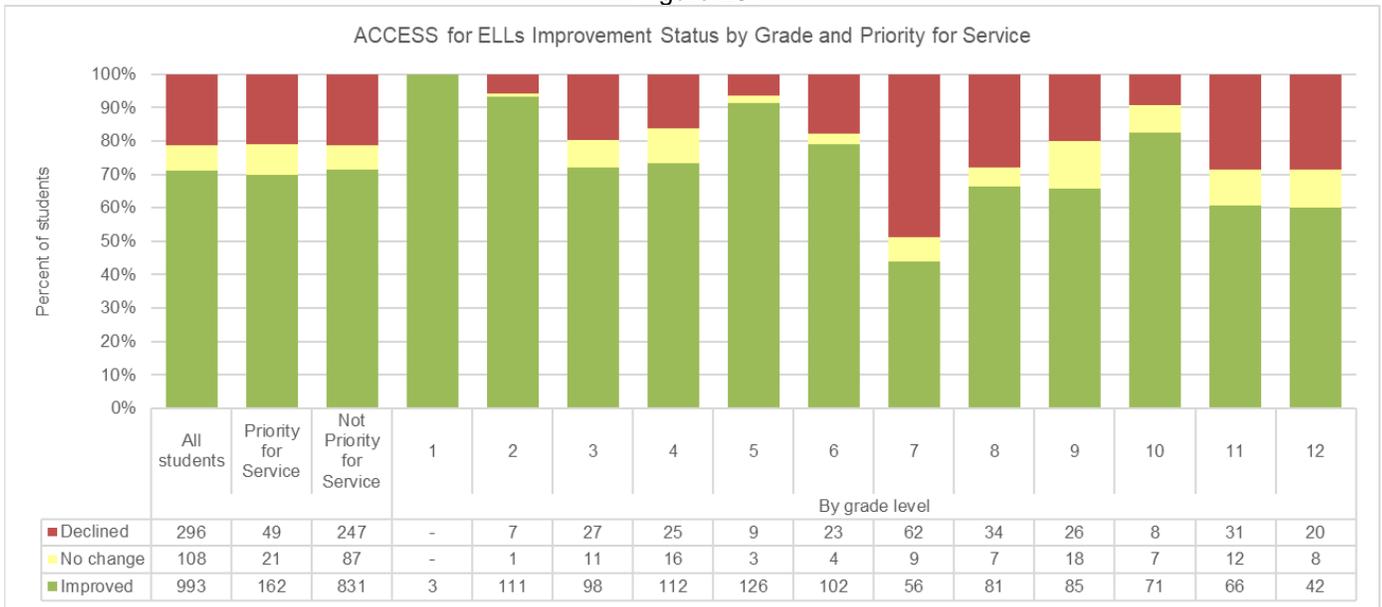
Priority for Service factors influences results, as 94 percent of Priority for Service students scored in the bottom three levels compared to 85 percent of non-Priority for Service students. Kindergarten and grade 1 had the highest percentages (97 and 96 percent, respectively) of students scoring in the lowest three performance levels. Grade 4 had the lowest, at 65 percent.

Figure 25.



Slightly more than half (61 percent) of these nonfluent students with 2019-20 ACCESS for ELLs data also had 2018-19 ACCESS for ELLs data for comparison. Based on a comparison of each student's composite scale score as directed by the ACCESS for ELLs Interpretive Guide, 71 percent of students with two consecutive years of data improved, 8 percent maintained the same level, and 21 percent declined. There is no 'did not need to improve' category here because once a student reaches the highest level, they are typically exited from ESL and not tested again using the ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Grades 1, 2, and 5 had the largest improvement percentages. Grades 7, 8, 11, and 12 had the highest percentages of students showing a decline at 28 to 49 percent.

Figure 26.



### Completion of Higher-Level Math Courses

One of the federal Migrant Education Program performance measures addresses the frequency with which students entering grade 11 had previously successfully completed Algebra I or a higher-level math course. PA-MEP examines this element for all high school students as well as grade 11 specifically.

