



# *From the Fields to the Classroom:* Overview of the Migrant Education Program (MEP)

*Presented by Bianca Fonseca Cervantes and Rogelio Ruiz*



# Agenda

- Objectives
- Arizona Agriculture
- Overview of the MEP
- Identification and Recruitment
- Supplemental Support Services
- Family Engagement
- Questions



# Objectives

Participants will understand the role and work of the Migrant Education Program and learn the basic eligibility requirements used to identify a migratory family.

Participants will also be able to explore how existing migratory and agricultural practices in Native American communities can lead to the identification of Native Migratory Students.



# Meet the AZ MEP Team



**Dr. Zujaila Ornelas**  
**State Director**



**Bianca Cervantes**  
**Identification &  
Recruitment**



**Rogelio Ruiz**  
**Family Engagement &  
Community Outreach**



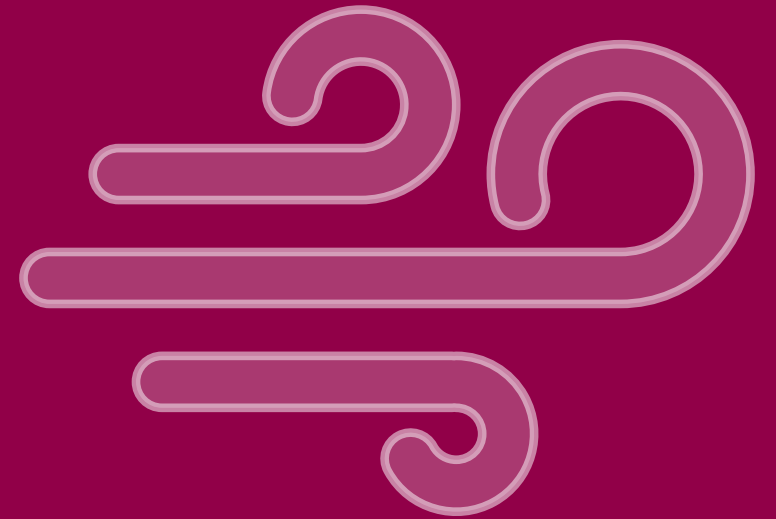
**Ivan Quintana**  
**Grants**

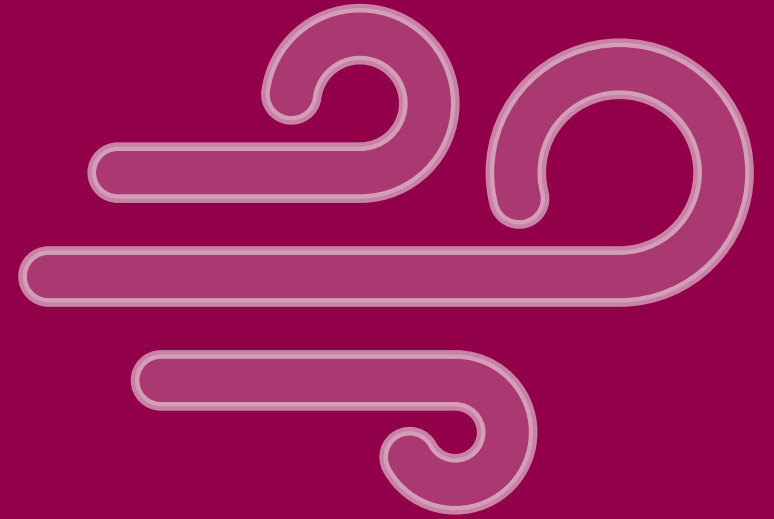


**Noemi Escamilla**  
**Professional Learning**



**Dani Donaldson**  
**Data**





# Arizona Agriculture

# Agriculture in Arizona

**Dairy** is currently **Arizona's leading agricultural product** and State's ranchers produce enough beef annually to feed more than **4.6 million** Americans.



Arizona is a top producer of the nation's fruits and vegetables and continues to be the **winter lettuce capital of the world**



The Yuma area grows more **Medjool dates** than anywhere else in the world.



**Cotton** is one of the major agricultural commodities produced in Arizona.



Arizona ranks **second** in the nation for **cantaloupe** and **honeydew melons**.



Arizona's border town of **Nogales** is the gateway for **50% of all fresh fruits and vegetables** shipped into the United States from México.



# Native Food Systems in Arizona

## Gila River Indian Community

“15,000 acres of tribal land grow cotton, wheat, millet, alfalfa, barley, melons, pistachios, citrus, and vegetables, 500 acres grows olives for worldwide distribution”

## Colorado River Indian Tribes

“CRIT has a strong farming and agricultural industry... Today there is approximately 84,500 acres of irrigated, fertile farmland growing cotton, alfalfa, feed grains, tomatoes, lettuce, peanuts, and melons.”

## Ak-Chin Indian Community

“One of the main enterprises in the region is Ak-Chin Farms and, now with over 15,000 acres of productive land, is one of the largest farming communities in the U.S. Today their farming operations grow cotton, alfalfa, barley, potatoes, and corn”

## Navajo Nation

“In addition to growing potatoes, onions, and alfalfa, there are over 6,000 active permits for livestock grazing on over 1.35 million acres, accounting for almost 400,000 heads of cattle, horses, sheep, and goats, with 17,000 heads maintained by the Navajo Nation.”

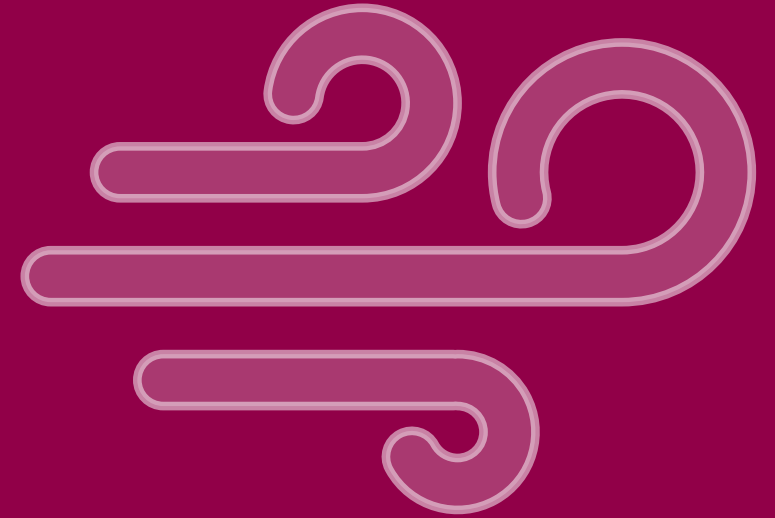
## San Carlos Apache Tribe

“Reservation farms grow watermelon, cotton, alfalfa, and jojoba beans, in addition to five tribal cattle associations that raise commercial Hereford cattle.”

## Tohono O’odham Nation

“The Nation has four farms totaling 10,000 acres where cotton, hay, and broccoli are grown, alongside both family subsistence ranching and larger joint venture cattle operations.”

Source: “Libguides: Indigenous Food Systems: Indigenous Nations.” *Library Guides*, [libguides.asu.edu/c.php?g=1220071&p=8989122](https://libguides.asu.edu/c.php?g=1220071&p=8989122)

