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Ellen Kehoe Schwartz

Veronica Scott

Beatrice F. Birman

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Children who change schools frequently face many challenges to their success in school. Nevertheless, many of the children who change schools frequently may be less likely to receive . . . services than other children.

Student Mobility in the Nation's Elementary Schools¹

Ellen Kehoe Schwartz, Veronica Scott,
and Beatrice F. Birman

The United States has one of the highest mobility rates of all developed countries; annually, about one-fifth of all Americans move. Elementary school children who move frequently face disruption to their lives, including their schooling. Sadly, these children are often not helped to adjust to the disruption of a new school—new children, teachers, and principal—and to make sense of the variations in curriculum between the old school and the new. The success of children who change schools frequently may therefore be jeopardized. In addition, as the schools pay greater attention to high academic standards, advocated by national and state leaders,² these children may face increased difficulty in achieving success.

In response to a congressional request based on these concerns, we obtained information on children who change schools frequently: (1) their number and characteristics, (2) their success in school relative to children who have never changed schools, (3) the help that federal educational programs, such as Migrant Education and Chapter 1, provide, and (4) the help that improved student record systems could provide.

Ellen Kehoe Schwartz, a senior education specialist with GAO, has conducted a number of research projects related to school finance and education policy.

Veronica Scott, an evaluator with GAO, has conducted examinations of federal programs at the elementary and secondary level, as well as the higher education level.

Beatrice Birman, an assistant director with GAO's Education and Employment Issue Area, manages a program of educational evaluation and research focused on federal elementary and secondary education programs.

Background

High numbers of mobile children, school officials have reported, can interfere with teachers' ability to organize and deliver instruction. While the mobility of children is often a reflection of underlying family issues, such as shortages of affordable housing, changes in marital status, or unemployment, it is the schools that must face the difficult challenge of meeting the educational needs of children who change schools frequently.

One federal program, the Migrant Education Program, provides services for one group of children who are likely to change schools frequently—children of migrant agricultural workers and fishers. About 440,000 migrant children were provided with educational, medical, or social services through this program, which was funded at about \$300 million for fiscal year 1993. The program serves children who are "currently migrant"—those who have moved from one school district to another within the last 12 months—as well as "formerly migrant" children; the latter are eligible to receive services for an additional 5 years after they are no longer categorized as "currently migrant." Under the Hawkins–Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, states, in delivering services, are required to give currently migrant children priority over formerly migrant children.³ A recent House bill proposes to limit migrant education services to migrant children who have changed school districts within the last 2 years.

Except for migrant children, little is currently done to help children whose frequent school changes affect the continuity of their schooling. It may be difficult for teachers to focus on the needs of these children, particularly those who enter after school has started, rather than on maintaining continuity for the rest of the class. When children enter classrooms after the beginning of the year, teachers may prejudge them unfavorably.⁴ Teachers in schools with high proportions of children who change schools after the beginning of the year indicated that these school changes disrupt classroom instruction, and teachers must spend additional time on noninstructional tasks. Teachers may therefore not have the time to identify gaps in such a child's knowledge; moreover, these gaps may grow as the child is left on his or her own to make sense of the new curriculum and its relation to the one at the previous school.⁵ Children who changed schools often, except for migrant children, did not receive specialized educational services, researchers have noted.⁶

Some children who have changed schools frequently may be eligible for federal education programs for reasons other than their mobility. If these children are low achievers, for example, they may be eligible for Chapter 1 services in subjects such as reading and math. In fiscal year 1993, the federal government appropriated over \$6.1 billion for school districts to provide supplementary education services to low-achieving children in those schools and grades served by the Chapter 1 program.⁷

When children changed schools four or more times, both a Department of Education and a Denver Public Schools study found they were more likely to drop out of school. Children who changed schools four or more times by eighth grade were at least four times more likely to drop out than those who remained in the same school; this is true even after taking into account the socio-economic status of a child's family, according to the Department study.⁸ Children who transferred within the district five or more times dropped out of school at similarly high rates, regardless of reading achievement scores, the Denver study found.⁹ Children who have moved often were also more likely to have behavioral problems, according to a recent study.¹⁰

Recently, the attention of national and state leaders has been focused on meeting the National Education Goals, including developing and adopting high standards in school subjects

for all children. As policymakers have focused on how all children will meet high standards, policymakers have also been examining ways to determine the progress of all children and ensure that they receive the services they need. As one way to determine children's progress, the National Education Goals Panel has recommended a voluntary student record system, which would help to monitor the progress of all children, even if they move among schools. Thus, issues related to the mobility of all children have reached national prominence on the educational policy agenda.