Of the 779 high school students with information available related to their completion of higher-level math courses, 49 percent had successfully completed Algebra I or a higher-level math course as of their earliest needs assessment for the year. Particular to grade 11 (163 students), 76 percent had successfully completed Algebra I or a higher-level math course as of their earliest needs assessment. As might be expected, grade 12 students had the highest percentage (86 percent of 138 students) and grade 9 had the lowest percentage (13 percent of 263 students). Grade 10 data showed 47 percent of the 215 students successfully meeting this indicator.

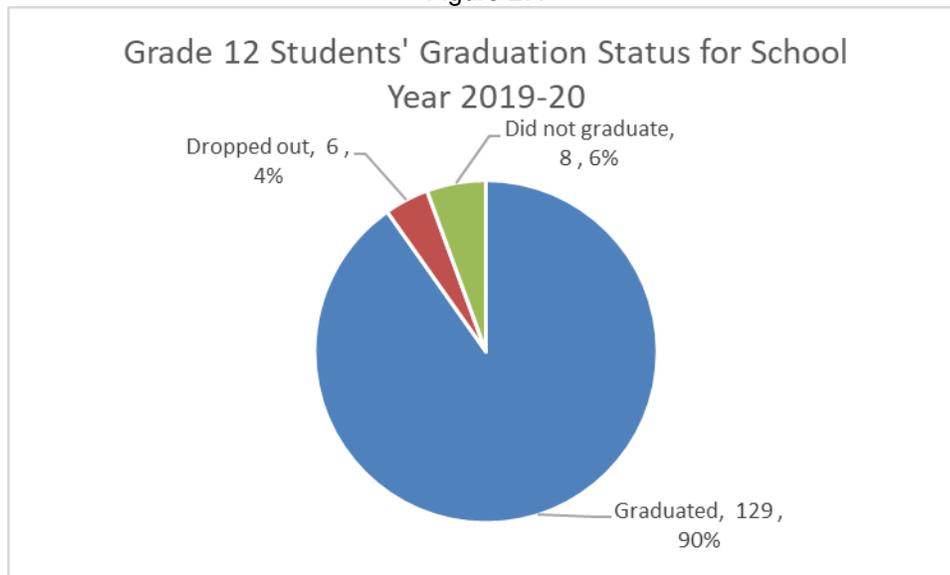
### Graduation, GED, and Promotion

Migrant students have a higher risk of not graduating from high school because of the mobile nature of the migrant lifestyle. One of the areas of focus for the PA-MEP is to keep students in school and ensure that they graduate. A total of 143 students were enrolled in grade 12 during the 2019-20 school year and had graduation information available.<sup>26</sup> Of

<sup>26</sup> Four students were enrolled in Grade 12 according to the MIS2000 database for the Sept. 1, 2019-Aug. 30, 2020 period; however, their enrollment did not start until August 2020, so that grade 12 enrollment actually belonged to the 2020-21 school year. As such, these four students were excluded from 2019-20 grade 12 graduation analysis as they would not have been eligible for graduation in 2019-20. Additionally, four students left Pennsylvania and one student ended eligibility prior to the end of the school year. These

these 143 students, 90.2 percent (129) graduated, which is higher than the prior year, where 87.7 percent graduated.

Figure 27.



Of the 129 grade 12 students graduating, 29 percent had a Priority for Service designation. Of the 14 students who did not graduate, 7 percent were Priority for Service.

In addition to grade 12 students graduating, analysis revealed that one student enrolled in grade 11 successfully graduated in 2019-20 by earning additional credits and meeting requirements. This brings the total 2019-20 graduate count to 130 students.

Because of changes to how graduation rate is calculated at the state level (a cohort method is used) evaluators are unable to compare state and PA-MEP rates using the methodology described above. PDE calculates migrant graduation rate using the cohort method and posts this information to its website. However, at the time of this report's production, 2019-20 cohort graduation rate information was not yet available. For an approximation, 2018-19 four-year cohort graduation rate information was available and indicated that the migrant graduation rate was 73.13 percent, which was higher than the 2017-18 migrant graduation rate of 65.7 percent but also lower than the state's graduation rate of 86.52 percent.<sup>27</sup> As these rates are not for 2019-20, caution should be used in comparing this information to the current year.

