

Kansas OSY Advocacy Project



Northwest Kansas
Educational Services Center

Oakley, KS

Introduction

According to *Success in Secondary School and Access to Postsecondary Education for Migrant Students: A Policy Brief* (2009), “the Migrant Education Program requirements **mandate** that youth up to age 22 be served, including those not enrolled in school. Out-of-school youth (OSY) continue to be one of the fastest growing subgroups within the MEP as well as the ones least served. Policies are urgently needed to extend opportunities to out-of-school migrant youth who wish to continue their education as well as to develop service delivery models for states to assist them in meeting the instructional and support services needs for those OSY who are here-to-work.

Improving educational access and making connections to much needed support services for both groups of OSY migrant youth – the here-to-work youth and the recovery youth – will require leadership of OME and the coordinated initiatives of state, local and school district educational agencies.”

OSY can be either **recovery youth** who have attended school, earned credits, but dropped out; or, **here-to-work youth** who are primarily from Mexico or Central America. Many are unschooled or have limited schooling, are non-English or limited-English proficient and live in extreme poverty. Not only has this population of MEP children increased dramatically to now over 47% of the total national MEP child count, but they also continue to be the most challenging group to identify.

Many states are now exploring OSY needs resulting from the huge increase in this population over recent years. Most migrant educators/administrators have limited experience working with OSY since traditional migrant services have been delivered to students in K-12 settings. So urgent is the demand within States to serve this high-needs population that 28 federally-funded MEP States are collaborating through a national SOSY consortium to further promote strategy development in this area.

„Many dropouts were so poorly taught in the lower grades that they believe they are incapable of doing high school-level work; many need to work to sustain themselves and their families; many lack support for their education; many are alienated by the impersonal, often uncaring, nature of schools where it seems no one cares if they succeed or fail. Young people want to learn, but those who have left school do not see themselves returning to the same kinds of institutions that did not work for them before.,,

Whatever it Takes, by the American Youth Policy Form, 2006. From *Success in Secondary School and Access to Postsecondary Education for Migrant Students: A Policy Brief* (2009)

A History of OSY

In many States there is no history of services to this MEP population. Services require exploring and developing a new infrastructure – substantially more difficult for MEP staff that provides supplementary services. Serving OSY requires school staff and administrators to work within structures they may not be familiar with nor comfortable in interacting. With no base of research on OSY and national numbers growing at a staggering rate, providing services to OSY related to the diversity and intensity of their needs is an enormous challenge. Even determining simple demographics is a daunting task (e.g., time in the U.S., educational attainment, language proficiency, previous schooling).

Likewise, the needs of OSY are challenging: OSY are likely to live away from parents and many are parents themselves; most have health needs that interfere with participating in school (i.e., medical, dental, vision, nutrition); and, even among migrant students whose graduation rate is only 50% compared to nearly 85% for all students, recovering OSY to MEP services and keeping them engaged is perhaps the most difficult work in migrant education.

Gaps in services are further complicated by OSY themselves who may have left school due to negative educational or social experiences or because they were required to help provide financial assistance to their families. While they may recognize the value of an education, they are resistant or ambivalent about

returning to school because they may be insecure about future success or they need to work to support themselves or their families. Further, OSY are the most highly mobile subgroup because they are older, can drive and have the ability to move if offered better wages or circumstances.

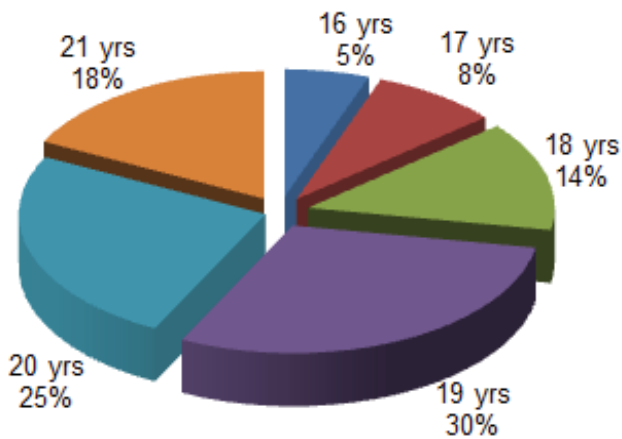
According to *Opportunities for Success for Out-of-School Youth* (2009), “many OSY try to stay “invisible” by living on the periphery and concentrating on working as many hours as possible and not trying to access services. With recruiters more aware of their presence and needs, OSY can be connected to essential services and are being encouraged to take advantage of educational opportunities tailored to their needs and interests.”