Scope and Methodology

Children's mobility can be measured in different ways, including changes in residence or changes in schools. In our analysis, we focus on the latter. We analyzed data, collected during school year 1990-91 by the Department of Education's Prospects Study,¹¹ to determine the extent to which children change schools frequently; the characteristics of these children, including their achievement rates; and the help these children receive from federal education programs. The study provided nationally representative information on third-graders; about 15,000 third-graders, in 235 elementary schools, and their parents, teachers, and school principals completed questionnaires. The data were collected using a sample that was stratified by census region and three levels of urbanization.

The Prospects Study contained a measure of a child's mobility—the number of schools that a third-grader has attended since the beginning of first grade. This measure allowed us to separate children into three groups. The first group, those who have attended the same school since first grade, we refer to as those who have never changed schools. We also provide information on a second group, those who have attended two schools since first grade. The third group, those who have attended three or more schools since first grade, we refer to as children who have changed schools frequently.

The Prospects Study also provided information on the number of times the child changed schools during that school year; however, we focused on the first measure in order to include school changes that may have occurred in previous years. We found that few children, about two percent, changed schools more than once during a school year.

The Prospects Study includes a national stratified sample of elementary school children in the first, third, and seventh grades. We chose to analyze data on third-graders rather than seventh-graders because the focus of our request was children's mobility in the elementary grades. In addition, using third-graders allowed us to minimize the chances that children would change schools as part of a group, rather than individually. For example, a child may have attended three or more schools by seventh grade because the district puts grades K-3, 4-6, and 7-9 in different schools; a child may, therefore, be changing schools with classmates from the previous grade. Such changes are likely to be less disruptive to the child than those made as a result of a change in school attendance area. Data on children in the first grade would not have allowed us to examine children's mobility in elementary schools in as comprehensive a manner as the data for third-graders.

In response to our requests for analyses, the Planning and Evaluation Service, within the Department's Office of the Under Secretary, provided us with crosstabulation tables from the Department's contractor, Abt Associates, based on our specifications. Because the data tape for the study was not available outside of the Department at the time we conducted our analysis, we were unable to conduct multivariate analyses, such as regression. In addition, estimates of sampling errors were not available to us. Overall, we have presented group differences that are relatively large and, according to our analyses, pass standard tests of statistical significance. For our examination of one group whose size was relatively small, that

of migrant children, we supplemented our analyses of the Prospects Study database with analyses based on the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) study of a representative sample of migrant children.¹²

We interviewed officials from the Department of Education's Migrant Education and Chapter 1 programs to examine (1) the extent to which children who have changed schools frequently receive federally funded education program services and (2) the effect changing schools may have on children who are served by these programs.¹³ We also met with officials from the National Education Goals Panel and the Council of Chief State School Officers to discuss the development and implementation of the Exchange of Permanent Records Electronically for Students and Schools (ExPRESS) system; through this exchange, elementary and secondary schools, in different localities and states, would be able to voluntarily transfer student records electronically. We interviewed officials, from one state and one district, who are conducting pilots using the ExPRESS system.

Findings

Low-income, Inner City, Migrant, and LEP Children Are More Likely to have Changed Schools Frequently

Children who are from low-income families or attend inner city schools are more likely than others to have changed schools frequently. Overall, about 17 percent of all third-graders—more than half a million—have changed schools frequently, attending three or more schools since first grade.¹⁴ Of third-graders from low-income families—that is, with incomes below \$10,000—30 percent have changed schools frequently, compared with about 10 percent from families with incomes of \$25,000 and above. Overall, the percentage of children who change schools frequently decreases as income increases. (See fig. 1.)