PA-MEP also collected information on completion of GED programs for those youth who dropped out of school having not yet earned a high school diploma. Four out-of-school youth earned their GED credential during 2019-20, which is three more than the prior year.

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students were also excluded from analysis as their graduation status cannot be classified as graduated or not graduated.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/CohortGradRate/Pages/default.aspx>

Additionally, 11 youth were listed as pursuing their GED, which is five more than the prior year.

Grade promotion for students in grades 7-12 was another area of inquiry, as the federal GPRA measures include an item related to secondary grade level promotion. According to promotion information for secondary students (grades 7-12) whose graduation and promotion status could be determined<sup>28</sup> (1,047 students), 95 percent were promoted to the next grade or graduated. Priority for Service factors did not appear to make much of a difference in promotion status; 95 percent of both Priority for Service students and those without this designation were promoted or graduated.

Overall, 96 percent of the 2,578 K-12 students whose status was known graduated or were promoted.

### **Dropout Prevention**

According to PDE's website,<sup>29</sup> a dropout is defined as "a student who, for any reason other than death, leaves school before graduation without transferring to another school/institution" and explains that the dropout rate is "the total number of dropouts for the school year [divided] by the fall enrollment for the same year." Evaluators calculated the 2019-20 dropout rate by dividing the number of students who dropped out by the number of secondary students enrolled during this program year minus any 2019-20 program year enrollments that occurred after Aug. 25, 2019.<sup>30</sup>

Evaluators identified students dropping out during the course of the 2019-20 program year as well as by identifying students were enrolled in K-12 school during the prior year (2018-19) and not identified as dropping out but then classified as an out-of-school youth in 2019-20, meaning that they were determined to have dropped out between the last PA-MEP interaction in 2018-19 and their initial enrollment for the 2019-20 program.

Evaluators identified 32 students as dropping out either during 2019-20 year (15) or between 2018-19 and 2019-20 (15); one additional student dropped out during 2019-20 but then re-enrolled before the end of the year. This provides a net dropout count of 31 students, which is fewer than the prior year's net count of 35.

Of the 32 students dropping out, 28 percent (9 individuals) had a Priority for Service designation.

Two students who dropped out were coded as pursuing their GED credential.

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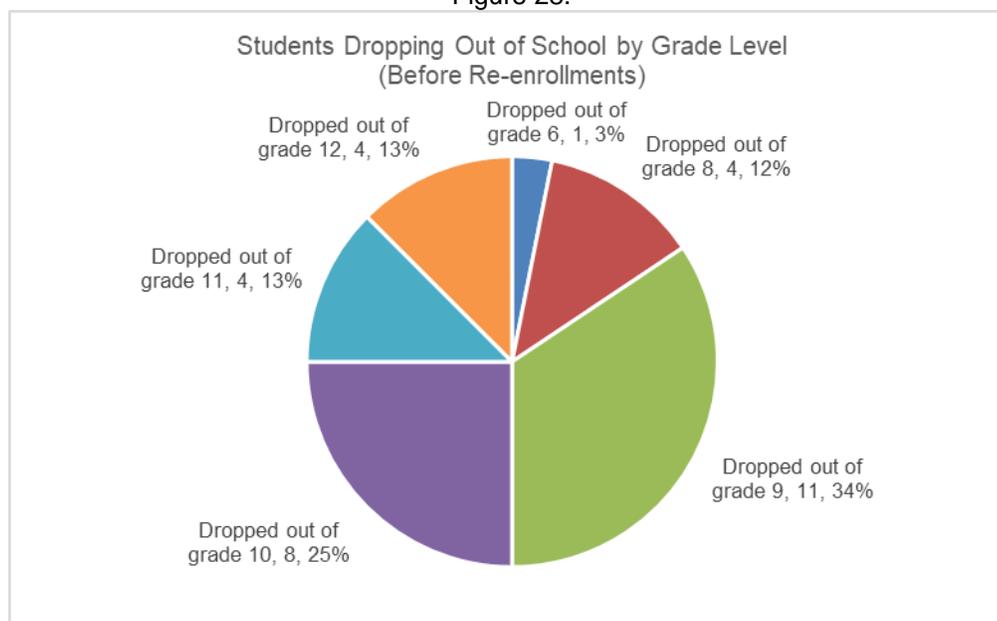
<sup>28</sup> Students whose status could not be determined included those that left the area before the end of the school year, their eligibility expired, or they arrived too late in the program year for promotion to be determined.