A Need for an OSY Solution | 1

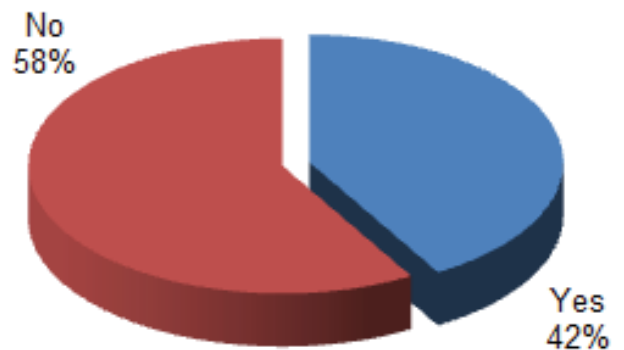
In an Immigrant Youth Study (Hill and Hayes, 2007), data revealed that OSY immigrant youth have an interest in improving their English and earning a GED; however, their need to work supersedes their educational aspirations. The study also found that few of the educational services that might help these youth are actually reaching them; and, they suggested that States need to look beyond traditional schools and teaching methods. States may have identified OSY as a priority, but they appear to lack the infrastructure to serve them.

Kansas MEP identified approximately 1,017 OSY migrant students (18% of the MEP child count) for 2009-2010 school year. Currently, approximately 10% of these identified OSY youth are receiving services during the regular school year; none are receiving services during the summer months. Adding to the quagmire of issues currently surrounding Kansas OSY are the following: OSY needs are not K-12 educational services; OSY needs are supplemental; OSY have a negative effect on district drop-out rates; and, State school districts are not networking effectively with social services and non-profit agencies towards finding and providing services to OSY students.

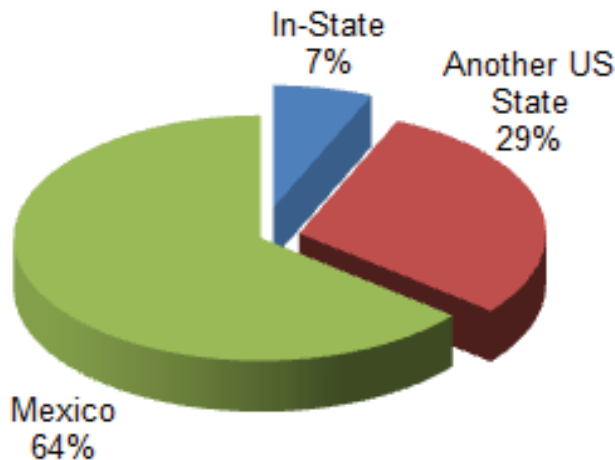
Age Distribution



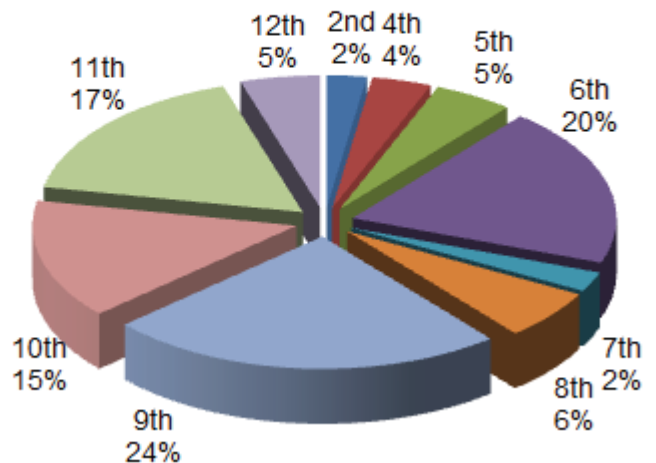
Understands English



Location of Last School



Last Grade Attended

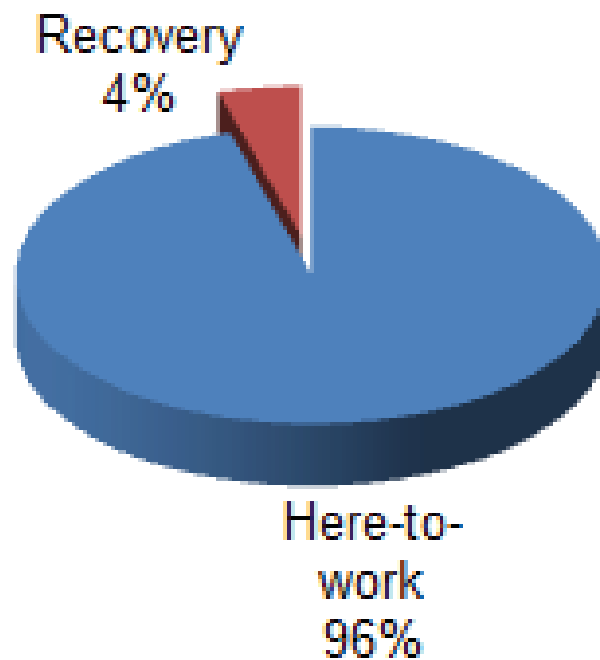


2 | A Need for an OSY Solution (cont.)

