

Student Profile— Migrant Education Students in North Carolina, 2007-2008

Introduction

This is the second Migrant Education Student Profile completed by North Carolina Migrant Education. While the last student profile was the reflection of dramatic changes in North Carolina's agriculture and migrant student population, the current profile demonstrates a stabilizing of many demographic factors. This stabilization occurred even in the face of the 2007 drought, the worst on record. This document will explore agricultural changes, migrant student demographic characteristics, and academic achievement.

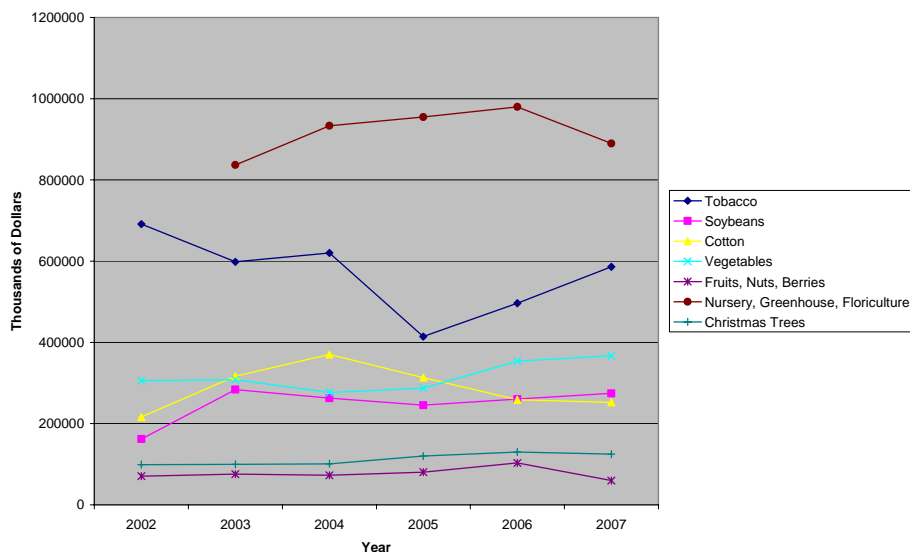
General Agricultural and Labor Conditions

North Carolina has become an increasingly urban state during the last 20 years. However, it still ranks high in agricultural production, being first in the nation in tobacco, pigs, Christmas trees, and sweet potatoes. In 2008, agriculture contributed 70.1 billion dollars (nearly 20%) to the North Carolina economy.

While there has been a recent increase in the acreage and sales of crops that are mechanically harvested, such as corn and soybeans, North Carolina farms still produce many crops that require hand labor, including sweet potatoes, tobacco, Christmas trees, cucumbers, apples, tomatoes, blueberries, and many other fruits and vegetables. Additionally, the crab and oyster industries of the coastal area require hand labor.

During the last ten years, the number of farms in North Carolina has declined by 18 percent, and the acreage of land in farms has decreased by 6 percent. While tobacco receipts have shown an overall decline, other labor-intensive crops have shown small increases, even with the effects of the 2007 drought.

Cash Receipts from Farming, by Commodity, 2002-2007

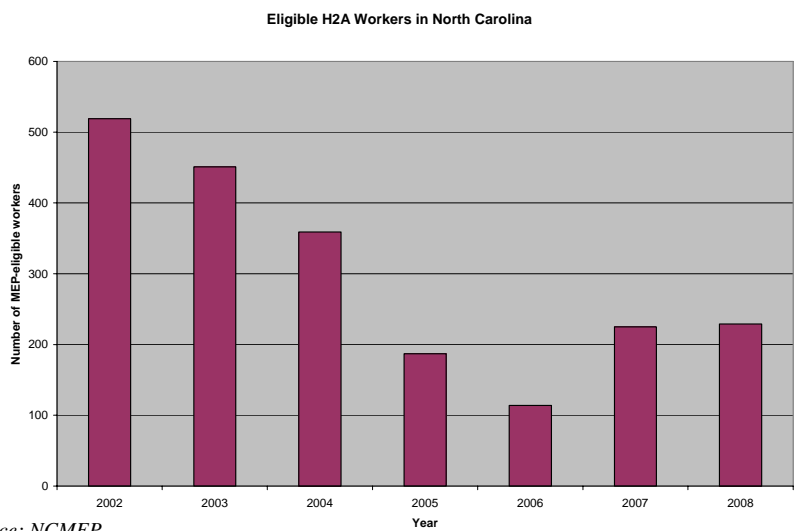


Data Source: NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, *Agricultural Statistics*, 2009

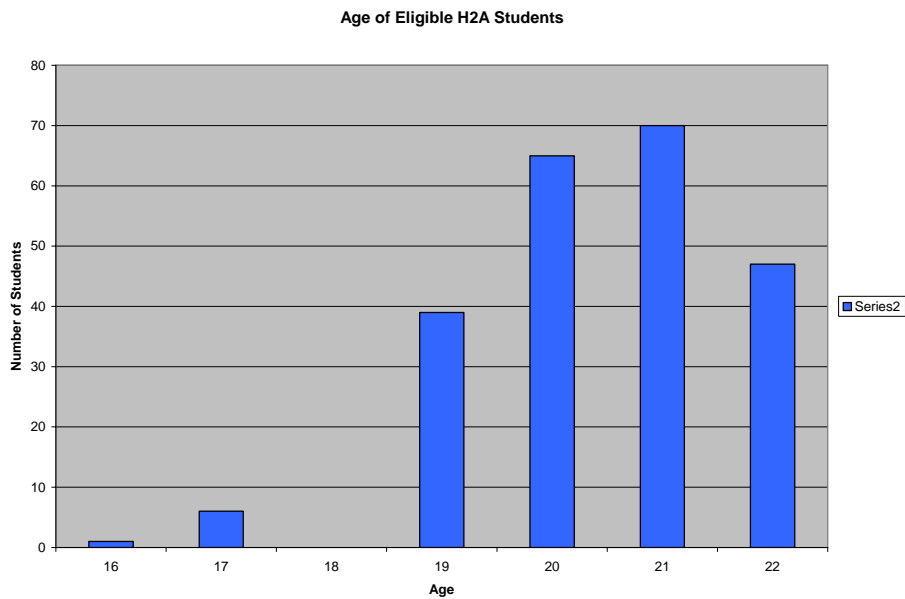
Although receipts from crops have increased slightly, the number of migrant farmworkers estimated by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission has decreased by 6 percent

from 2004 to 2006, and the number of seasonal farmworkers has decreased by 19 percent. The estimated number of migratory farmworkers by county in North Carolina ranges from none in Clay and Graham Counties in the western mountains to over 2,700 in Duplin, Sampson and Wayne Counties in the east.

North Carolina hosted 7,671 H-2A workers in 2006. These are workers contracted to come from their home countries for limited times to work in agricultural jobs. Most H-2A workers in North Carolina are contracted through the North Carolina Growers Association. The majority work in tobacco, although workers are also contracted for vegetable crops and Christmas trees. H-2A workers under 22 years of age can be recruited by the Migrant Education Program. The actual number of H-2A workers recruited for Migrant Education was only slightly over 200, since most H-2A workers are too old for eligibility. In 2007-2008, H-2A workers eligible for Migrant Education worked in seventeen North Carolina counties, mostly in the eastern part of the state.