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Dropouts.aspx#\\_VpVVKbYrK70](http://www.education.pa.gov/Data-and-Statistics/Pages/Dropouts.aspx#_VpVVKbYrK70)

<sup>30</sup> Some school districts begin their school year before September 1. Students are supposed to retain their prior school year grade level classification until their next fall school year enrollment. Students enrolling for the first time at the very end of the program year would likely have their 2019-20 grade level assigned and would not have been present for nearly all of the 2019-20 academic term.

Students dropped out of grades 6-12, with grade 9 having the greatest number of students dropping out of school (11) followed by grade 10 (8).

Figure 28.



Considering: 1) all students in grades 6-12, 2) excluded re-enrollments, 3) excluded enrollments on or after Aug. 25, 2020, and 4) the count of students dropping out of these grades, the dropout rate out of grades 6-12 for 2019-20 was 1.86 percent.

In addition to examining the number and rate of students dropping out of school, it is also useful to look at whether the dropout rate of migrant students is in line with the state rate. Pennsylvania calculates dropout rate based on grades 7-12 enrollment. At this report's writing, Pennsylvania's 2019-20 dropout rate was not yet available. However, the state rate typically does not change dramatically year to year, so for an approximation, the 2018-19 state dropout<sup>31</sup> rate was 1.73 percent (slightly lower than 1.83 in 2017-18 but almost equal to the 2016-17 rate of 1.72 percent). Based on the 7-12 enrollment and net dropout count of students dropping out of grades 7-12 (30), PA-MEP's comparative 2019-20 dropout rate is higher than the state rate at 2.15 percent.

Analysis also examined the frequency with which students who dropped out – in this or a prior year – re-enrolled in school. As shared previously in this section, one student dropped out and then re-enrolled within the year. An additional seven students re-enrolled in school during the course of the year. An eighth out-of-school youth re-enrolled in school during the year, but later dropped out again within the year. A final student was identified as being an out-of-school youth in 2018-19 but enrolled in school in 2019-20. This brings

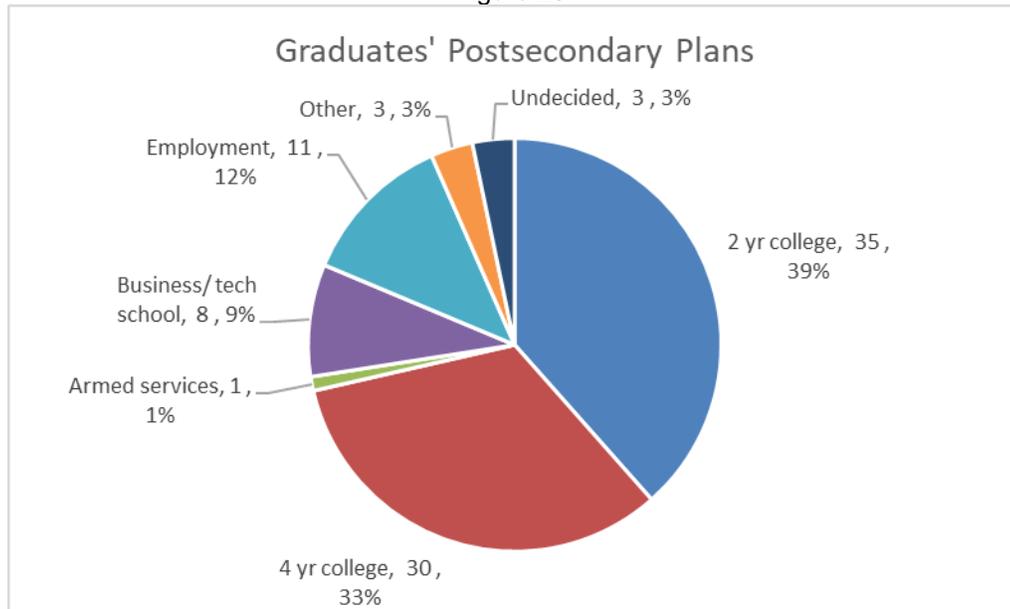
<sup>31</sup> Pennsylvania dropout data was collected from <https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Dropouts/Pages/default.aspx>

the program to a total net count of nine students re-enrolling in school, which is one greater than the prior year.