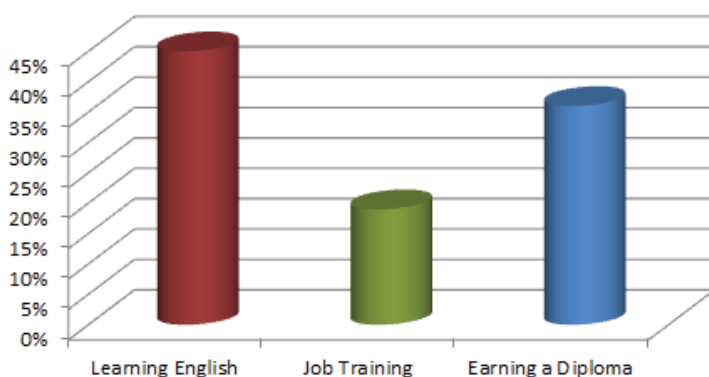
Based on the Kansas 2010-2011 OSY Needs Assessment, 90% of the OSY interviewed during the assessment are **here-to-work youth**. As previously mentioned, these youth are even more challenging to identify and provide services to within the confines of school districts and their regulations. Looking at the OSY profiles from the 2010-2011 Needs Assessment, it is clear that current OSY students are seeking multiple services, such as learning English, earning a GED, job training skills, and help with medical, dental and vision needs. However, traditional K-12 educational services do not fit the educational needs of OSY youth. Moreover, educating here-to-work youth in local school districts becomes problematic because these youth count against a school's graduation rate; they count as drop-outs. This discourages some schools from enrolling OSY youth in classes for fear of possible negative impacts on State assessment data.

Based on the information gathered at the Director's Meeting on March 31st, 2011, the CNA committee made recommendations on OSY students and an informal Needs Assessment was done.