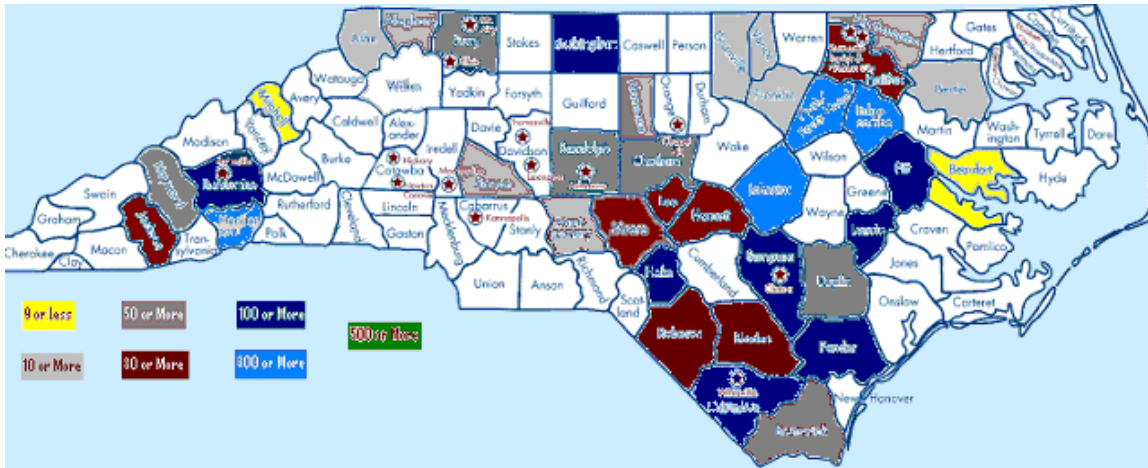


Data Source: NCMEP



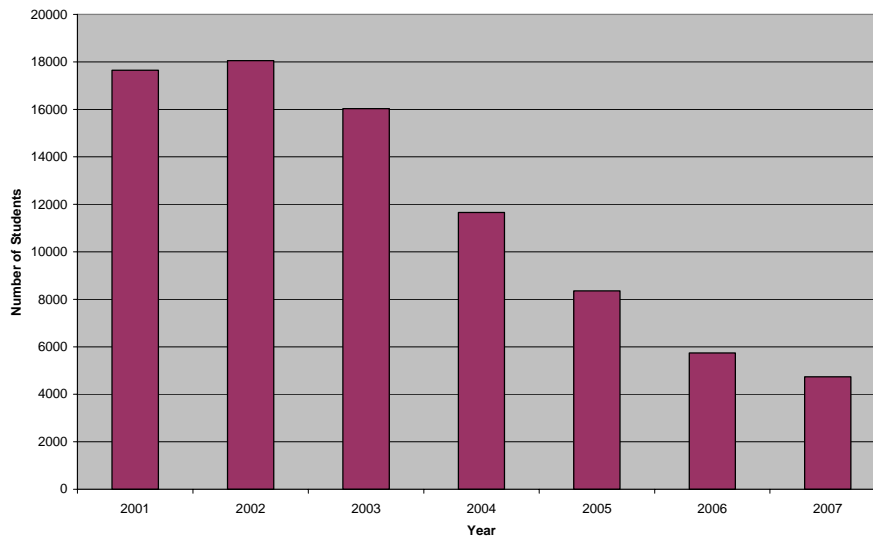
Demographics of North Carolina Migrant Education Students

Migrant Education Programs operated in 35 counties of North Carolina in 2007-2008. A far greater concentration of programs occurs in the eastern part of the state, with only eight programs operating in the mountain counties. However, the largest program in the state was in Henderson County, with 478 students.



During 2002-2008, the number of eligible migrant students in North Carolina showed a steady decline, from over 18,000 in 2002 to 4,739 in the 2007-2008 school year, according to the Consolidated Student Performance Report and NCMEP funding formulas. However, the rate of decline has decreased from close to 30% annually to around 17% from 06-07 to 07-08.

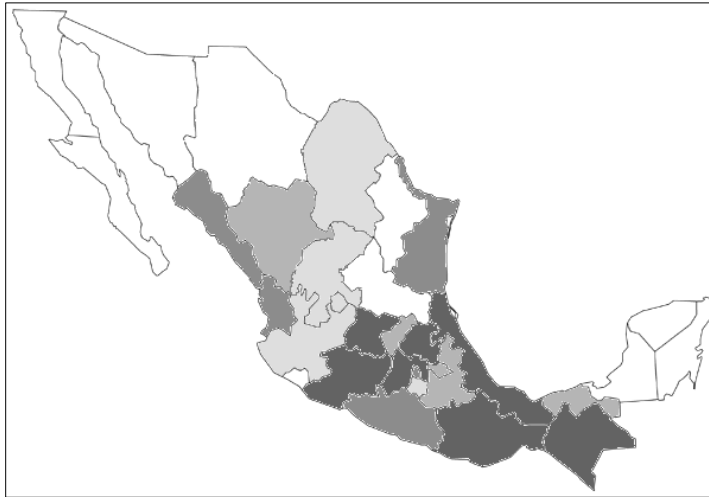
North Carolina Migrant Education Student Totals



Data Source: NC Migrant Education Program, NCDPI CSRP

In 2007-2008, the majority of NC Migrant Education students coming from Mexico came from central and southern Mexico, with the highest numbers coming from Oaxaca, Chiapas, Veracruz, Michoacán, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, and the State of Mexico. Interestingly, in many of

these areas, indigenous languages, such as Otomi, Mixteco, Nahuatl, Tzeltal, and Tzotzil are the first languages of rural families, with Spanish as their second language.



(Darker shading = Higher numbers of students)

As the map below indicates, Florida is the major state of origin of migrant students coming to North Carolina, with around 1,000 students coming from Florida. Georgia, Texas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Michigan are also important sending or receiving states for our students.

2007-2008 States of Origin of Migrant Students Coming to North Carolina from Within the United States

(Darker shading = Higher numbers of students)

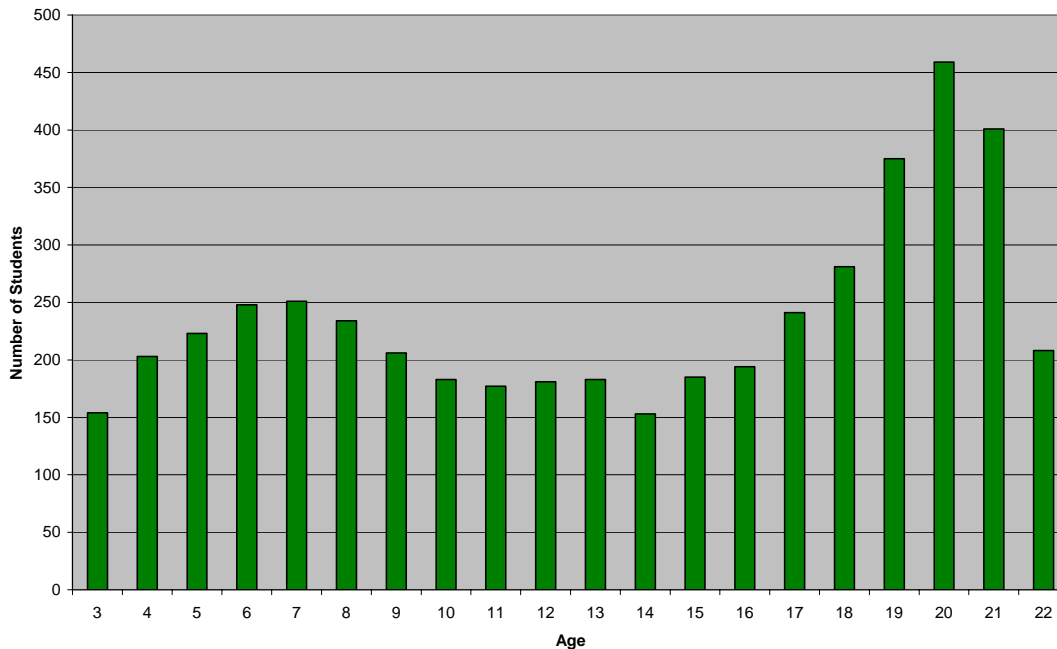


The majority of North Carolina Migrant Education students are of Hispanic ethnicity, as shown below. About 67% of North Carolina's Migrant Education Students are male.

	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-2008	
Ethnicity-American Indian	3	0.03%	3	0.04%	4	0.07%	4	0.09%
Ethnicity-Asian	27	0.23%	3	0.04%	4	0.07%	0	0.00%
Ethnicity-Black	207	1.77%	119	1.46%	54	0.94%	21	0.45%
Ethnicity-Hispanic	11413	97.32%	8007	97.96%	5655	98.50%	4701	99.19%
Ethnicity-Other	24	0.20%	13	0.16%	15	0.26%	8	0.17%
Ethnicity-White	53	0.45%	29	0.35%	9	0.16%	5	0.10%
Totals	11727	100.00%	8174	100.00%	5741	100.00%	4739	100.00%

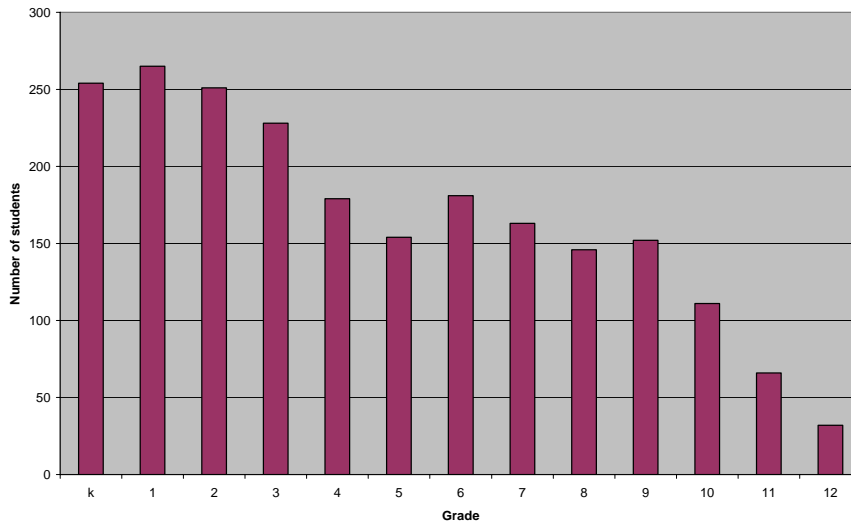
The age distribution of Migrant Education students is bimodal, with highest numbers of students in the late adolescent age group. The majority of these students are Out of School Youth (OSY), working students who need special attention due to their difficult circumstances.

