

Frequently Asked Questions

Guidance on Migratory Students and COVID-19 Closures

In response to the rapidly changing needs of Tennessee local education agencies (LEAs), schools, and students due to COVID-19, the following guidance is meant to assist LEAs with identifying migratory students in accordance with Title I, Part C, the Migrant Education Program. Guidance from the U.S. Department of Education or from the Tennessee Department of Education (department) may change over time, and this document will be updated as needed.

1. Are LEAs required to identify migratory students when schools are not in session?

Yes. Migrant students must have equal access to any educational opportunities being offered to the general student population. Because migrant services can only be provided once students are identified as qualifying for services, LEAs who continue to serve students during school closures must continue to identify migrant students. Each LEA has a migrant education liaison who works with *Conexion Americas* (*Conexion*), the department's contractor for the Migrant Education Program in Tennessee. The recruiters at *Conexion* use the *Occupational Survey* and farm information to contact families for possible identification of migratory students. LEAs should ensure that students are coded properly in the student information system at the school and LEA level.

2. How do LEAs enroll students when school is closed?

Families of migratory students should follow the enrollment process at the LEA level. The LEA should provide families with guidance through this process. LEAs and families are encouraged to contact *Conexion* for assistance in identifying and enrolling migrant students; they can provide translation services and support to families when needed.

3. Who should be responsible for communicating with students and families regarding migratory services?

Students identified as migratory are served through a migrant liaison at the LEA level. The person in this role should provide necessary communication from the LEA to migratory students and their families. LEAs should proactively contact students and their families to ensure they are able to participate in any school-provided instruction and other school and/or community-based supports as needed and appropriate. *Conexion* will also provide guidance and information to families regarding community resources.

4. What methods can LEAs use to maintain communication with migratory students during COVID-19 closures?

Schools and communities should work together to identify and execute a coordinated community strategy to maintain communication with families and students who receive migratory services. School staff, particularly those who already have established positive and supportive relationships with students, should be encouraged to regularly check in with the students and their families.

5. *How can migratory families access needed support—such as food, hygiene, medical care, temporary shelter, and housing options for quarantine or recovery should they become ill—including in communities where schools have closed in response to COVID-19?*

LEAs should ensure that the same resources available to other students are also made available to migratory students. LEAs and families are also encouraged to contact *Conexion* for assistance with support services. Assistance may include referrals to community resources such as food services, medical services, and legal services.

6. *Who can LEAs reach out to with any questions, concerns, or for more guidance?*

- **Jan Lanier**, Director of English Learner & Migrant Programs, Tennessee Department of Education
Jan.Lanier@tn.gov or (615) 532-6314
- **Ariel Safdie**, Associate Director, Tennessee Migrant Education Program, *Conexion Americas*
Ariel@conexionamericas.org, MEP@conexionamericas.org, or (615) 924-1497