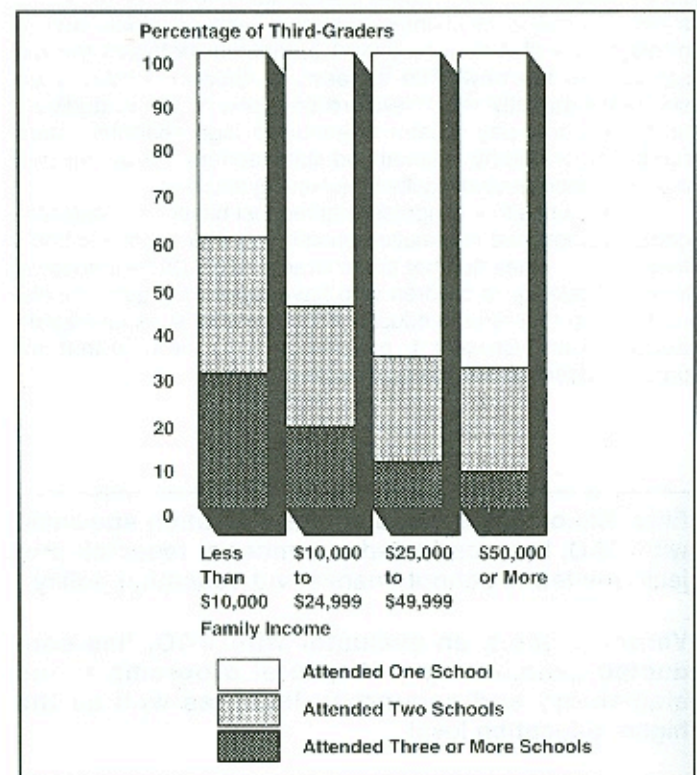


Figure 1. As Family Income Increases, Third-Graders' Likelihood of Changing Schools Frequently Decreases.

(Source: GAO analysis of Prospects Study data.)

About 25 percent of third-graders in inner city schools have changed schools frequently, compared with about 15 percent of third-graders in rural or suburban schools. An inner city child, compared with one in a suburban or rural school, may be more likely to change schools frequently, in part, because he or she is more likely to come from a low-income family. Another factor that could contribute to an inner city child changing schools is that such a child may move only a short distance, yet move into a new school attendance area; however, a child in a larger, less densely populated school attendance area—for example, in a suburban or rural school district—may move several miles and still attend the same school.

Migrant and limited English proficient (LEP) children are much more likely to change schools frequently than all children. About 40 percent of migrant children and 34 percent of LEP children change schools frequently, in comparison with 17 percent of all children. In addition, compared with 59 percent of all children, a smaller percentage of migrant and LEP children have never changed schools—28 and 38 percent, respectively.

Native American, black, and Hispanic children are more likely to change schools frequently than Asian or white children. However, these differences are less related to race or ethnicity than to differences in income and, consequently, homeownership versus renter status: renters tend to move much more frequently than homeowners. When we examined 1990 Current Population Survey data reported by the Bureau of the Census, race or ethnic differences in mobility largely disappeared after considering homeownership versus renter status.¹⁵

Children who have Changed Schools Frequently Are More Likely to be Low Achievers, Repeat a Grade, or Have Nutrition or Health Problems

Of the nation's third-graders who have changed schools frequently, 41 percent are low achievers, that is, below grade level, in reading, compared with 26 percent of third-graders who have never changed schools. Results are similar for math—33 percent of children who have changed schools frequently are below grade level, compared with 17 percent of those who have never changed schools. In grouping the children who have changed schools frequently into four income categories, children who change schools frequently are more likely to be low achievers—below grade level—in reading than are children who have never changed schools; however, the extent of this difference varies (see fig. 2). Overall, children from low-income families are more likely to be low achievers than those from higher income families, regardless of the frequency of school changes. The results were generally similar when we analyzed, by income group and number of schools attended, the percentage of children below grade level in math.¹⁶

In addition to examining the relationship between children's achievement and the number of schools attended since first grade, we also examined the relationship between children's achievement and the number of times children moved during the school year. Those children changing schools during the year are more likely to be low achievers than those remaining in the same school; those children changing schools two or more times are more likely to be low achievers than those changing schools once during the year. Few children,