Eligible Students 3-22, by age, 2007-2008



If we compare eligible students by age with eligible students by grade, it becomes clear that late adolescence is a time when students are making the decision to exit K-12 programs and go into the work force as OSY. Numbers of eligible students in high school declines dramatically each year, resulting in a 12th grade population of only 32 students.

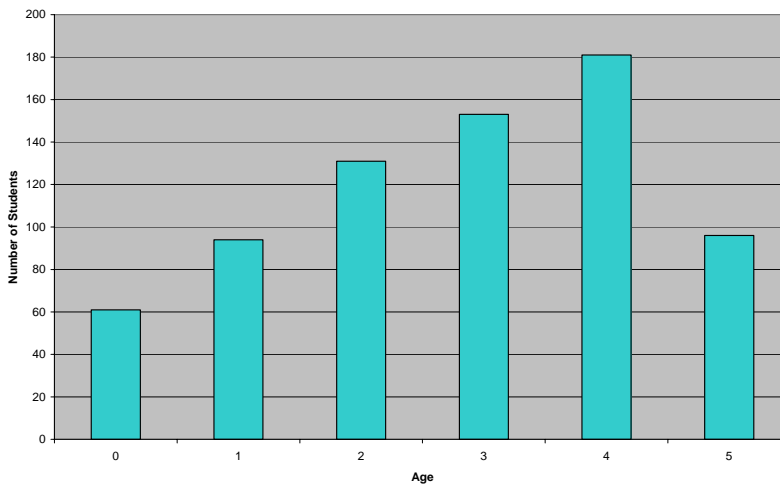
Eligible K-12 Migrant Students by Grade



Interviews with Out of School Youth conducted by the NC Migrant Education Program in 11 counties examined the students’ perceptions of their greatest needs. The participants rank-ordered their needs, with 35% reporting a driver’s license as their greatest need, English classes as a second need, access to health care as a third major need. In addition, participants reported the need for interpreting/translating and transportation. In 2006-2007, only 18.6% of Out-of-School Youth in the NC Migrant Education Program were receiving services. In 2007-2008, 15% of the students received instructional services. There is a clear need to increase these services. However, 84% of the Out of School Youth received supportive services, such as health screenings, counseling, or transportation.

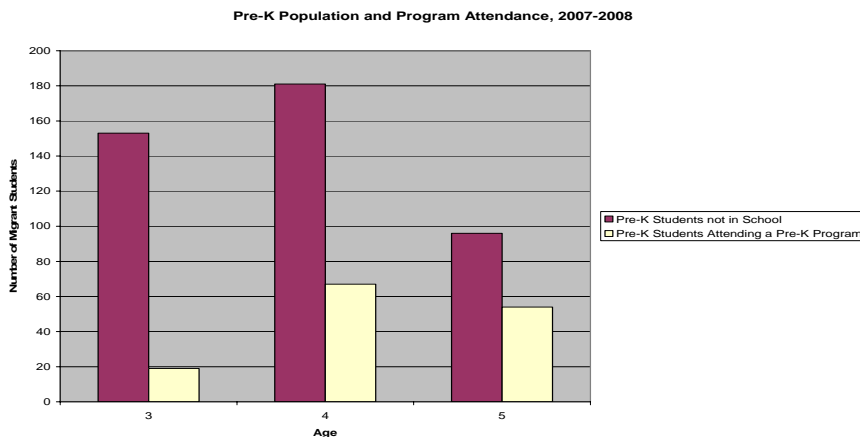
Another group of students who are not in school are children under 5 years of age. In 2007-2008, there were 430 Migrant Education children three to five years of age, including five-year-olds not in kindergarten. While the birth to two-year-old cohort is not eligible for funding, this group is important to count in order to get a prospective view of children who may enter eligibility. The graph below shows the North Carolina Migrant Education age distribution of children from birth to five years old.

Pre-Kindergarten Migrant Students, by Age



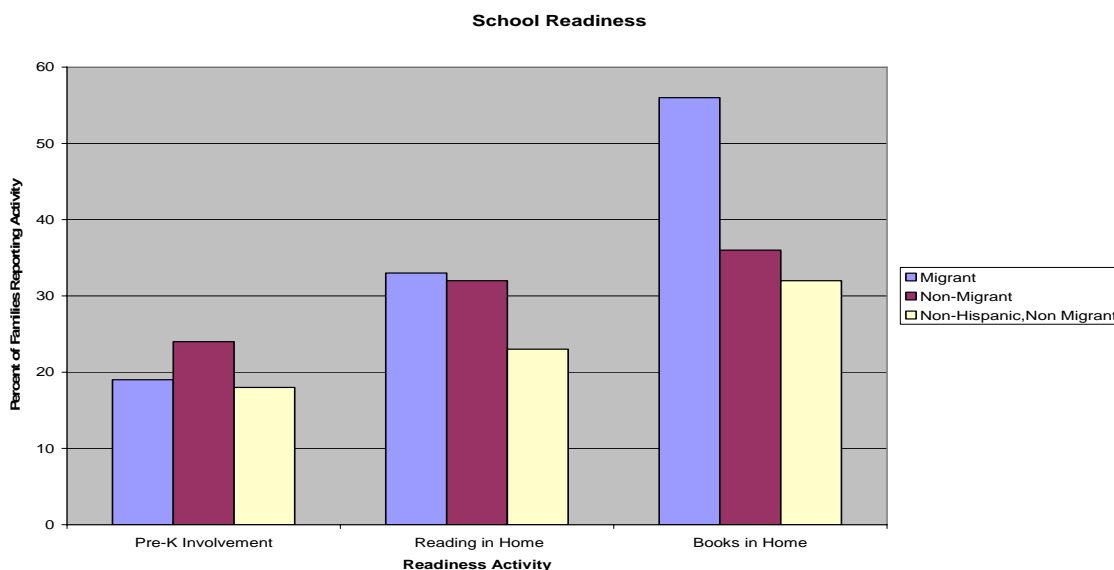
Among the pre-K students, some attend pre-K programs, as shown below. There has been an almost twofold increase since last year in the percentage of four and five year old MEP students

attending pre-K programs. However, the highest rate of attendance (among 4-year-olds) is still below 35%. (The National Institute for Early Education Research indicates that North Carolina had approximately 34% of all four-year-olds enrolled in State-funded pre-schools or Head Start in 2007.



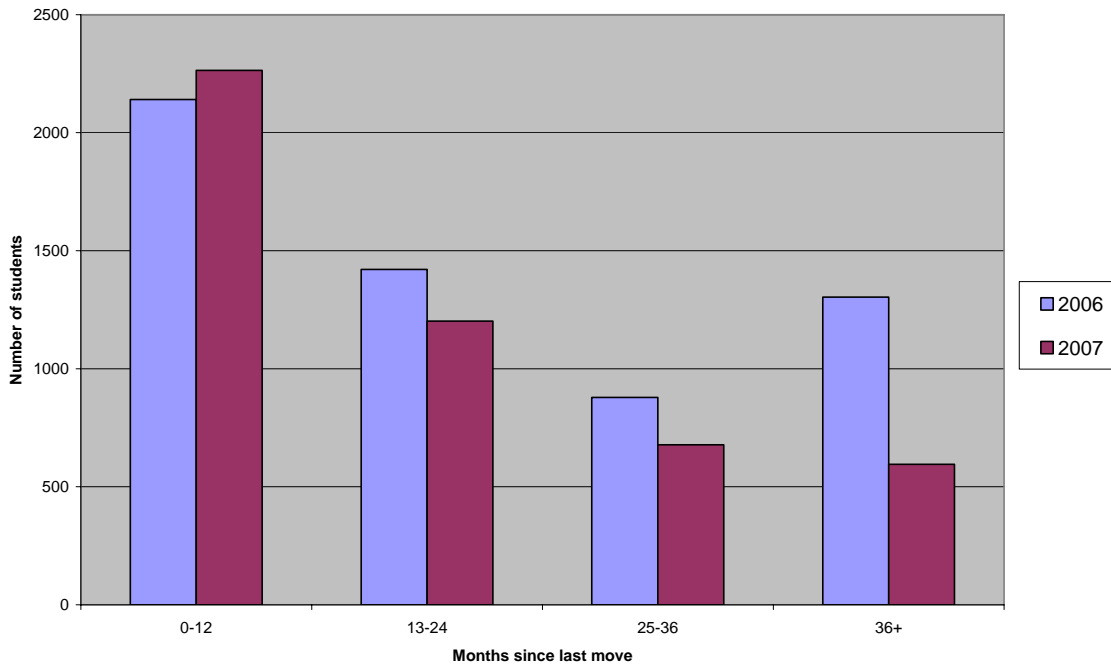
Several surveys were conducted among Migrant Education students and their families by the NC Migrant Education Program in order to learn more about the educational environment and needs of migrant students.