### Postsecondary Plans

Each year, PA-MEP asks students nearing graduation what they plan to do after high school. Postsecondary plan data was available for 91 of the 130 2019-20 graduates. Of those with a known status, 72 percent of graduates planned to attend a two-year (39 percent) or four-year college (33 percent) and 12 percent indicated that they planned to go to work.

Figure 29.



It is important to keep in mind that a student's postsecondary plan may be indicative of the choices available locally. Some project areas include large, urban areas where there are numerous colleges and universities available, while other areas are more rural with fewer options in close proximity. Students may not have the resources or options to relocate for postsecondary education. For these reasons, a regional breakdown of results is not included.

### Diploma Project

The Diploma Project is an outcome of Pennsylvania's Comprehensive Needs Assessment where concerns were raised and validated related to student and family understanding of graduation and postsecondary planning and requirements. PDE assembled a team of educators and stakeholders to develop the Diploma Project Toolkit content to support PA-MEP staff in implementing the initiative and supporting students and their families.

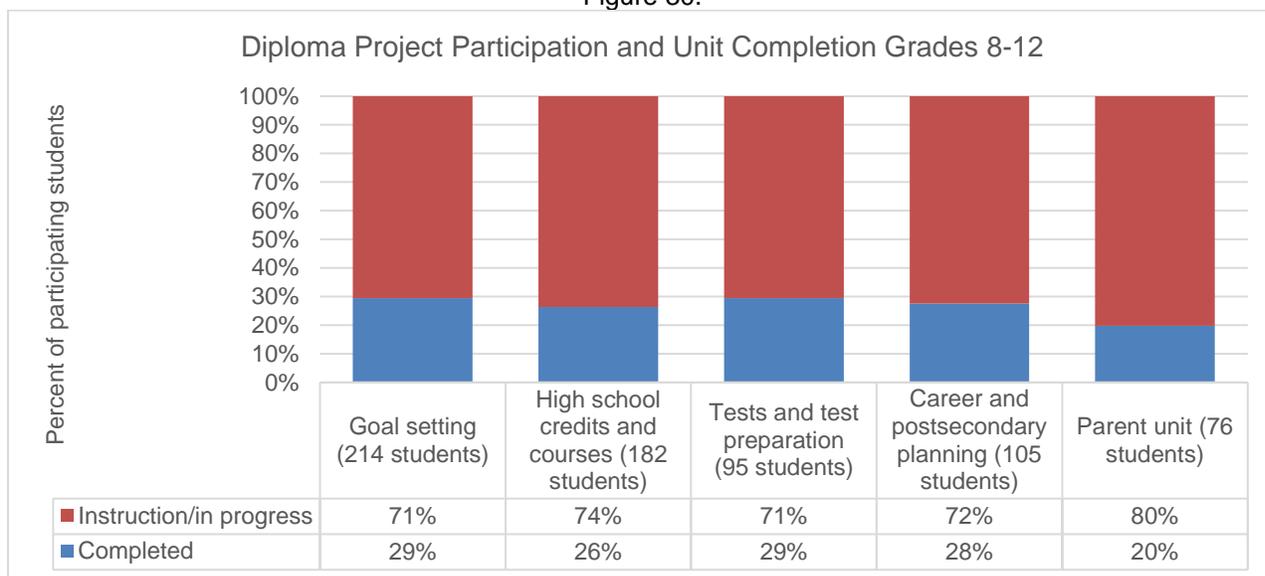
The toolkit, which targeted students in grades 8-12 and their families, contains five units with content and guiding student-centered questions:

- Unit 1 - Goal Setting
- Unit 2 - High School Credits and Courses
- Unit 3 - Tests and Test Preparation
- Unit 4 - Career and Postsecondary Planning
- Unit 5 - Parent Unit (a standalone unit)

The toolkit included sections containing tips for students and parents, learning checks, and action plans to examine whether students and parents gained new knowledge. The Diploma Project Toolkit is available in English, though the parent unit is available in translated forms.