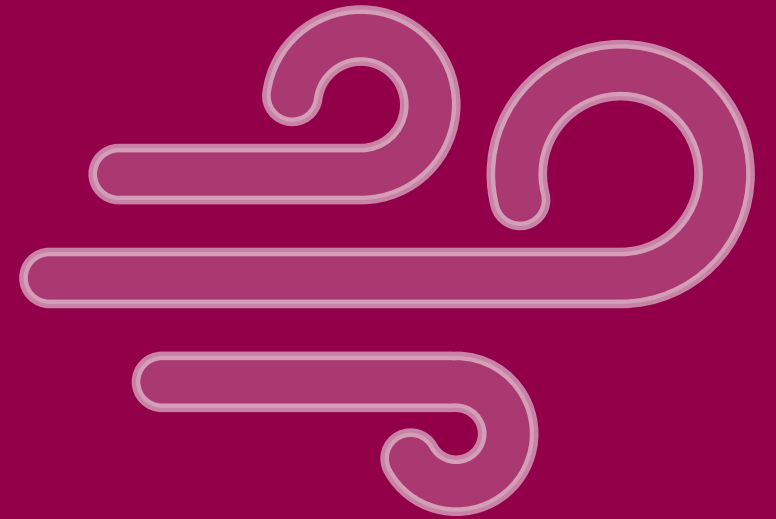


# Overview of the MEP



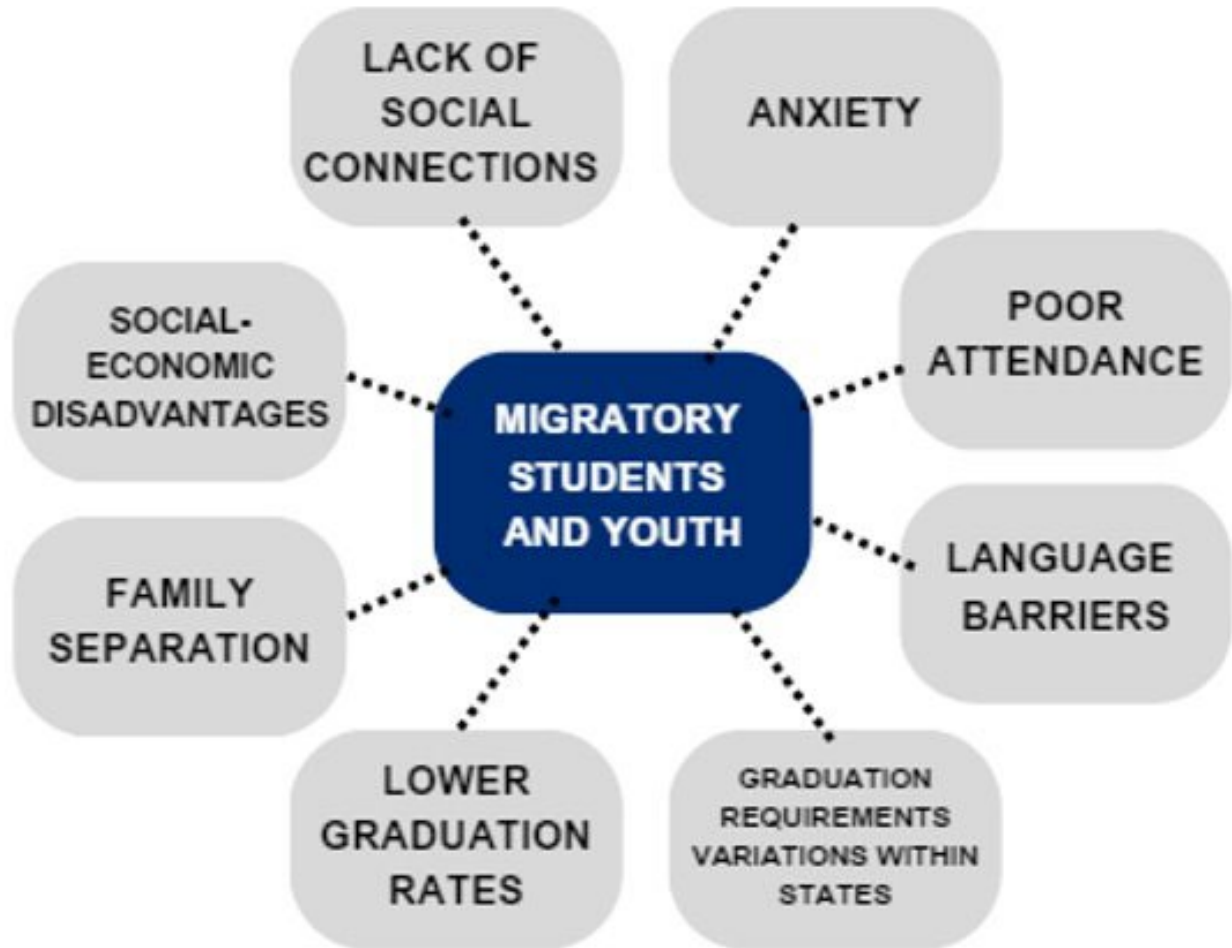
# The History

- In 1966, Congress authorized the **Migrant Education Program (MEP)** under **Title I, Part C** of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as a state-administered, state-operated program.
- It was enacted to reduce the unique challenges experienced by **children of migratory agricultural workers**.



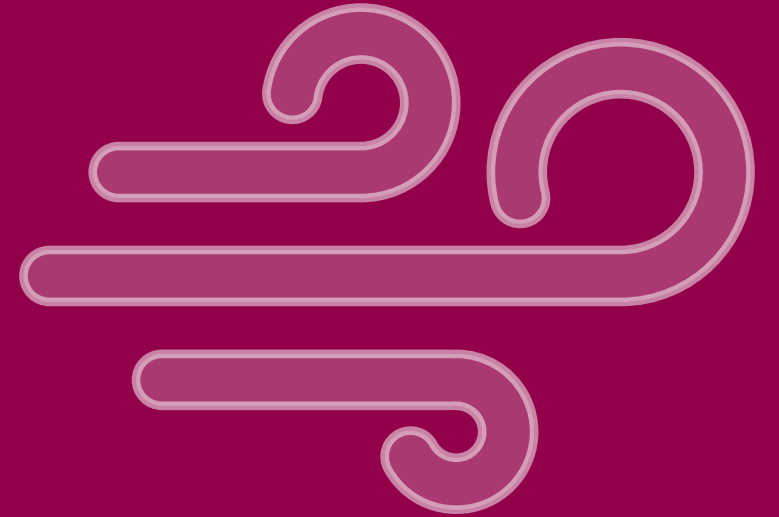
# Our Students

Migratory children and youth face **multiple challenges** because of their migratory lifestyle.



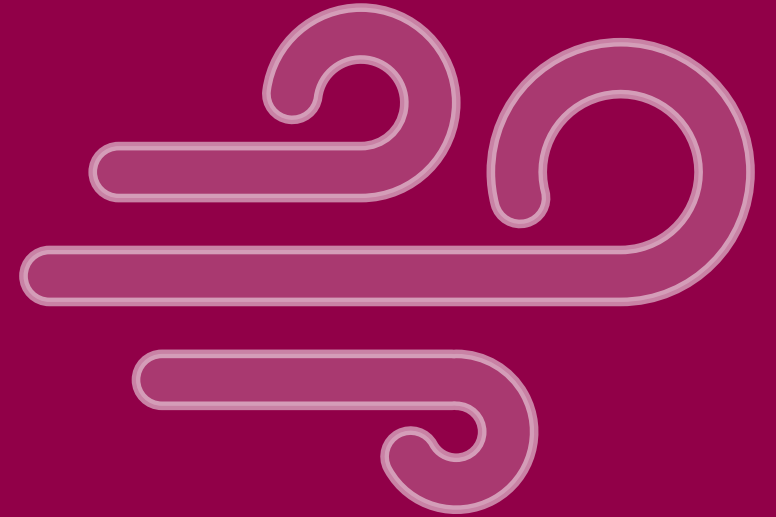
# Our Goal

The goal of the **Migrant Education Program** is to assist all migratory students and youth in meeting challenging academic standards and achieving graduation from high school (or GED) with an education that prepares them for **responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment.**



# Our Mission

- Impact **teaching** and **learning** in K-12 classrooms by providing **supplemental instruction and support services** to children and youth of migratory workers from the ages of **three through twenty-one**.
- We provide **funding and support** to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to provide the **structure, support**, and scope of **available services** to migratory students to ensure their **achievement** of higher academic standards and graduation from high school.