In the area of School Readiness, Migrant Students were compared with Non-Migrant Hispanic students, and with Non-Hispanic, Non-Migrant students in three areas: attendance at a Pre-K program, reading in the home, and the presence of books in the home. Probably due to the focus of the NC Migrant Education Program on school readiness and the provision of learning resources to families, both books and reading occurred in more Migrant homes than Non-Migrant. There is clearly a need for more information on pre-school options for Migrant parents, based on the lower number of Migrant students attending pre-K programs.



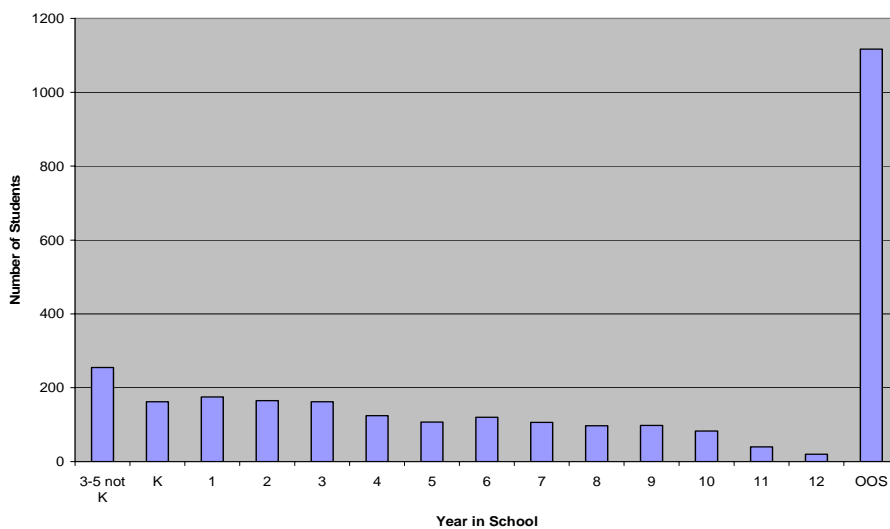
By definition, the Migrant Education student population is highly mobile. In North Carolina, the number of students who have made a move in the last year increased from 2006-07 to 2007-2008, although overall numbers declined.

NCMEP Mobility, All Students, 2006-2008

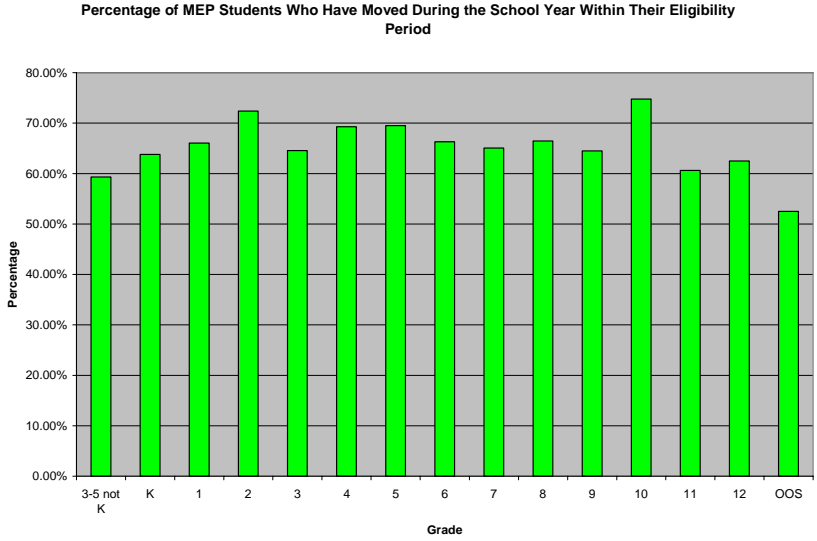


The students most likely to move during the school year are Out of School Youth and pre-K children. Mobility is also high in the upper grades, given that the number of students decreases.

Students who made a move during the school year within the last 3 years, 2007-2008 Data, including Out of School Youth



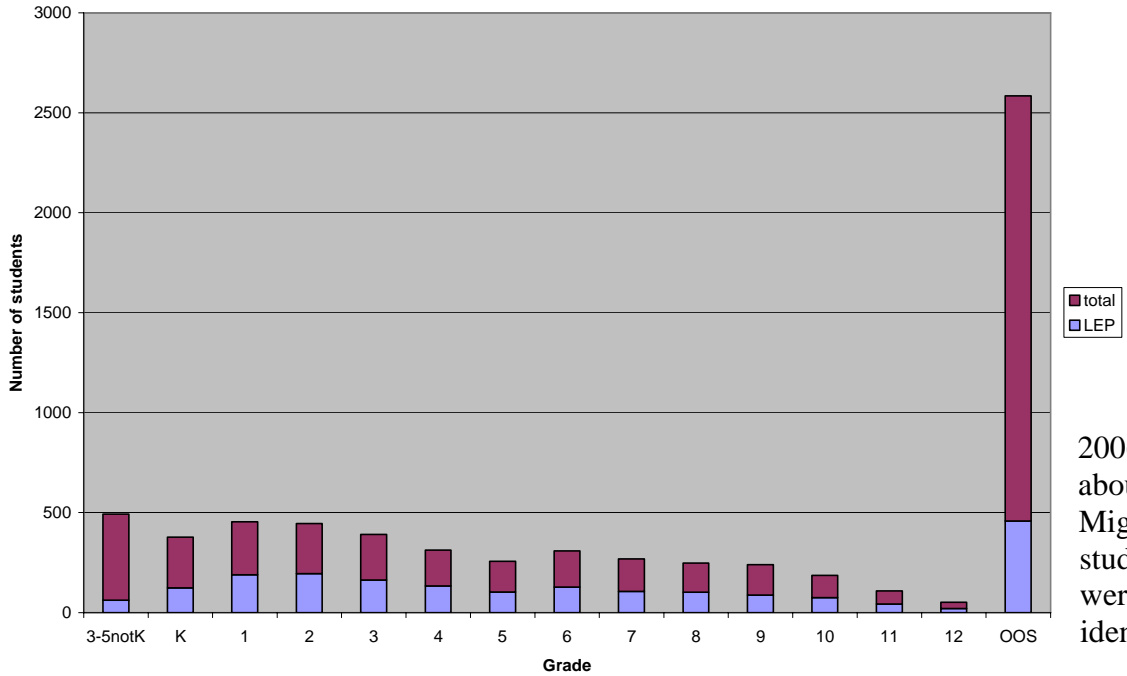
However, a very high percentage of Migrant children at all grade levels have made a move during the school year at some point in their three years of eligibility.



There has been some variability in the number of Migrant students who are English Language Learners (Limited English Proficient), but the general tendency from 2001 to 2008 is a decline in students who are LEP, dropping from around 49% in 2001 to around 42% in both 2006-07 and 2007-08.

The number of LEP students seems to mirror the general student population across grade levels, with the exception, the Out-of-School Youth and, to some extent, pre-K students. The proportion of LEP students is most likely lower than expected in these two groups due to lack of a consistent instrument used to evaluate English Language Proficiency among Out-of-School Youth and pre-K students.