A total of 287 students in grades 8-12 (25 percent of 1,157 students in grades 8-12) had information for one or more of the Diploma Project categories. The first four units were designed for students and the fifth unit was designed for parents. Goal setting and tests and test preparation had the highest percentages of completion (29 percent); the parent unit had the lowest (20 percent).

Figure 30.



## Out-of-School Youth Assessment

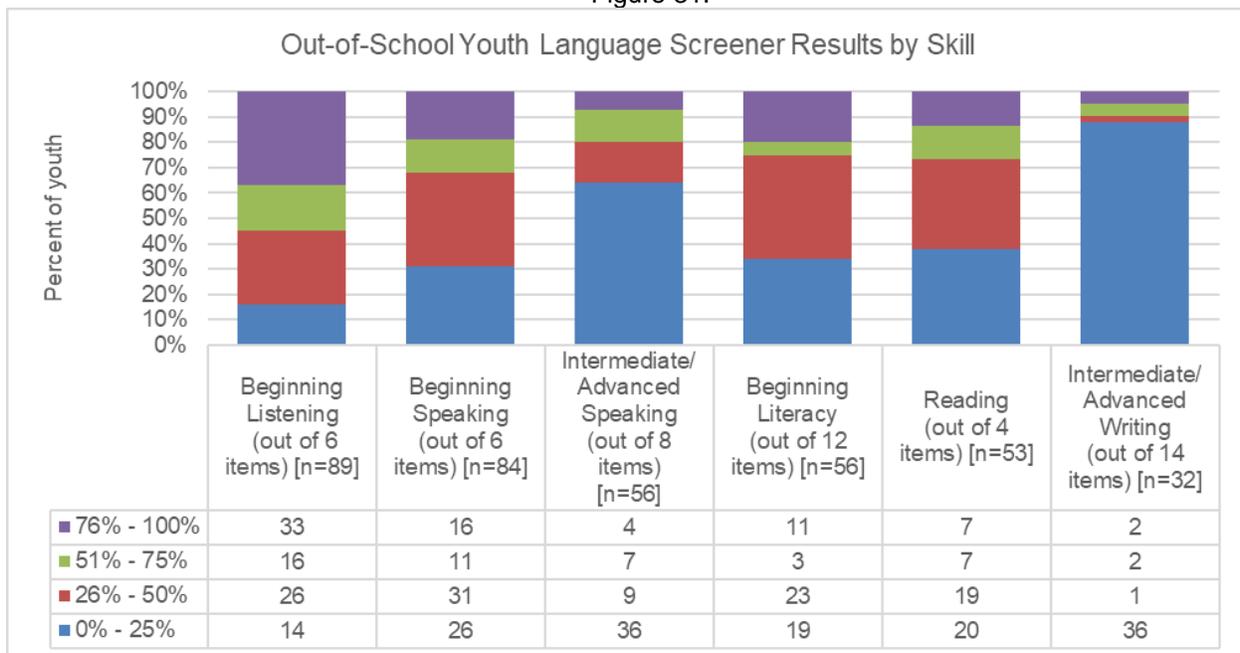
As part of PA-MEP's participation in the out-of-school-youth GOSOSY Consortium<sup>32</sup> PA-MEP is annually asked to provide certain information about its efforts and outcomes in supporting the out-of-school youth population. Using information from the GOSOSY Consortium, state evaluators and PDE collaborated to create an assessment format to

<sup>32</sup> GOSOSY stands for Graduation and Outcomes for Success for Out-of-School Youth. <http://www.osymigrant.org/>

gather information about out-of-school youth completion of specific lessons and activities contained in a workbook provided to PA-MEP staff. The 2019-20 program year was the sixth year this tool was used. The initiative included a language screener, goal tracker, and eight lesson categories, titled *For Your Health*, *Finanza Toolbox*, *Vermont Mini-Lessons*, *Math for Living*, *Parenting*, *Legal Rights*, *Healthy House*, and *Mental Health* each with several lessons and accompanying tests.