# MEP Organization

U.S. Department of Education



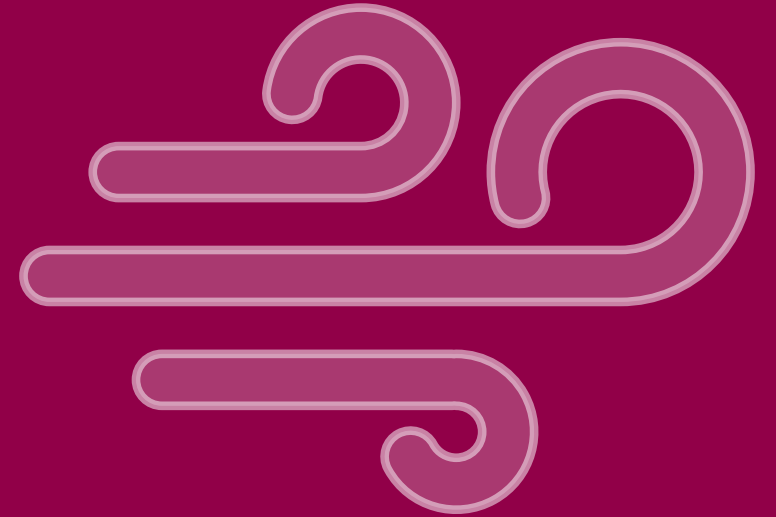
Office of Migrant Education (OME)



State Education Agency (SEA)



Local Education Agencies (LEA)



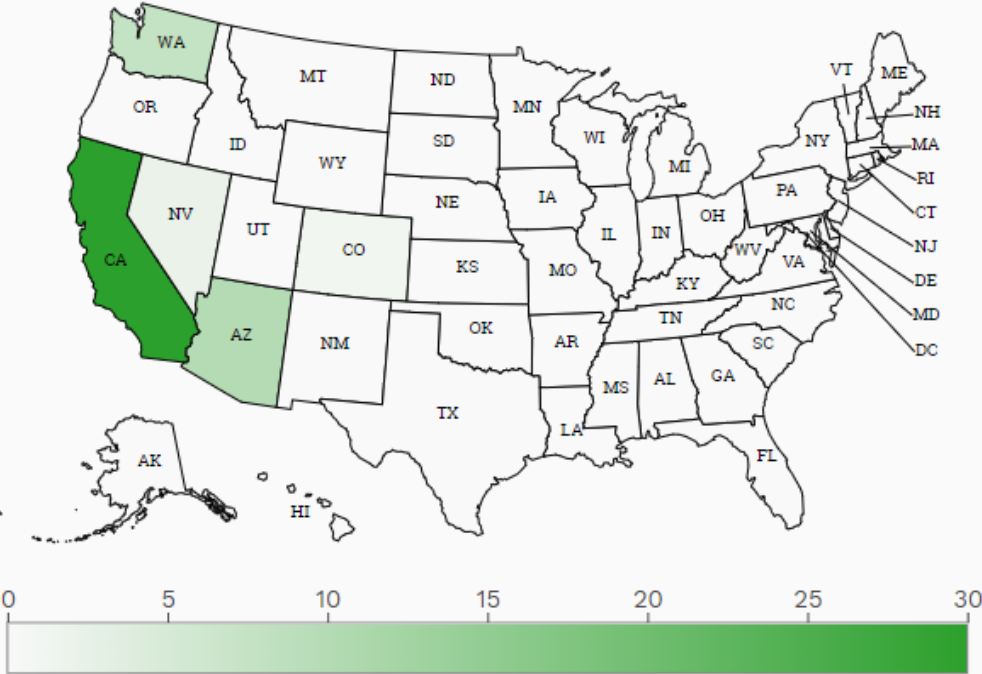
# Nationwide Program



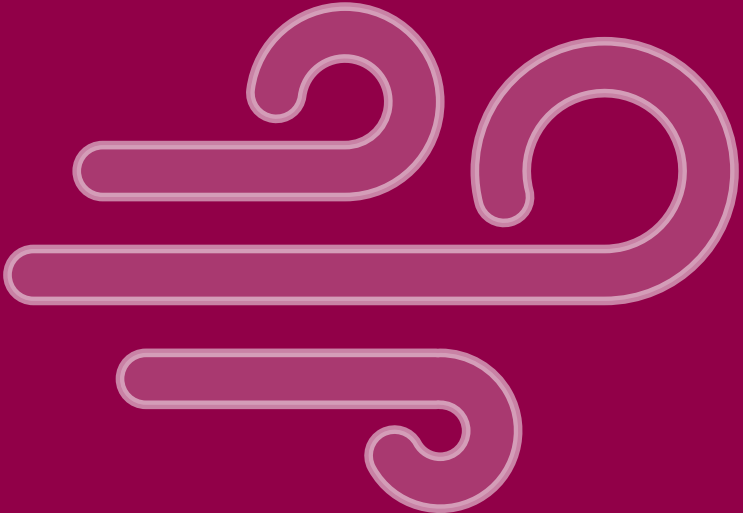
## Children Moving To Arizona

Showing: Current Performance Period (September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024)

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[View Details](#)