Limited English Proficient and Total MEP Population, by grade, 2007-2008



In 2006-07, about 202 Migrant students were identified as

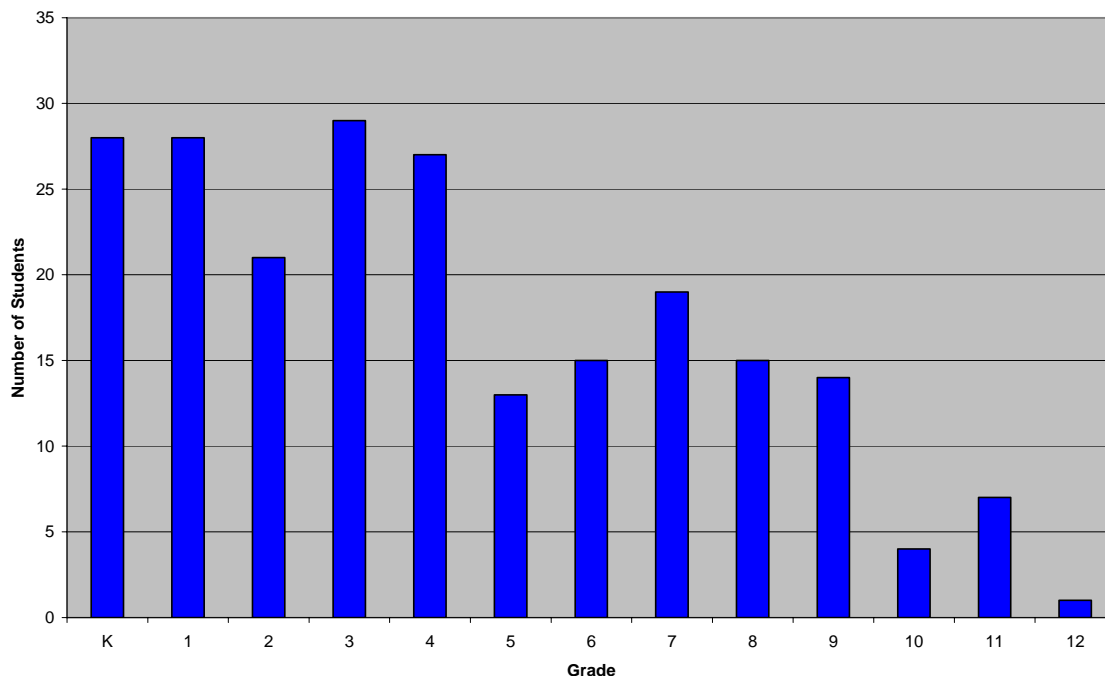
Exceptional Children, which constituted 6.4% of the pre-K to grade 12 population. In 2007-2008, only 44 Migrant students were identified as Exceptional Children. This may point to a difficulty in the identification process, which is certainly a consequence of mobility.

“Priority for Service” students are those students who have educational disruption and who are also at risk of not meeting state standards. In North Carolina, we define “educational disruption” as having made a move during the last school year, or (until 2008-09) as having missed 10 or more days of school due to the migratory lifestyle. “At risk for not meeting state standards” is met by either being Limited English Proficient or failing an End of Course Test (EOC) or End of Grade Test (EOG).

In 2007-2008, there were 221 Priority for Service students in the North Carolina MEP, with most students concentrated in the early grades. In 2006-2007, there were 341 Priority for Service students. Given that a large number of migrant students do not take EOGs or EOCs because they are not in the state at the time of the tests, it may be necessary to re-evaluate how we calculate Priority for Service. It will also be valuable to review whether the new ACCESS for ELLs test is more predictive of at-risk status than earlier English Language Proficiency tests. It may also be valuable to put in a “grade” criterion or an “on track to graduate” criterion, which will place all students at risk of not meeting standards or staying on track to graduate in the “at risk” category, and thus, make them eligible for Priority for Service.

In addition, North Carolina MEP has not evaluated Out of School Youth for Priority for Service. It may be important to re-evaluate this also, especially for those OSY who would like to continue their formal education.

Priority for Services, by grade, 2007-2008

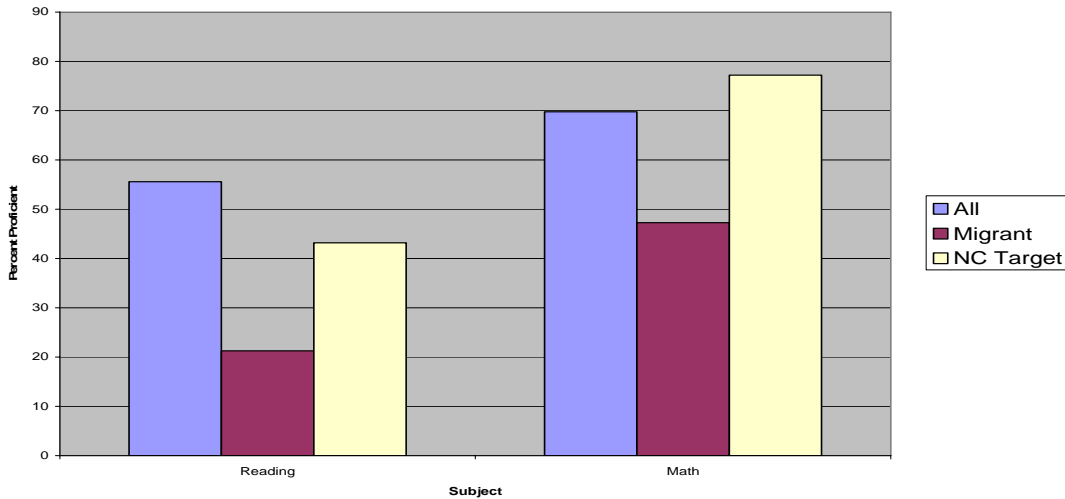


Academic Indicators for North Carolina Migrant Education Students

This student academic profile looks at standardized testing information, credit accrual for Algebra and English (both requirements for high school graduation), and scores on English proficiency tests.

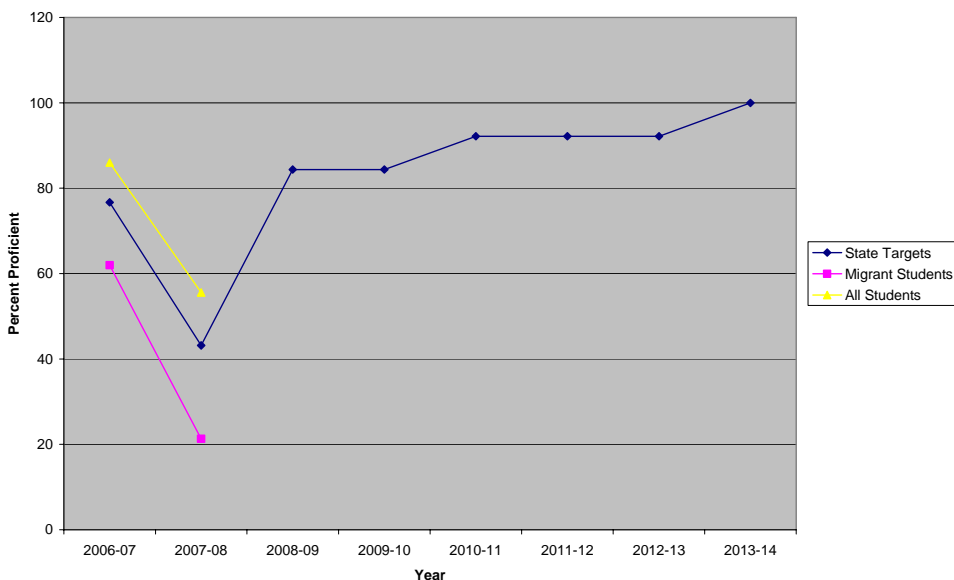
The End of Grade tests are standardized tests given to children in grades 3-8 across North Carolina. The content areas of the tests are Reading, Mathematics, and Science. The chart below compares the proficiency levels in Reading and Math of Migrant and Non-Migrant students with the target levels for the year. In 2007-08, Non-Migrant students in these combined grades surpassed the target for reading, but there existed a 22% gap between Migrant students' proficiency and the target level and an over 30% gap between Migrant and Non-Migrant students. In Mathematics, the gap between Migrant students' percent proficient and the target was even greater, at nearly 30%.