A total of 91 youth had language screener results that could be analyzed for one or more of the six testing areas (skills). Areas tested included beginning listening, beginning speaking, intermediate/advanced speaking, beginning literacy, reading, and intermediate/advanced writing. The graph that follows shows the results for each tested skill area, for those students tested in that area (*n*), the number and proportion of students achieving a percentage correct in the range of 0-25 percent, 26-50 percent, 51-75 percent, or 76-100 percent based on the number of items in each skill test. Given the differing numbers of students in each category, no discernable trends are identified, as percentages are largely a factor of the number of items within each area and the number of youth assessed. However, despite these limitations, it appears that youth may need additional support in the two intermediate/advanced categories, as these groups had the largest percentages scoring in the bottom quartile.

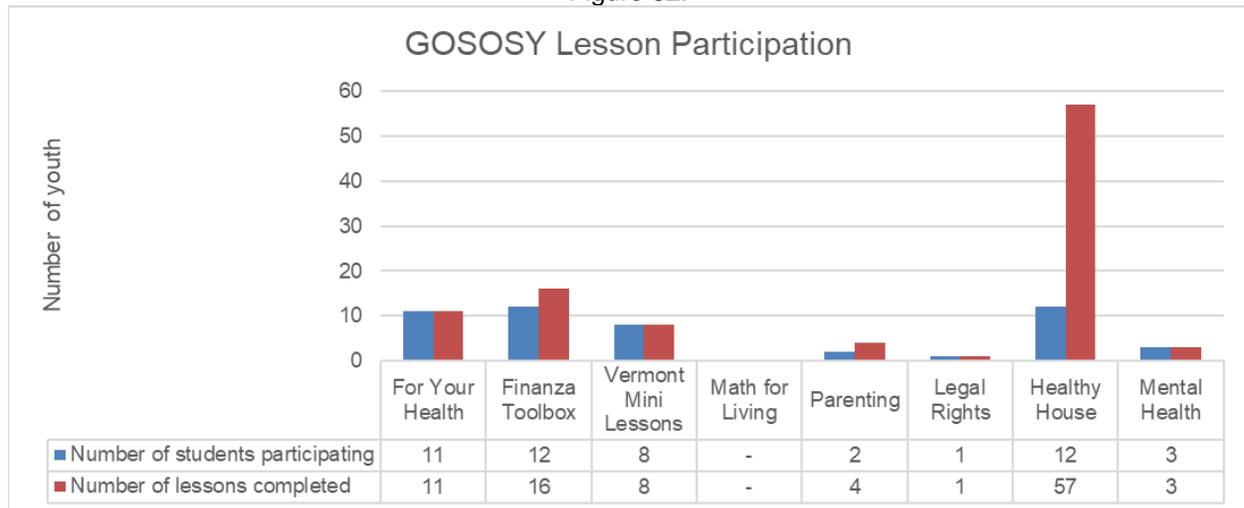
Figure 31.



For youth having a score for each of the six skill areas (41), a combined language screener score could be determined. Students received a total score (out of 50 possible points) and percentage based on these components. Of the 41 youth having a combined result, 66 percent scored in the 25 percent or less quartile, 24 percent scored between 26 and 50 percent, and 10 percent scored 76 percent or higher.

Youth may have participated in any combination or number of lessons, depending on what was relevant for that youth, but overall, few youth participated in any particular lesson or lesson category. A total of 41 youth participated in one or more lessons, with youth participation ranging from one to 12 youth participating in one or more lessons in a category. No youth participated in Math for Living lessons. Healthy House had the greatest level of participation; 12 students completed 57 lessons.

Figure 32.



Additionally, 2019-20 was the third year that information was collected on youth setting and achievement of goals. Of 181 youth included in project area submissions, 78 (52 percent) participated in a goal setting workshop, 84 (74 percent) developed a personal learning plan with a goal, and 60 youth (53 percent) participated in activities related to postsecondary awareness, career awareness, or other related activities; 27 youth (15 percent) were identified as participating in all three.

Of the 78 youth reported as participating in a goal setting workshop, 13 (17 percent) were reported as achieving a score of 8 on the goal setting workshop rubric, which is the benchmark established for the project.