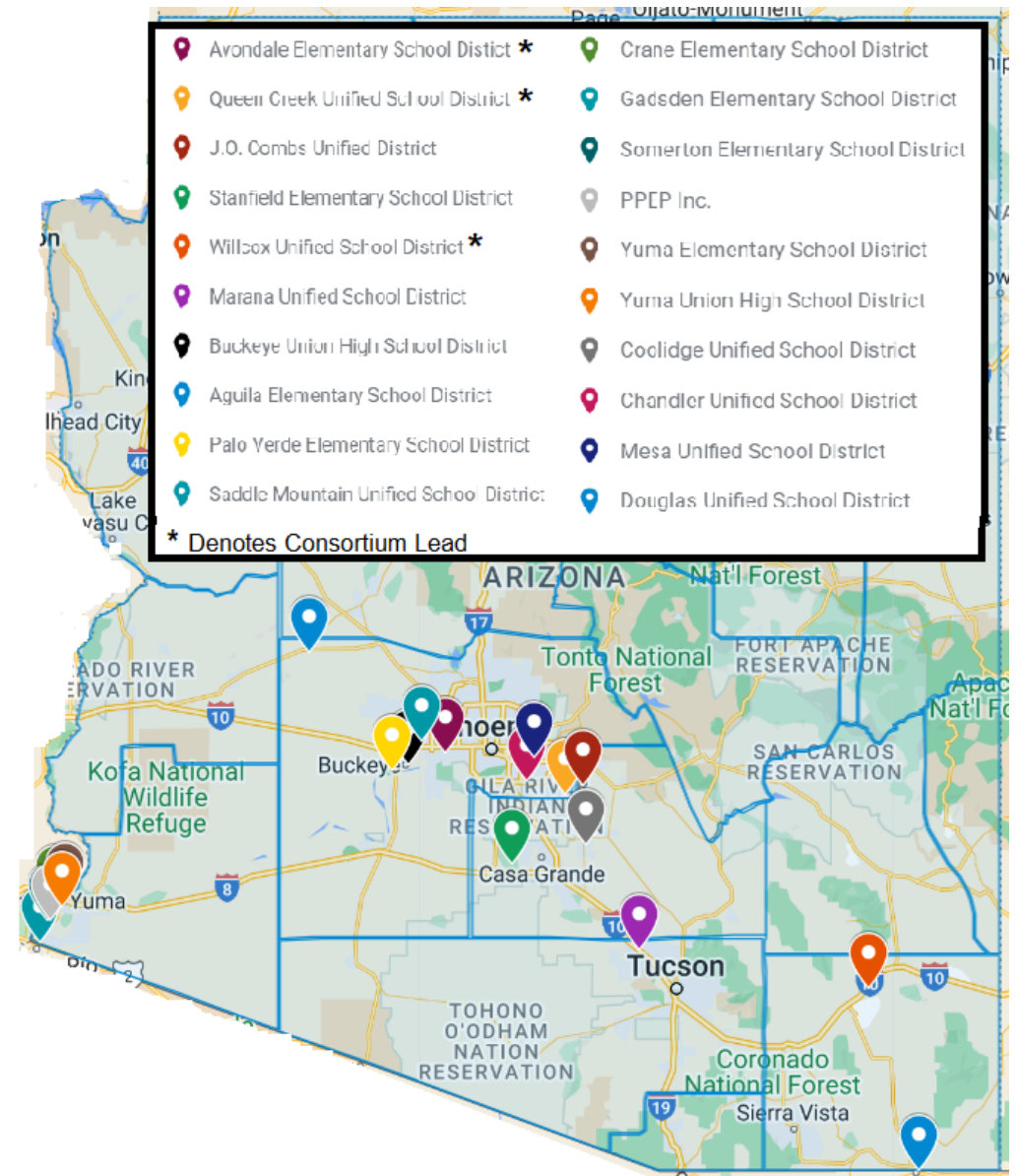
Last Updated 11/01/2023



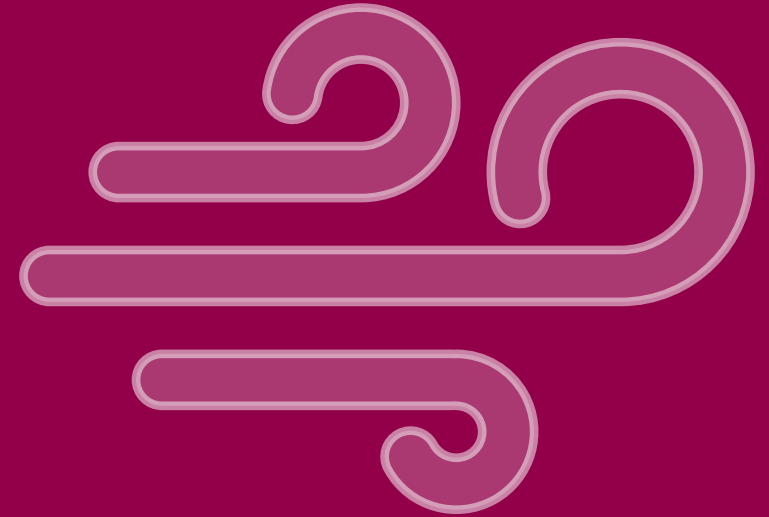
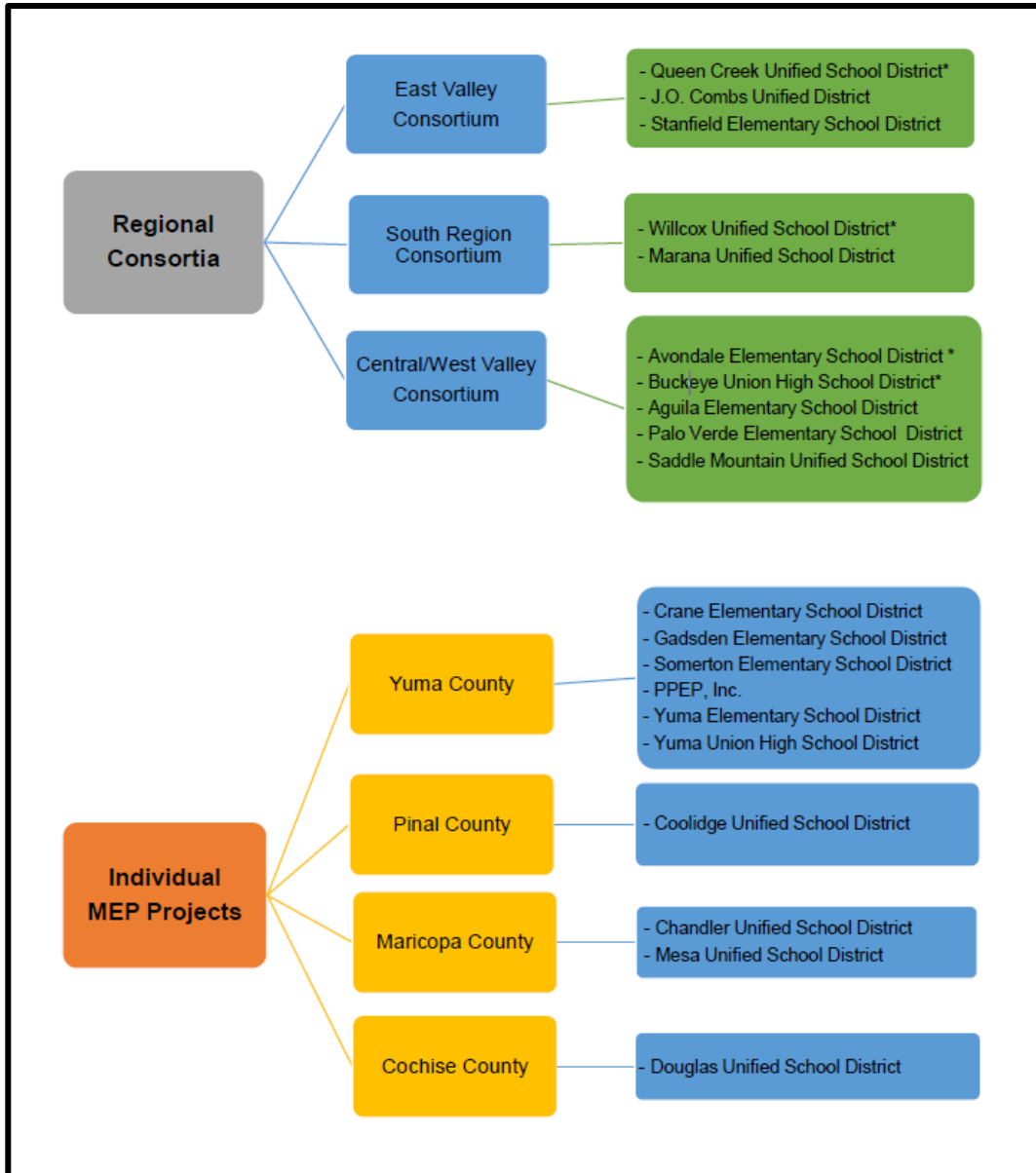
# MEP in Arizona

Arizona has approximately 10,500 identified migratory children and has the 7<sup>th</sup> largest population in the country (7 of 47).

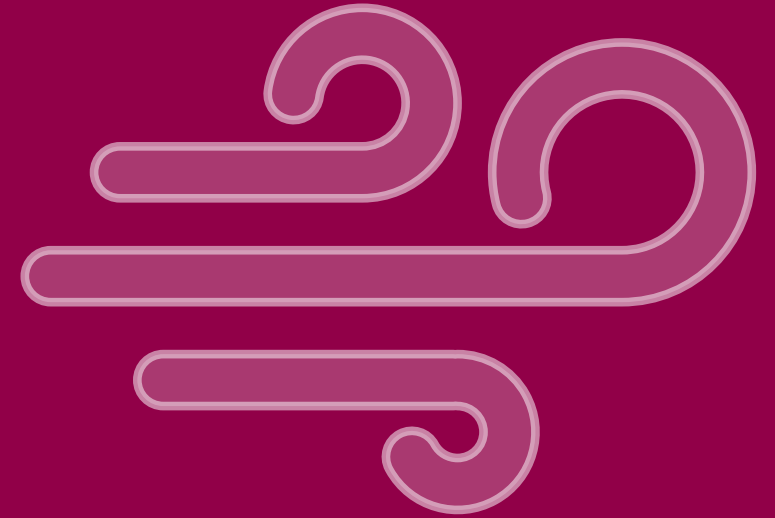
We serve all identified migratory youth and children in the state of Arizona, regardless of what district they reside in.



# AZ MEP Projects/Consortia



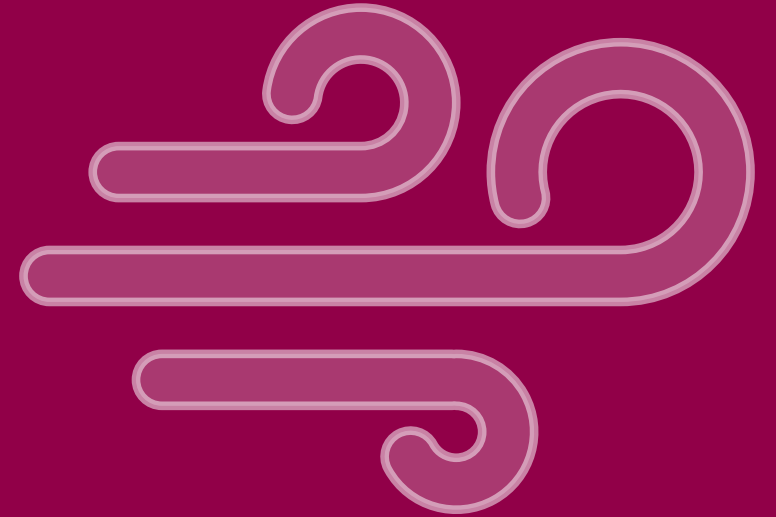
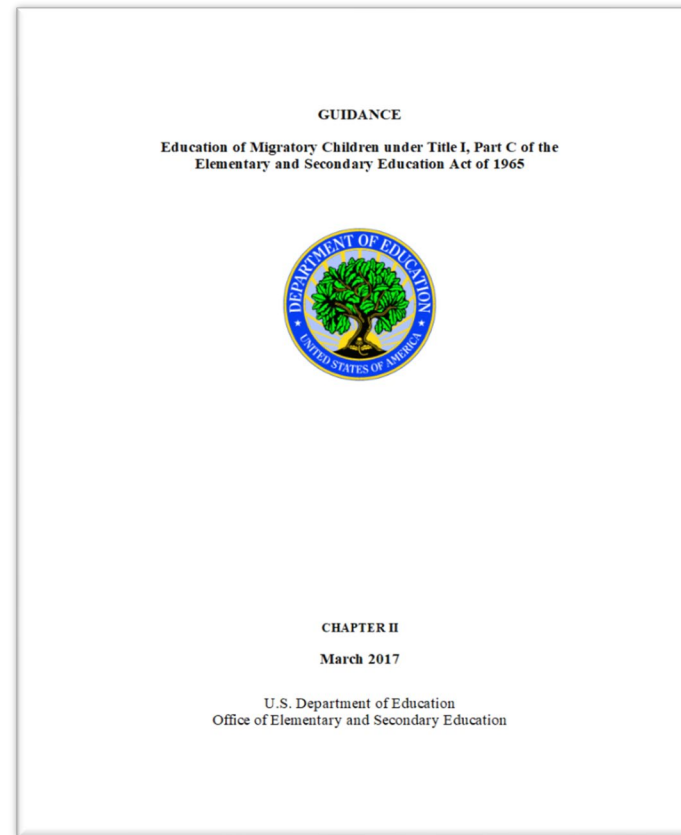