Grades 3-8 Reading and Math Proficiency, 2007-2008

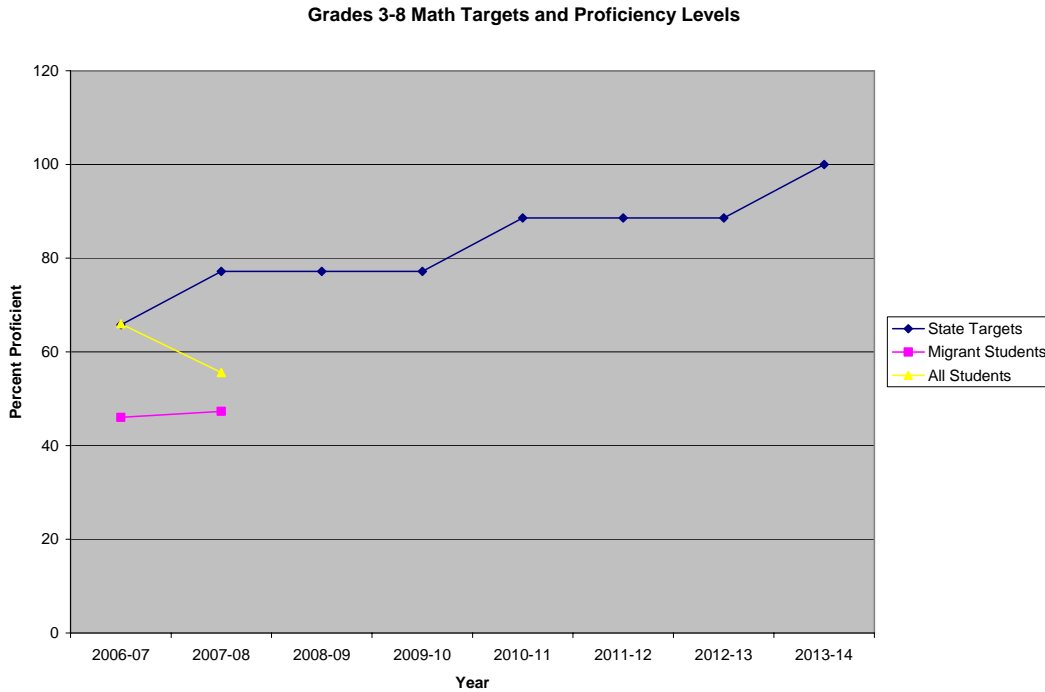


It is difficult to do a longitudinal analysis because the targets have changed as tests and norming have changed over the years. However, it appears that in 2007-2008, Migrant student population and the total population showed similar declines, paralleling the changing test and target.

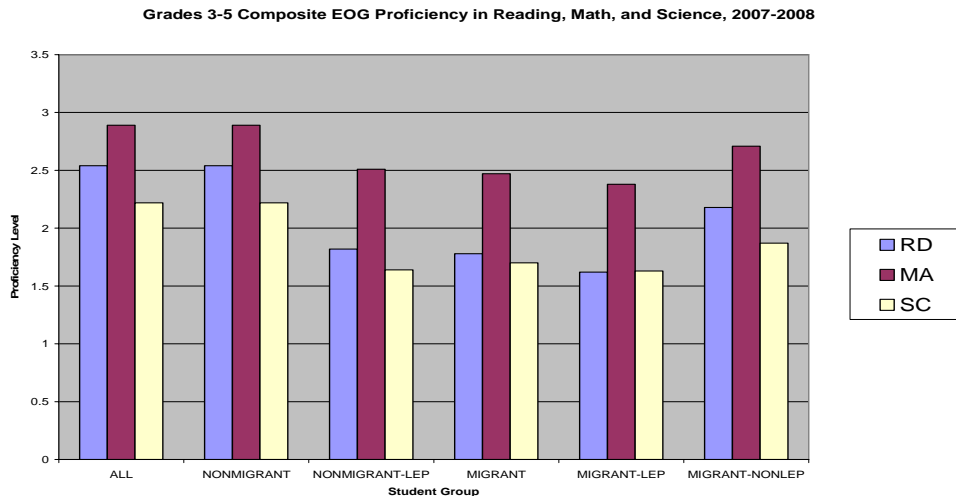
Grades 3-8 Reading State Targets and Proficiency Levels



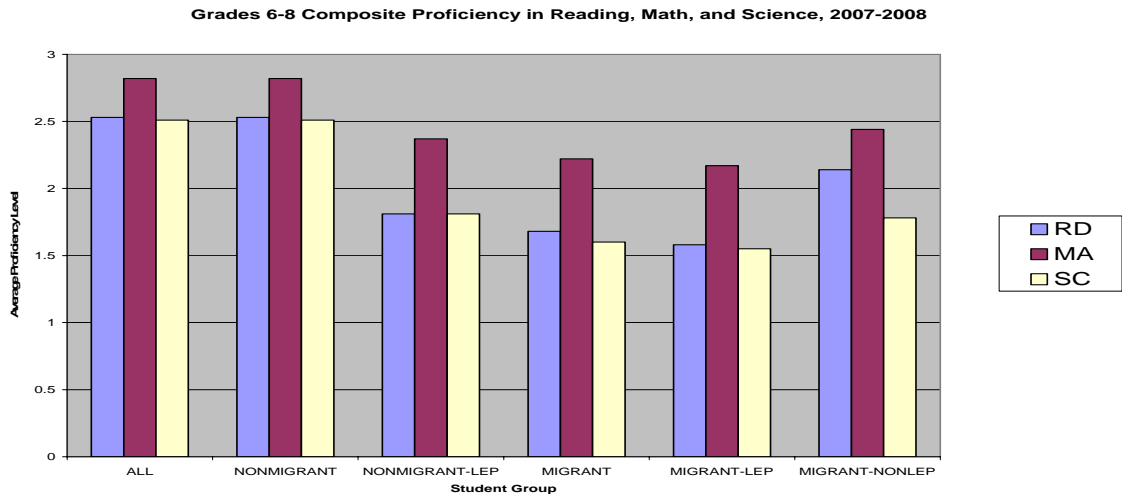
The story is slightly different for Math, however. During the 2007-2008 school year, the Math target did not change. Overall student performance declined; however Migrant student performance improved slightly.



The 2007-2008 gap between Migrant and Non-Migrant students can be seen also in the composite proficiency information for grades three through five, presented below. (EOGs are scored on a 0-4 scale.) While Non-Migrant students are on par with the total population, Migrant students lag behind in all three content areas. However, there is a much smaller gap between Migrant non-LEP students and Non-Migrant students. Along with the low scores for Non-Migrant LEP students, this indicates a clear need for to increase English Language Development opportunities for all ELLs, and specifically Migrant ELLs.

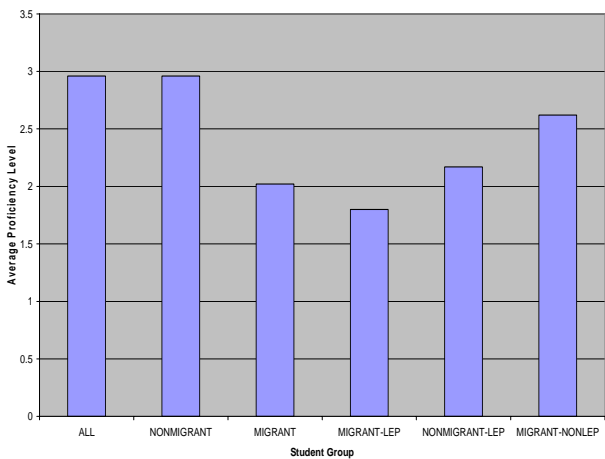


For grades six through eight, the proficiency of Migrant students, and especially Migrant ELL students, shows a similar profile. At these grade levels, the Non-LEP Migrant students' average proficiency level in Math was only slightly higher than the LEP Non-Migrant students.

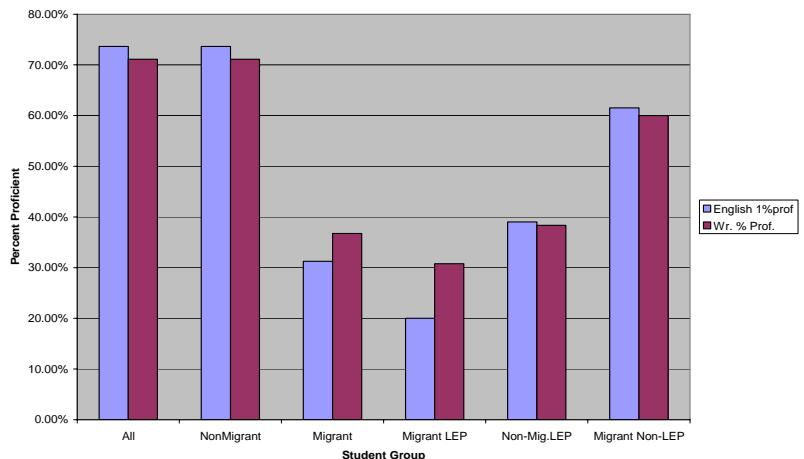


At the high school level, students take End of Course tests in English 1, Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, Civics and Economics, US History, Biology, Physical Science, Physics and Chemistry. The two courses that most determine whether a student is on track to graduate are English 1 and Algebra 1, since they must be taken before higher level courses. The diagram at left shows the average proficiency level for each group, and the diagram at right shows the percentage of students achieving proficiency for both English I and the 10th Grade Writing Assessment. It is clear that English 1 is a stumbling block for Migrant English Language Learners (Migrant LEP). In addition, only 37% of 9th and 10th graders took either test.