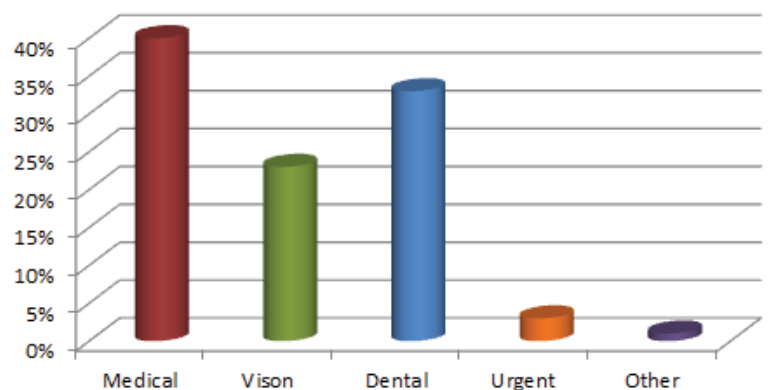
OSY Status



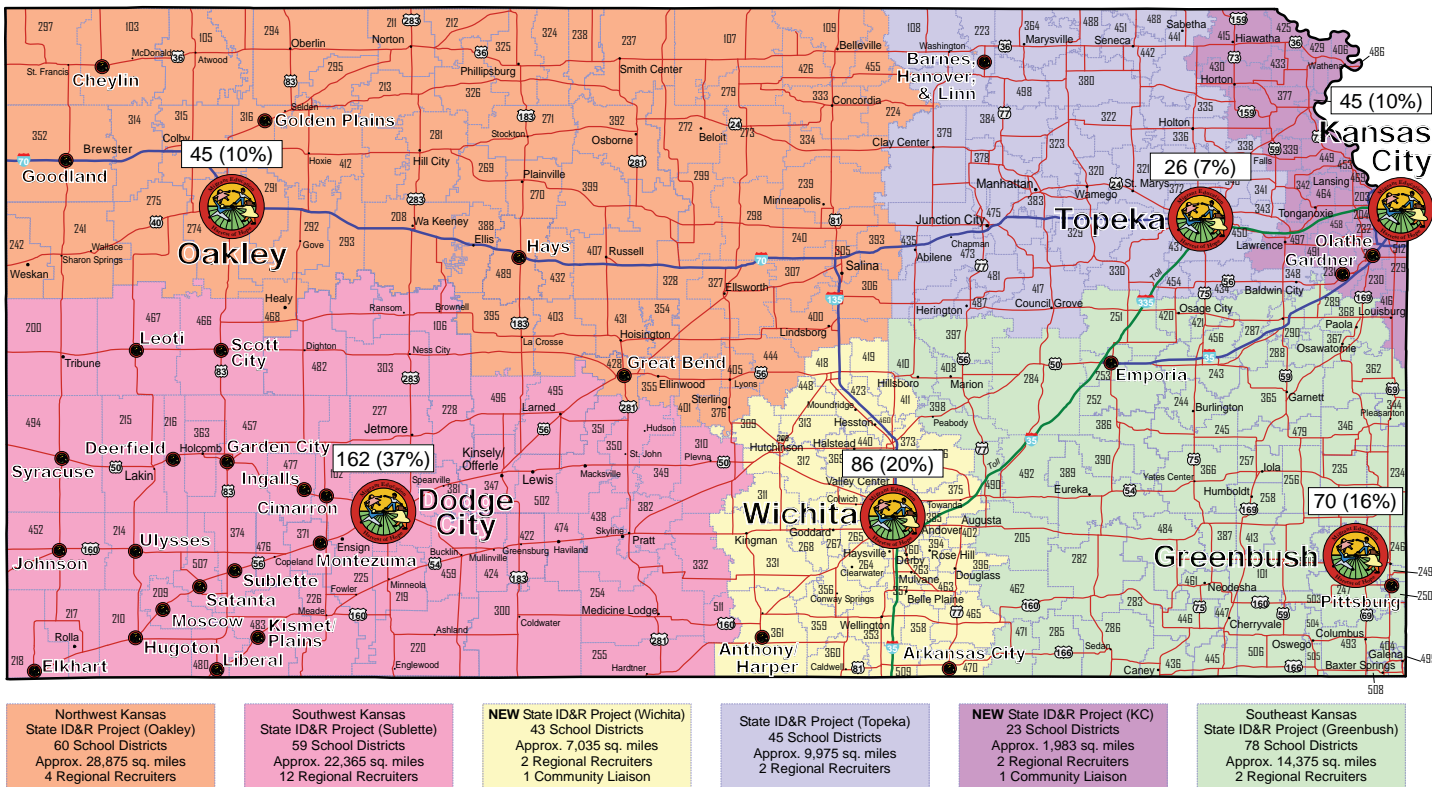
Expressed Interest In



Health Needs



Distribution of OSY in Kansas | 3



The distribution of OSY migrant youth in Kansas clearly indicates a need for specific OSY advocates across the State. Based on current OSY numbers in Kansas, these migrant youth can be found throughout the state, with the highest concentrations in the Southwest region. And, recently OME has determined all OSY migrant youth are Priority for Services. With a national mandate to serve all OSY migrant youth as well as increasing numbers each year, it is imperative that Kansas make every effort to identify and serve these youth by initiating a program specific to targeting this at-risk MEP subgroup. And, given that OSY migrant youth are behind in school *and* highly mobile, their chances for success – without support and advocacy from an OSY specific project – are dismal.

Expand educational options. Identify educational opportunities appropriate for recovery youth, i.e., HEP and ABE/Adult Education; as well as for the here-to-work group, i.e., job-specific skills, life skills and civics education, native language literacy instruction, and/or English language instruction. *(OME, SEA and LEA policy recommendation)*

Provide adequate support to recovery youth. Support both here-to-work and dropout groups, as they transition back into educational environments. This may require mentoring, role models, English language classes or tutoring, possibly transportation, interpretation services and child care, as well as access to and support for successful use of instructional technology. *(SEA and LEA policy recommendation)*

Develop a common accountability system. Track services provided and analyze measurable outcomes related to delivery of services to OSY. Inform programs of promising practices. *(OME and SEA policy recommendation)*

From *Success in Secondary School and Access to Post-secondary Education for Migrant Students: A Policy Brief* (2009)

4 | Proposal

For the Northwest OSY Advocacy Project

Kansas MEP currently has six statewide recruitment centers divided into regions which serve the entire state and provide identification and recruitment of all migrant qualifying children, as shown on the OSY distribution map:

the Northcentral Kansas State ID&R Center (Topeka),

the Northeast Kansas State ID&R Center (Kansas City),

the Southeast Kansas State ID&R Center (Greenbush),

the Southcentral Kansas State ID&R Center (Wichita),

the Southwest Kansas State ID&R Center (Dodge City), and

the Northwest Kansas State ID&R Center (Oakley).