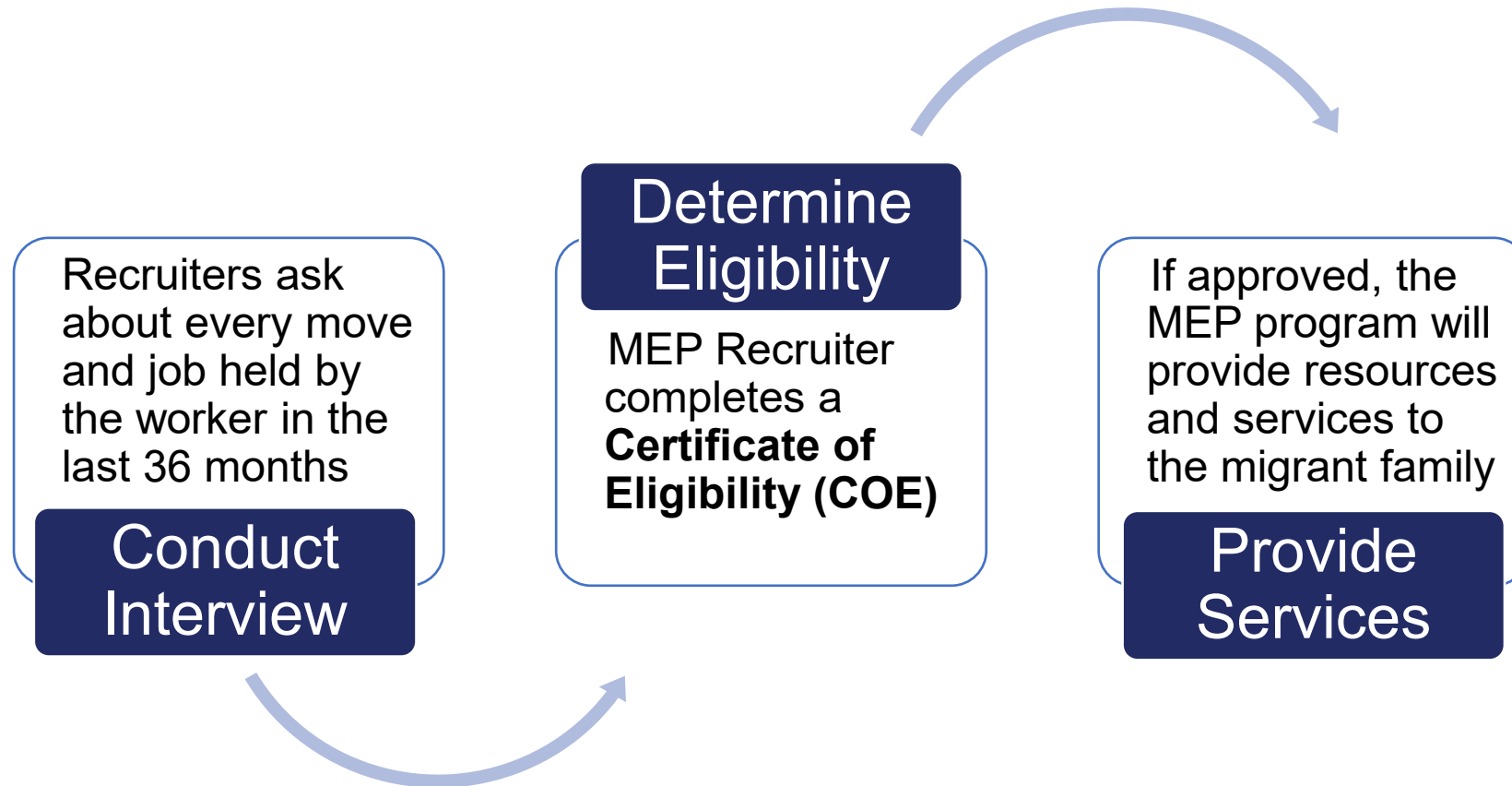
# Identification & Recruitment

# Identification

- 28 recruiters across the state use the Non-Regulatory Guidance to determine if the worker(s) and their children are **eligible for the Migrant Education Program**.



# Eligibility Process



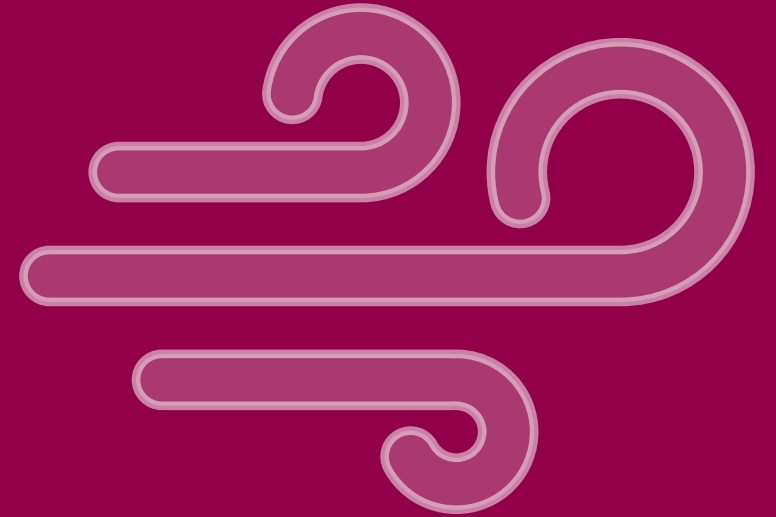
# Eligibility Factors

Age

School  
Completion

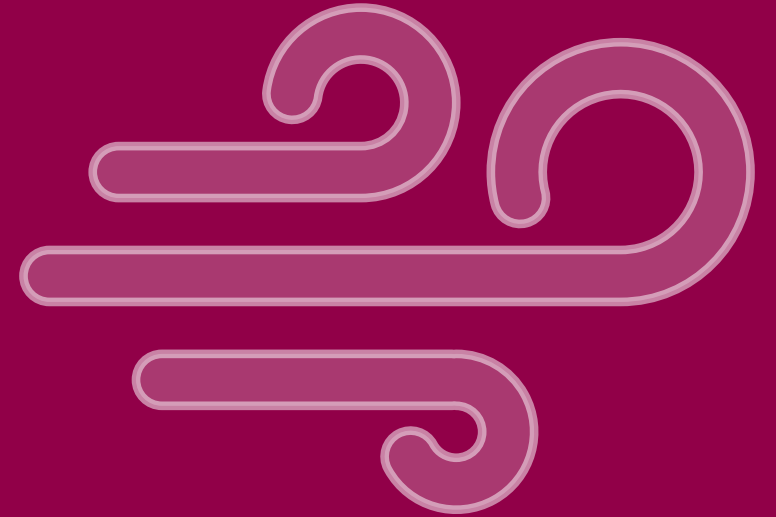
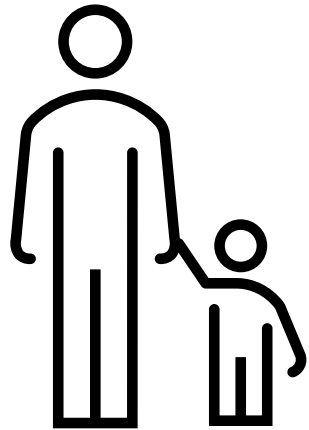
Qualifying  
Move