English 1 Proficiency

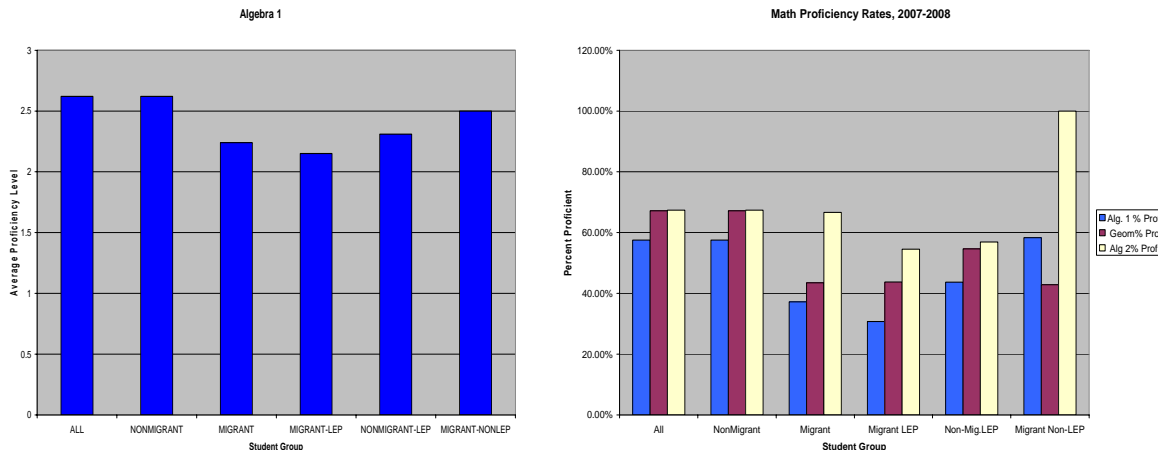


English and Writing Proficiency Levels, 2007-08

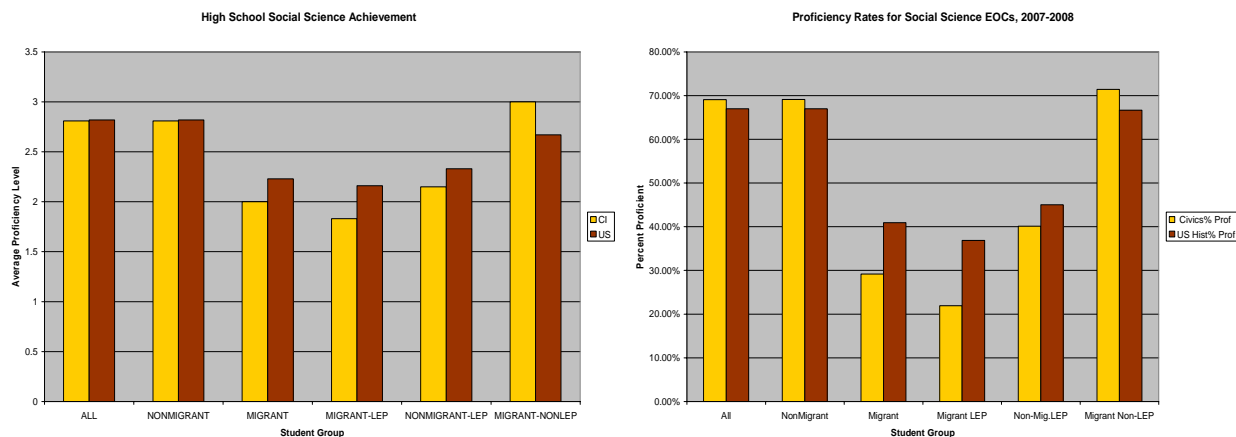


Approximately 43% of Migrant high school 9th, 10th, and 11th graders took one of the EOC Math assessments in Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. Since Algebra 1 is a “gateway” to the following courses, it is particularly important in determining whether a student is on track to

graduate. For Migrant ELLs, the proficiency rate is more than 20 percentage points below the proficiency rate for all students. Interestingly, the proficiency rate for Non-LEP Migrant students is similar to that of non-migrant students. However, we are dealing with only a sample of twelve students in the Non-Migrant, Non-LEP student group.

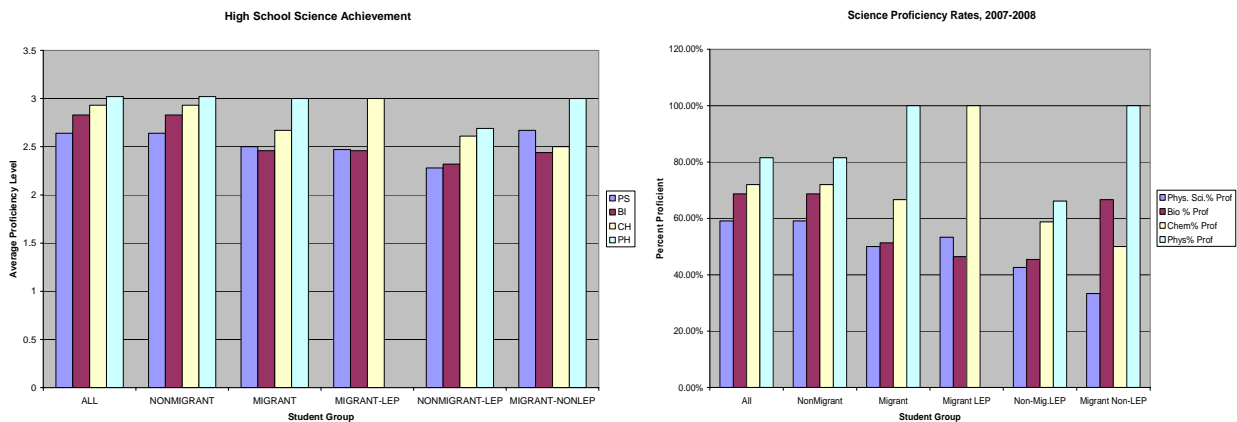


Social Studies is often a difficult subject for ELL students, due to the large amount of reading and sophistication of the language. Civics is especially problematic for Migrant LEP students, as seen below. Fewer than one third of Migrant tenth and eleventh graders took these tests, however.



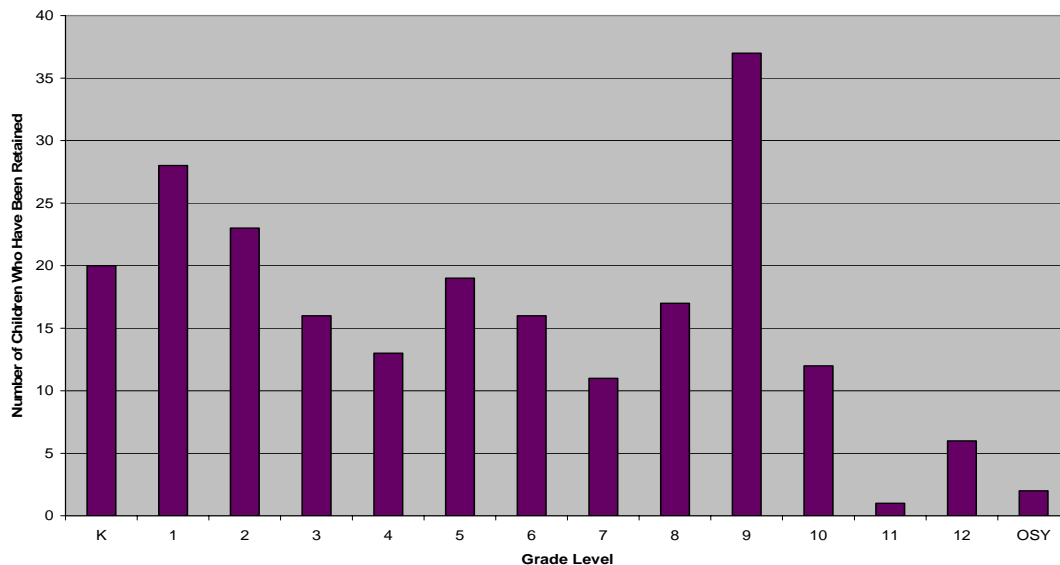
As seen in the grades 3-8 data, the gap is smaller for Migrant students in science proficiency. This intriguing statistic needs to be investigated. It appears that Migrant students may have life experiences that give them a “boost” in science. As a supplemental instruction program, it is important for us to find and cultivate science talent among our students. However, it is sad to report that an even smaller percentage of Migrant high school students have even taken these tests; only 59 tests were taken by 261 high school students, under 23% of the high school population was in core science classes. Without the core high school courses and tests, students will not be able to

graduate. Clearly, an effort needs to be made to increase access, provide recovery programs, and increase other opportunities for credit accrual.