Eighty-five youth had goal plan information available. Numbers of goal steps ranged from one to six steps (average 3.7 steps). Seventy-eight youth accomplished at least one of the steps of their goal; 67 students accomplished 50 percent or more of their goal's steps. Twenty-four youth completed all steps of their goal (average 2.7 steps per goal).

## Reflections, Implications, and Recommendations

Through data analysis of results submitted by project areas, MIS2000, and PDE several overall themes emerged, which informed the following recommendations.

1. Under the conditions caused or influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, academic outcomes were limited and may continue to be influenced to some extent for at least the next year, as a result of assessment cancellations and other disruptions to data collection. This undoubtedly influenced and will continue to influence the program's ability to demonstrate growth on its established measures. As the program is nearing its next round of Comprehensive Needs Assessment and *Service Delivery Plan* development, the program leadership might consider accelerating that process to begin sooner, while data are being disrupted anyway, so that when typical cycles can resume the program is poised to act.
2. While the data available for 2019-20 are limited, historical information indicates that the needs of students who are nonfluent, Priority for Service, and/or at risk for dropping out should be elevated for services. PA-MEP staff should continue to identify students by these criteria and provide them with or connect them to services and support in line with the needs identified on their individual needs assessment. While PA-MEP continues to demonstrate that Priority for Service students are more likely to receive services than students without the designation, continued focus is needed to ensure that Priority for Service students are getting services they need to succeed. Ensuring all nonfluent students are connected to English services in their school district or through PA-MEP is as critical as ensuring that Priority for Service students are being serviced first. PA-MEP should also continue its emphasis or strategies focused on dropout prevention, and to the extent possible, re-enrollment in school. When students re-enroll in school, the program should take steps particularly to address any needs related to the student's initial reason for leaving school to prevent another dropping out.
3. Based on evaluation guidance and focus areas provided by the ED's Office of Migrant Education as well as state initiatives, PA-MEP's evaluators, MIS2000 staff, and PDE should review current data collection and reporting practices and content to ensure their continued relevance, and where possible, collaborate to reduce the data burden or simplify reporting. Data should only be collected if it contributes useful and necessary information. As program needs and priorities change, data collection must evolve to ensure that these priority areas can be examined. Evaluators and the state team should review data collection and reporting protocols to ensure continued relevance, and where possible, reduce the data and reporting burden on PA-MEP staff.
4. PA-MEP staff should (continue to) increase efforts intended to engage out-of-school youth in high school equivalency programs and provide services to these individuals to support their completion of such programs. Similarly, staff should also increase efforts to engage secondary students and out-of-school youth in Diploma Project

modules. PA-MEP should continue efforts focused on engaging youth in such programs and supporting them towards completion.

5. Evaluation findings from the past several years have been somewhat consistent. Historically, there has been a “serve all with some” approach, driven primarily by federal requirements. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the varying and disparate needs of particular populations, of which the migrant children and youth may be part. These populations may face even greater challenges and larger achievement gaps as the commonwealth begins its recovery process. While the program certainly should continue its attempts to serve children and youth according to federal directives, regional staff should consider the volume of services provided to those individuals with complex and higher levels of need. While this may mean that service delivery percentages may decrease slightly for some indicators, the improved results for the students with the greatest needs would elevate the program and students’ results. Also, a more focused approach is more sustainable, may lead to less staff turnover, and may improve results.
6. Project areas should continue to use federal program indicators, measurable program outcomes, and *Service Delivery Plan* objectives along with student need indicators to focus and frame program implementation and service delivery.
7. Project areas should use the summer program site visit checklist during summer program planning and staff training in order to ensure that program components and expectations are present and evident. PA-MEP state office staff should consider a refresher in the spring, perhaps at a project manager meeting, to review the summer program checklist, clarify expectations, and share examples of program implementation.

The evaluation of the PA-MEP is intended to provide program results and information that PDE and local program staff can use to make informed decisions about program changes, improvement, and implementation. Results and recommendations are based upon the data available.

Evaluator’s note: While this report covers the 2019-20 program year, and recommendations are offered based on the findings of this year, evaluators acknowledge that the report was prepared and released during widespread school and program closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020. As such, some data normally collected were not available for this cycle. Further, programs may have limited ability to make program adjustments in the short term, as they are operating under restrictions that are outside of program leaders’ control.