Qualifying  
Work



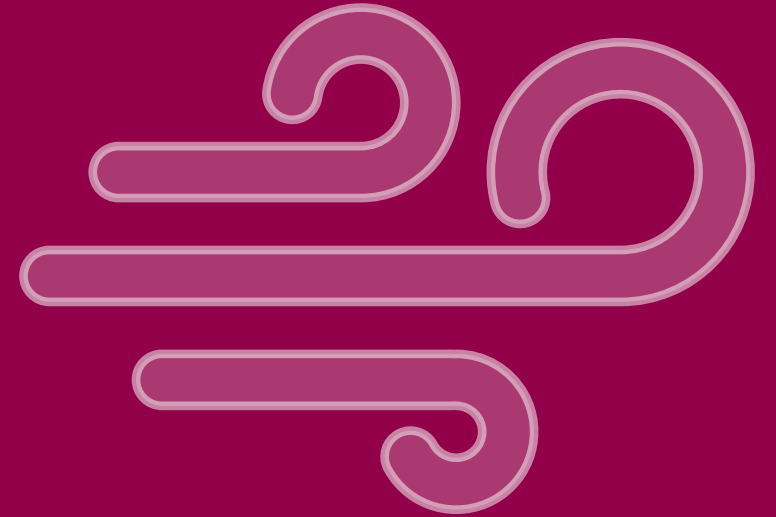
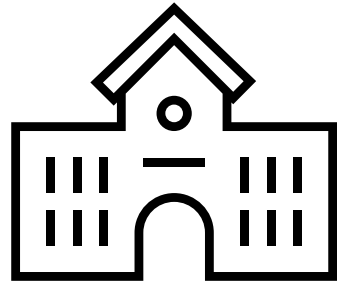
# Age

Children and youth under  
**22** years of age



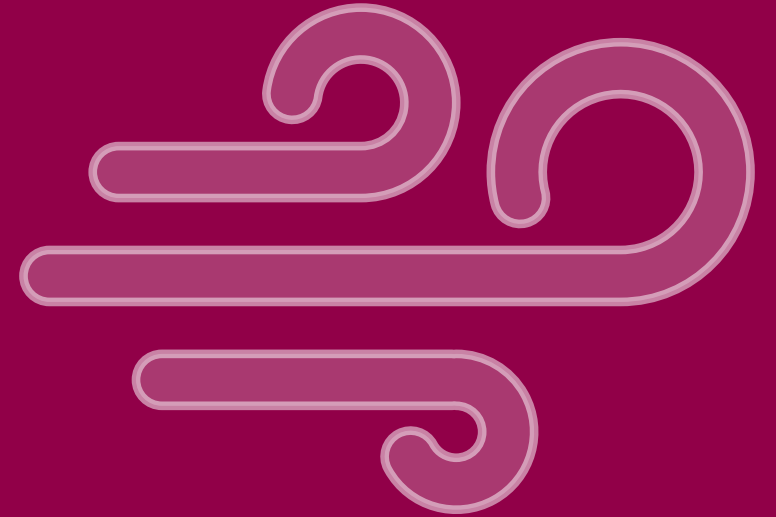
# School Completion

- Child is eligible for free public education
- Youth has not graduated from high school
- Youth does not have a high school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)



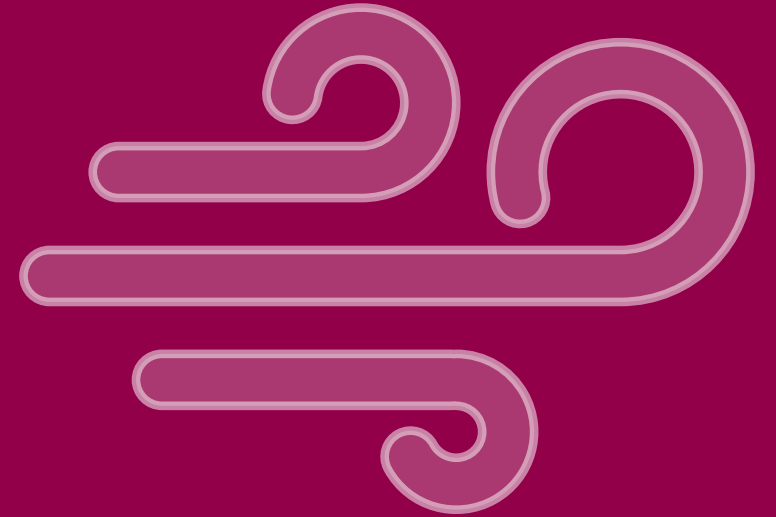
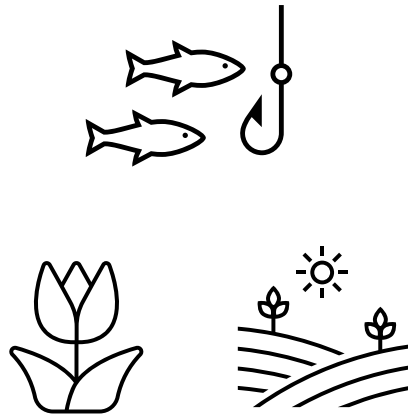
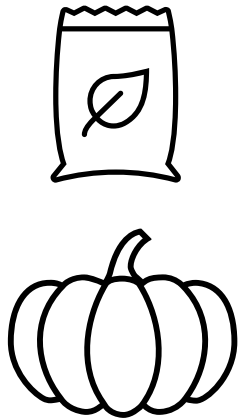
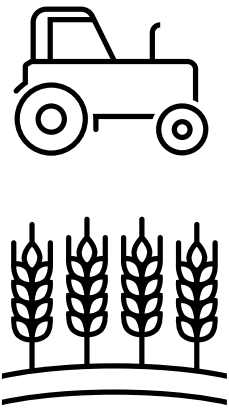
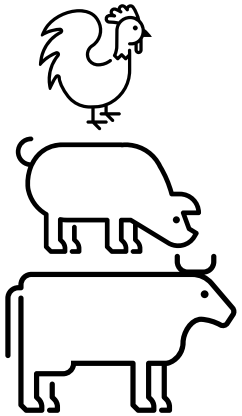
# Qualifying Move

- Child/youth moves from one **residence** to another, across **district** lines.
- Child/youth moves with a **Migratory Agricultural Worker**.
- Child/youth moves within the state (**intrastate**) or to another state (**interstate**).



# Qualifying Work

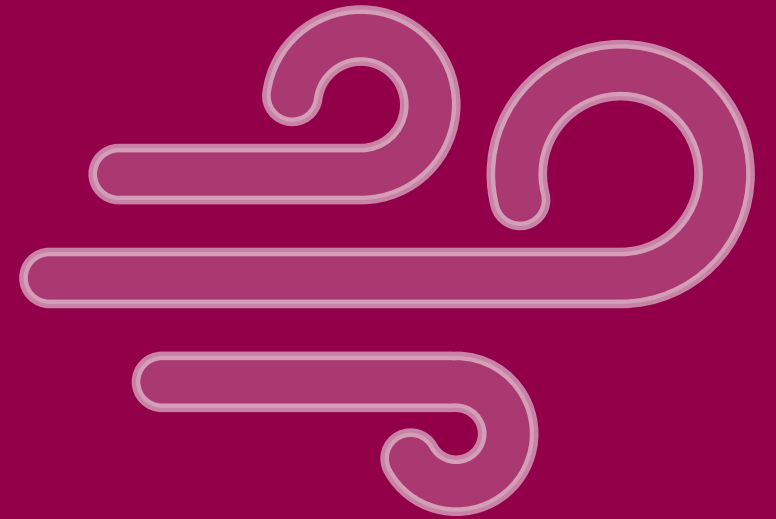
- Parent/guardian or youth engages in qualifying **agricultural or fishing work**.
- Parent/guardian or youth engages in **seasonal** or **temporary** work (work that lasts less than 12 months)
- Qualifying work includes work in the fields, dairies, nurseries, packaging sites, logging, slaughterhouses, etc.





# Clarifications

- A parent/guardian does not need to be working in agriculture or fishing at the time of the interview. They can qualify based on qualifying work and moves they may have done in the **last 36 months**.
- MEP can serve youth who have dropped out of school as long as they are under 22 years old.
- Once a migratory child is identified, they have eligibility for 36 months from their qualifying arrival date.