Migrant students have a retention rate of 8.2%, much higher than the total rate for North Carolina, which was 4.5% (in 2005-06, according to the *NC Schools Statistical Profile 2007*). The early years of elementary school, fifth grade, and ninth grade seem to be the most critical years for migrant children, given the strong effect retentions have on dropout rates and graduation rates.

Migrant Children Retained by Grade "X," 2006-2007

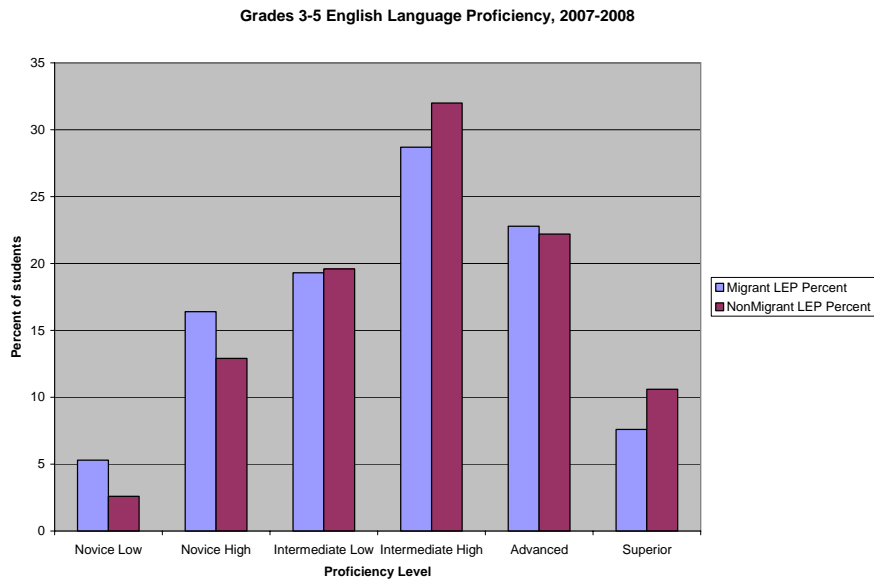


English Language Proficiency

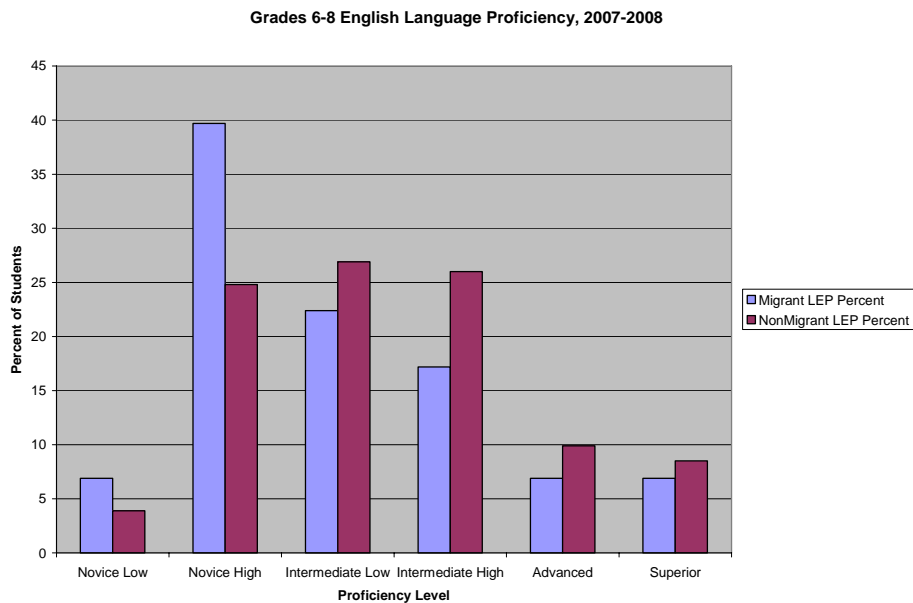
2007-2008 was the last year the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT) was used as the assessment of English language proficiency among English Language Learners. The IPT has been replaced by

the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) and ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners), since North Carolina joined the WIDA Consortium. The results below indicate the English proficiency levels of Migrant students.

Migrant students in grades 3-5 tend to cluster in the middle ranges of proficiency, a change from earlier data, in which their proficiency levels were much lower.

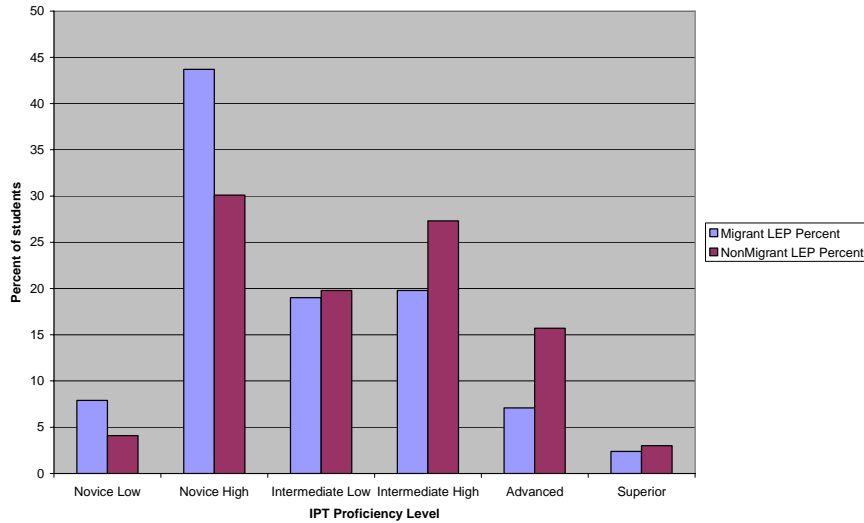


The situation changes, however, as students move into the middle grades. In grades 6-8, a greater proportion of students are in the Intermediate Low and Novice levels. This indicates a pressing need for greater ESL supplemental instruction for Migrant students.



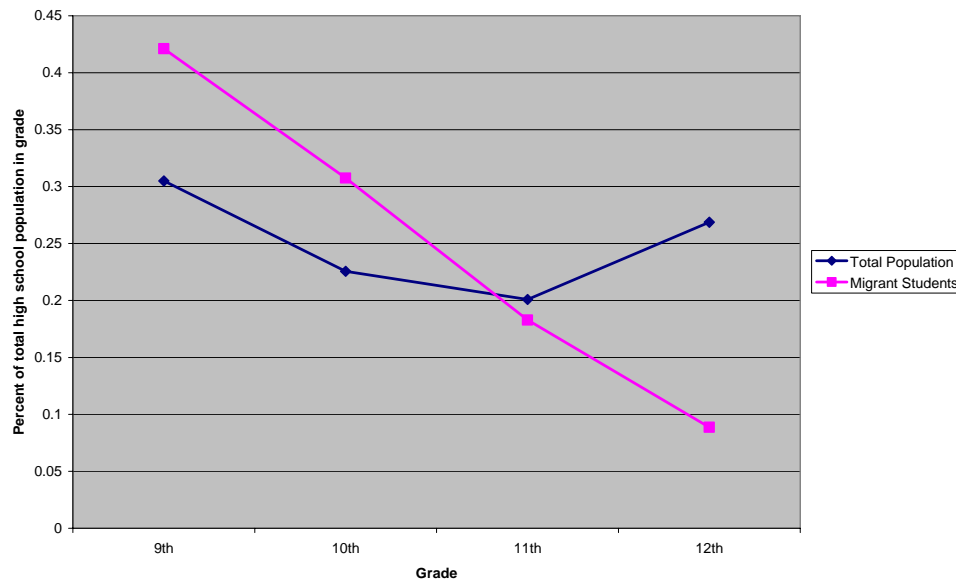
High school just continues the trend. The highest percentage of Migrant high school students score in the Novice Low and Novice High levels. Given the intensity of language in high school content classes, it is clear that significant intervention must occur for Migrant LEP high school students to get on track and stay on track to graduate.

English Language Proficiency, Grades 9-13, 2007-2008



The final chart in this document illustrates the attrition of Migrant students from high schools. One would expect to see only a slight downward trend in the population, as shown by the general population. However, while 45 percent of the Migrant high school students can be found in 9th grade, by 12th grade, fewer than ten percent remain.

High School Attrition, 2007-2008



Looking at the North Carolina Migrant Student Profile as a whole, there is clearly much work to do with every identified group of students. There needs to be an increase in pre-school attendance and services, a strong focus on closing the gap between grades 3-5 LEP Migrant students and Non-LEP Migrant students, on assisting middle school students with reading and math in order to close the gap between Migrant and Non-Migrant students, on improving not only scores, but access to courses for high school students, and finally, on providing strong educational and support services for the nearly 45% of our students who are out of school.