The Northwest ID&R Service Center (Oakley) will be the proposed site and fiscal agent of the new **OSY Advocacy Project**. The new OSY project will consist of staff that are trained to meet the unique needs of OSY migrant youth, particularly connecting **recovery youth** with PASS, HEP or similar recovery programs in addition to providing **here-to-work youth** with instructional, educational and health services.

Based out of the Northwest ID&R Service Center, the new project will have a lead Coordinator who will supervise the OSY project staff. Additionally, to support this struc-

ture, Tracie Kalic, the national SOSY Director, has committed to provide the majority of staff development along with newly-developed techniques based on the SOSY consortium professional development materials and the latest service delivery models. The new **OSY Advocacy Project** will work collaboratively with the national SOSY consortium towards meeting the needs of all Kansas OSY migrant youth.

Based on current OSY migrant numbers in the State, the proposal would consist of seven OSY advocates employed out of the Northwest ID&R Service Center. However, the seven advocates will be located throughout the state in each of the ID&R Regions, with two advocates in the Dodge City Region and one at each of the remaining Regions. The advocates will be under the supervision of the OSY Coordinator.

These advocates will be trained to complete the SOSY Student Profile and Needs Assessment through collaboration with the SOSY Director; however, job responsibility and priority will be focusing on provision of services aligned to the needs of these youth. Emphasis will be placed on knowledge of current OSY languages, existing specialized services in each of the six regions of the State, and development of newly identified services and their provision.

Within an organized framework that focuses on serving OSY youth, the objectives of the **OSY Advocacy Project** will be: a) develop and deliver services to meet the unique

needs of new and existing OSY youth in the State; b) provide professional development to support these activities; c) move the here-to-work youth to recovery youth if appropriate; d) institutionalize OSY services into the State plan to elevate the quantity and quality of services to these youth; and, e) increase the number of OSY who meet performance standards on State-identified achievement assessments and/or identified education or career goals.

It is essential that all OSY advocates, LEA liaisons, and MEP recruiters work together to ensure collaboration, coordination, and a statewide perspective towards Kansas MEP efforts. The intent is that a referral network will exist between OSY advocates, district liaisons, community liaisons, and state recruiters. This referral network will increase the likelihood of addressing all MEP needs, including OSY migrant support services, within and outside of local school districts.

This new **OSY Advocacy Program** will: a) provide OSY migrant youth support services required by the unique demands of their migrant lifestyle, b) collaborate with supporting agencies to provide essential services, c) blend local and statewide perspectives into a substantial and resourceful system of OSY migrant support, and d) provide referrals to ID&R Staff. The new proposal will fulfill State and Federal regulations while ensuring all qualifying OSY migrant youth are provided services within a timely manner.

Summary of Positions | 5

OSY Special Project Coordinator

The OSY Special Project Coordinator will facilitate the OSY Advocacy Program throughout the State of Kansas. The position will be responsible for: reviewing and compiling data and demographics in regards to State OSY migrant youth; developing, through collaboration, a state-wide service plan for all eligible OSY youth; providing technical assistance and support to regional MEP ID&R centers regarding OSY needs and services; and, oversight of all OSY Advocates located in the ID&R Service Regions of the State. The position is 1 FTE and requires a Bachelor's degree with teaching certificate, pursuing Master's degree desired, as well as experience working within the Migrant Education Program, at-risk migrant populations and Out-of-School and Recovery Youth. This position will collaborate with the national SOSY Director to develop and provide professional development to all OSY Advocates as well as oversee the provision of services to all eligible OSY migrant youth in the State. The OSY Coordinator will be employed by the Oakley Service Center; but, the position will programmatically serve the State Director of Migrant Education.

OSY Advocate

The OSY Advocate position will be responsible for the provision of services and/or linking the OSY youth to the appropriate service provider as needed. This position will be responsible for the following: collecting data and demographics in regards to OSY in their regions; supporting multi-site instruction on location with materials, technical assistance, and necessary resources; visiting job sites, homes and/or camps where OSY youth can be found; coordinating services between State ID&R recruiters, local school districts, community organizations, and non-profit agencies in order to strengthen the network of assistance available to OSY migrant youth in Kansas; and, assisting the OSY Director with the recruitment and service needs of Kansas OSY youth as needed. The OSY Advocate position will be based out of the Oakley Service Center and be responsible to the OSY Coordinator; however, the advocates will work in one of the State ID&R Service Regions and be responsible for facilitating services for OSY migrant students in their appropriate area. The position is full-time and year-round and will require appropriate language skills, cultural sensitivity, and extreme flexibility in the work schedule.



Date of Implementation
July 1, 2011