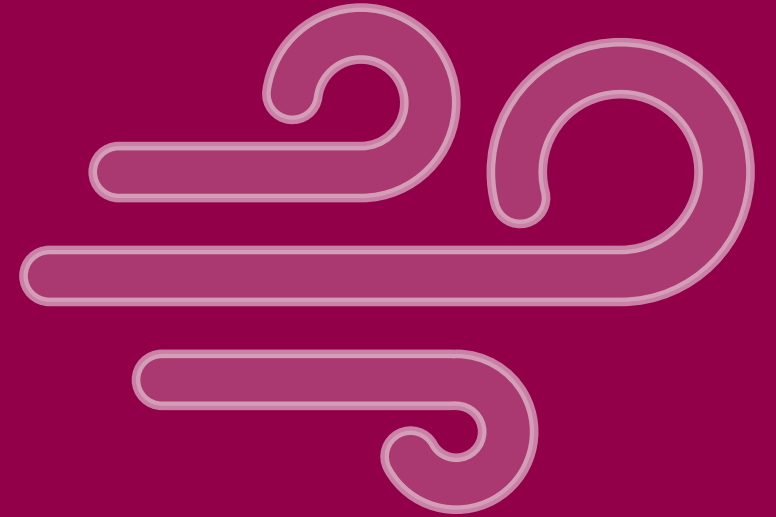


# Personal Subsistence

“Personal subsistence means that the worker and the worker’s family, as a matter of economic necessity, **consume**, as a **substantial portion** of their food intake, the crops, dairy products, or livestock they **produce** or the fish they catch.” (NRG, F28)

# Examples of Personal Subsistence

- Traditional Sheep Herding
- Hunting practices on traditional homelands
- Traditional gathering of plants
- Traditional fishing practices



# Native Migratory Families in Alaska

- The majority of the 13,000 migratory students that have been identified by the Alaska Migrant Education Program qualify under **personal subsistence**.
- Other common qualifying activities include subsistence berry picking, commercial fishing, cannery work, and logging.



Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

# Subsistence Fishing in Alaska

- Families travel from one part of the state to another to engage in subsistence fishing at various fishing camps.
- Salmon, whitefish, and halibut are the most common catches that the families consume.
- Native migratory families are usually identified after they return from the camps.



*Subsisting on the Unalakleet River  
Duncan Ivanoff cutting the fish and little brother  
Mason Ivanoff looking on. Photo Creds to mother  
Dorothy Ivanoff of Unalkleet*



*Cut fish hanging for drying at the dock of the  
Unalakleet River  
Photo credits to Francine Johnson*

# Eligibility Scenario 1

Two parents and their three elementary-age children move from Washington to Arizona. Within a week of their arrival, the father begins to work at the local nursery. His boss tells him that he is only contracted to work for 9 months.

**Are the children eligible for the Migrant Education Program?**

- ✓ Age
- ✓ School Completion
- ✓ Qualifying Work
- ✓ Qualifying Move

**Yes, the children are eligible for the MEP because they made a qualifying move with a Migratory Agricultural Worker. The work that the father engages in is considered temporary work.**

# Eligibility Scenario 2

A mother and her two high-school children move to help their family with the herding and consumption of their livestock. After a few weeks, they return to the city where the mother finds a job at a local restaurant.

**Are the children eligible for the Migrant Education Program?**

- ✓ Age
- ✓ School Completion
- ✓ Qualifying Work
- ✓ Qualifying Move

**Yes, the children are eligible for the MEP. Although the mother is not engaging in agricultural work at the time of the interview, she did engage in personal subsistence in the last 36 months.**

# Eligibility Scenario 3

A recruiter identifies a 19-year-old who is working in the lettuce fields in Yuma, AZ. He shares that he recently dropped out of school to begin working and help support his grandparents. They had recently moved to the area after being evicted from their apartment in California.

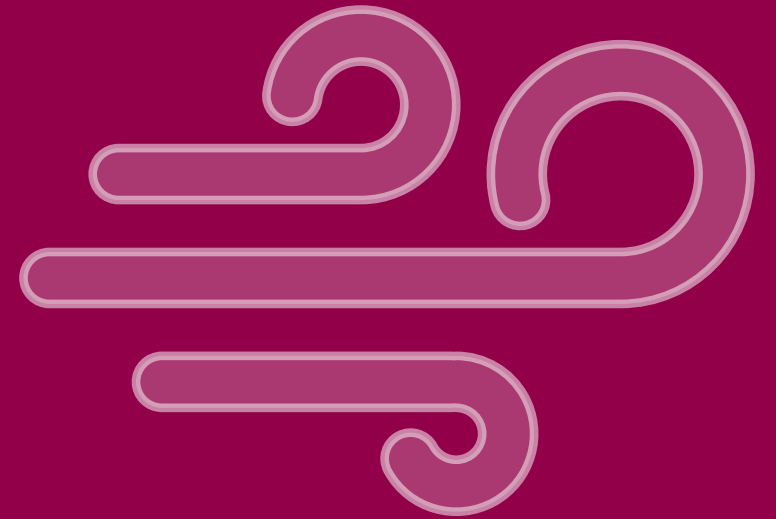
**Is the youth eligible for the Migrant Education Program?**

- ✓ Age
- ✓ School Completion
- ✓ Qualifying Work
- ✓ Qualifying Move

**Yes, the youth is eligible because he is under 22 years of age and has not graduated from high school. He also happens to be a Migratory Agricultural Worker.**



**Are there Native Migratory Children or Youth in Your Communities Who May Be Eligible for the Migrant Education Program?**



# MEP Referrals

## Referral Link & QR Code



<https://idrreferrals.net/index.php>

## Call or Email

Migrant Education Program  
[MEPInbox@azed.gov](mailto:MEPInbox@azed.gov)

Bianca Fonseca Cervantes  
Identification & Recruitment Coordinator  
[Bianca.FonsecaCervantes@azed.gov](mailto:Bianca.FonsecaCervantes@azed.gov)  
602.542.5169

# Areas of Recruitment



Field Based



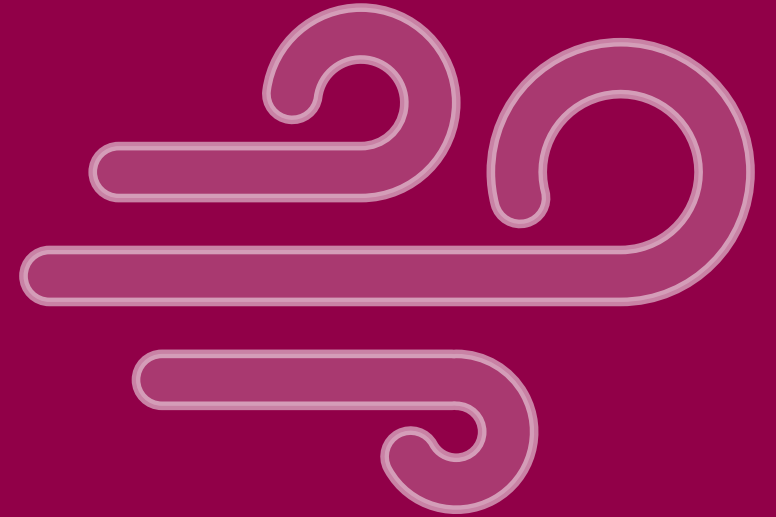
School  
Based



Community  
Based




Housing  
Based



# Parent Occupational Survey

- LEAs include the [survey](#) in their enrollment packets.
- Any surveys that indicate that the family may be eligible for the program will be sent to the closest recruiter.
- The recruiter will then connect with the family, conduct a thorough interview, and determine if they are eligible for the program.
- If you select "American Indian or Alaska Native," please include the **tribal affiliation** of the student.

**MIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PARENT OCCUPATIONAL SURVEY**



Student Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

School District: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Children in Household: \_\_\_\_\_ Age(s) of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of the School(s) the Children Attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent(s)/ Caregiver(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Race/Ethnicity of the Children (select all that apply):








American Indian or Alaska Native (If selected, please provide tribal affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_)

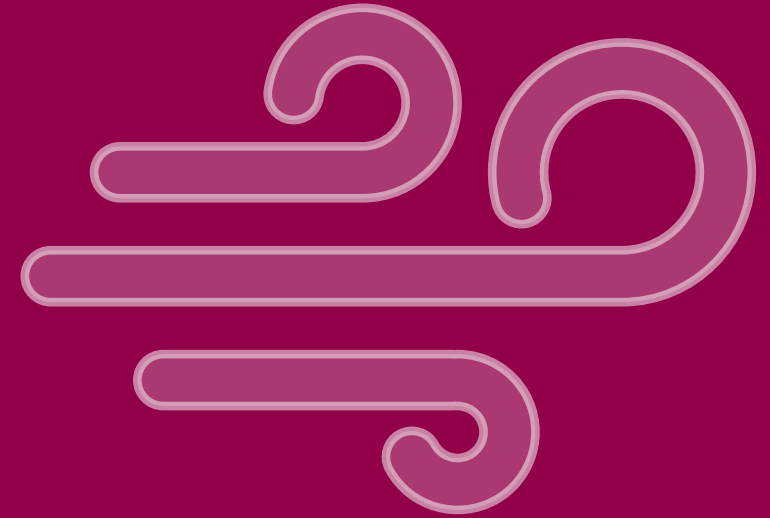
Latino/a  Black/African American  White  Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander  Asian

1. Have your children participated in the Migrant Education Program in Arizona or any other state?  
 Yes  No If yes, please indicate the date and state where your children received services: \_\_\_\_\_

2. In the last three years, has your family moved to search or work in another city, county, or state?  
 Yes  No If yes, on what date did your family arrive in the city you reside in at this time?: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Has anyone in your immediate family worked in one of the occupations listed below as a seasonal or temporary employee (less than 12 months)? (select all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Agriculture</b> (harvesting/picking vegetables or fruits such as lettuce, tomatoes, broccoli, strawberries, dates, lemons, etc.) 	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dairy/Livestock/Poultry</b> (herding, handling, feeding, branding, slaughtering, deboning, etc.) 
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Planting</b> (Planting seeds, growing or cutting trees, preparing the land, etc.) 	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Meatpacking/ Meat Processing</b> (skinning, hanging, cutting, trimming, freezing, etc.) 
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Processing/Packing agricultural products</b> (cleaning, weighing, cutting, sorting, freezing, packing, etc.) 	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fishing/ Seafood</b> (scaling, cutting, freezing, enclosing raw product in container) 
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Personal Subsistence</b> (Family consumes the crops, dairy products, or livestock they produce or the fish they catch) 	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other agricultural or fishing occupation</b> Please specify: _____



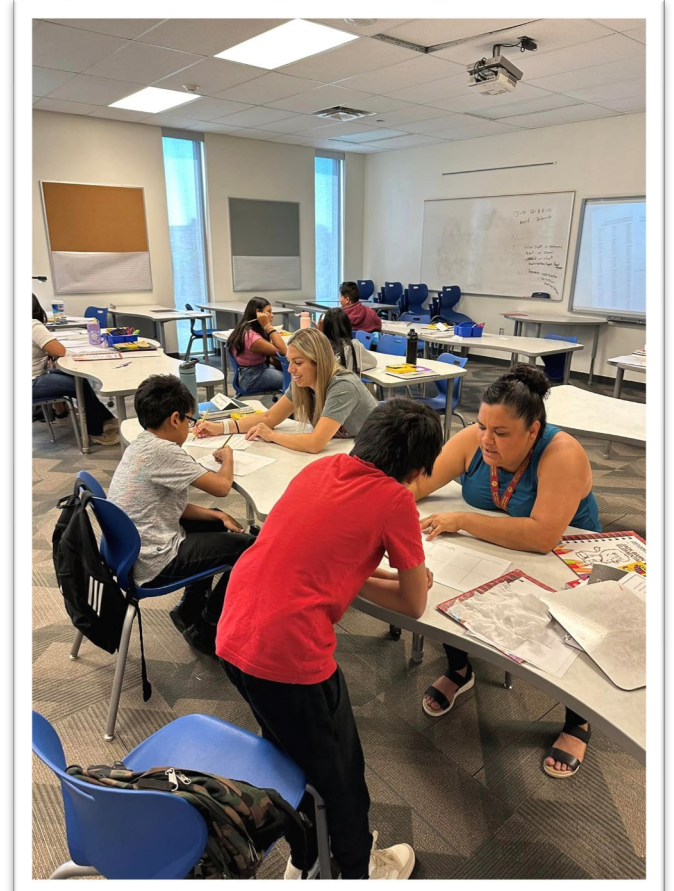
# Our Supplemental Support Services



# Instructional Support Services

**Supplemental instruction includes but is not limited to:**

- Tutoring Programs
- Enrichment Programs
- In-Home Instruction
- Credit Recovery
- High School Graduation Services
- Distance Learning Programs
- Student Leadership Programs
- University Based Summer Programs



# MEP Summer Programs



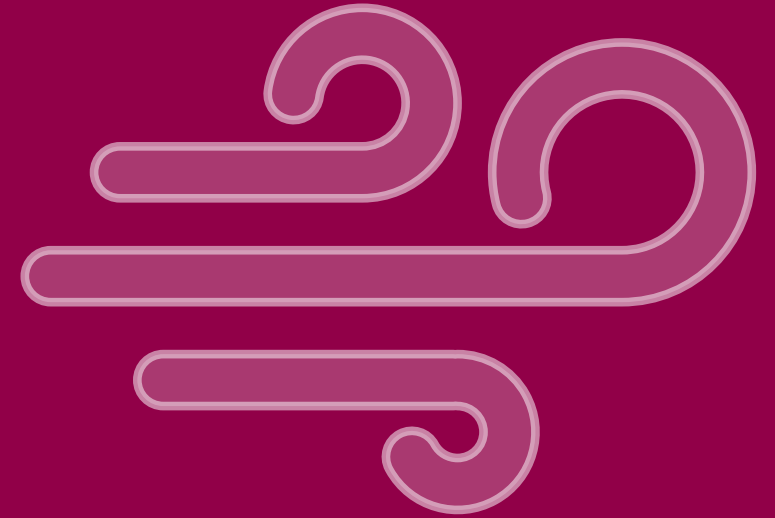
# Non-Instructional Support Services

Supplemental non-instructional support services include but are not limited to:

- Health Services
- School Supplies
- Transportation
- College and Career Readiness







# Family Engagement

# The Role of Parents in the MEP

- It is a statutory requirement to have a **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**
- **Migratory parents** play a pivotal role in planning the educational programs and projects in which their children participate.
- The Arizona MEP's local Parent Advisory Councils (**PACs**) and State Migratory Parent Advisory Council (**SMPAC**) meet regularly throughout the year to participate in the program's planning and evaluation.

## SMPAC Meeting

Thursday, April 13th  
9am-2:00pm  
Arizona Western College  
Yuma, Arizona

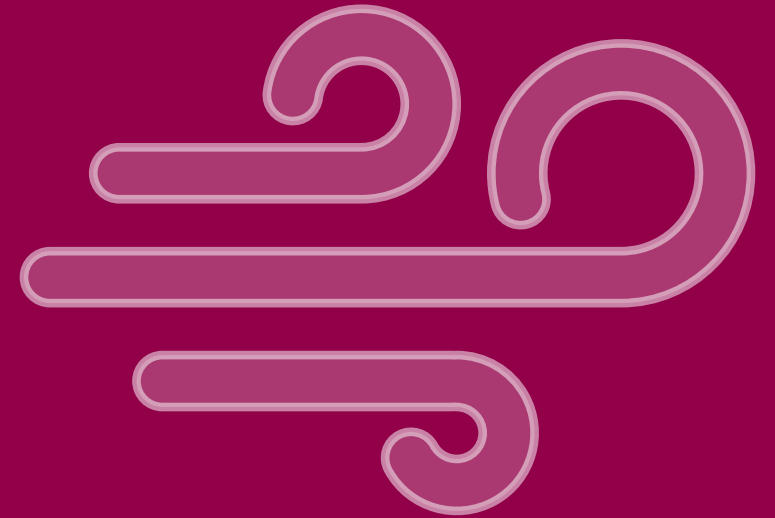


The Arizona State Migrant Parent Advisory Council (SMPAC) annual meeting is designed to provide an opportunity for the council to come together, make decisions, and learn how to support migratory children and youth.

### REGISTRATION

Questions and registration:  
Rogelio Ruiz  
rogelio.ruiz@azed.gov





**Questions**



# Thank You!

**Migrant Education Program**

[MEPinbox@azed.gov](mailto:MEPinbox@azed.gov)

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