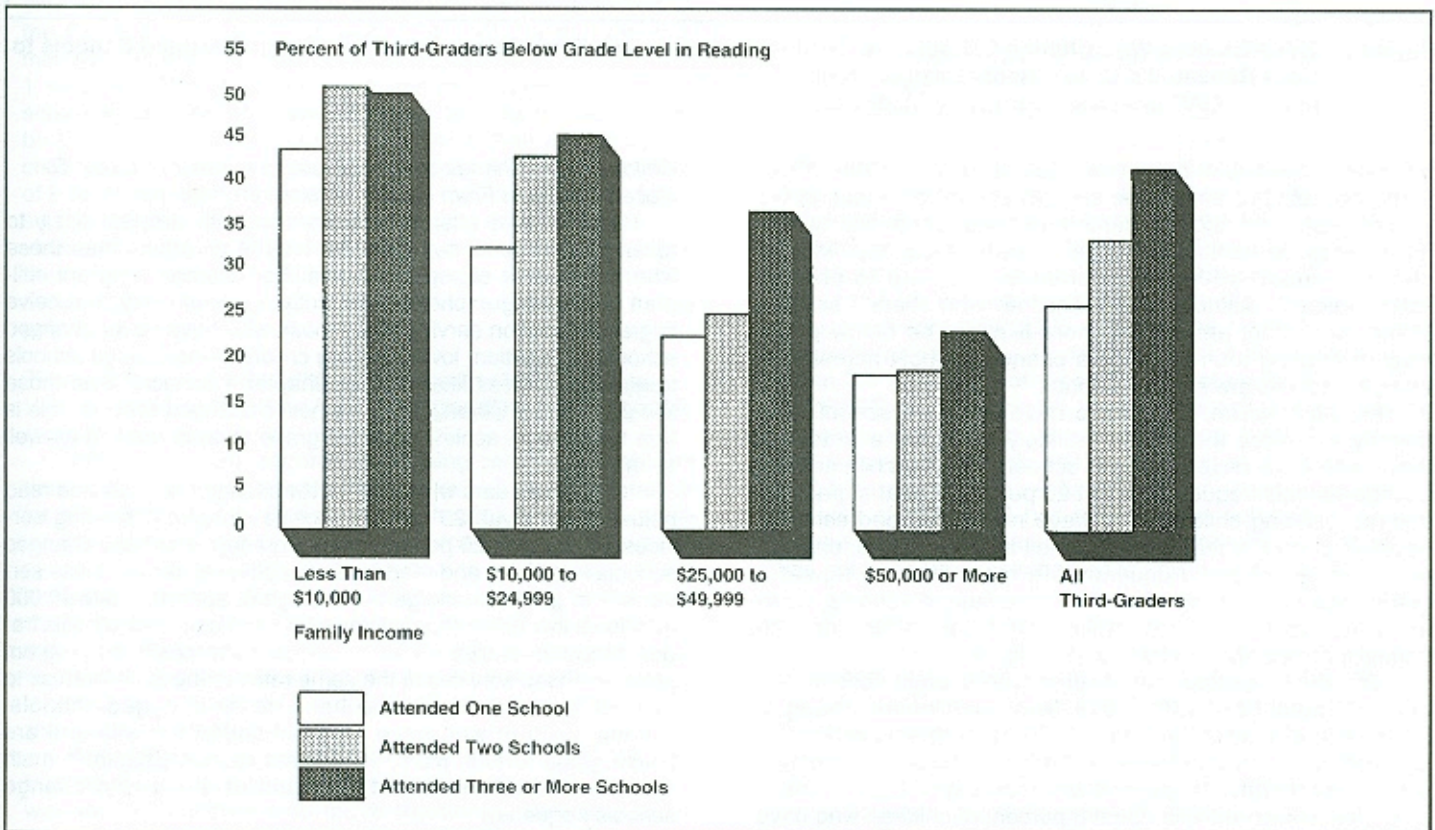


Figure 2. Third-Graders Who Change Schools Frequently Are More Likely Than Those Who Have Never Changed Schools to Be Below Grade Level in Reading, Regardless of Income
(Source: GAO analysis of Prospects Study data.)

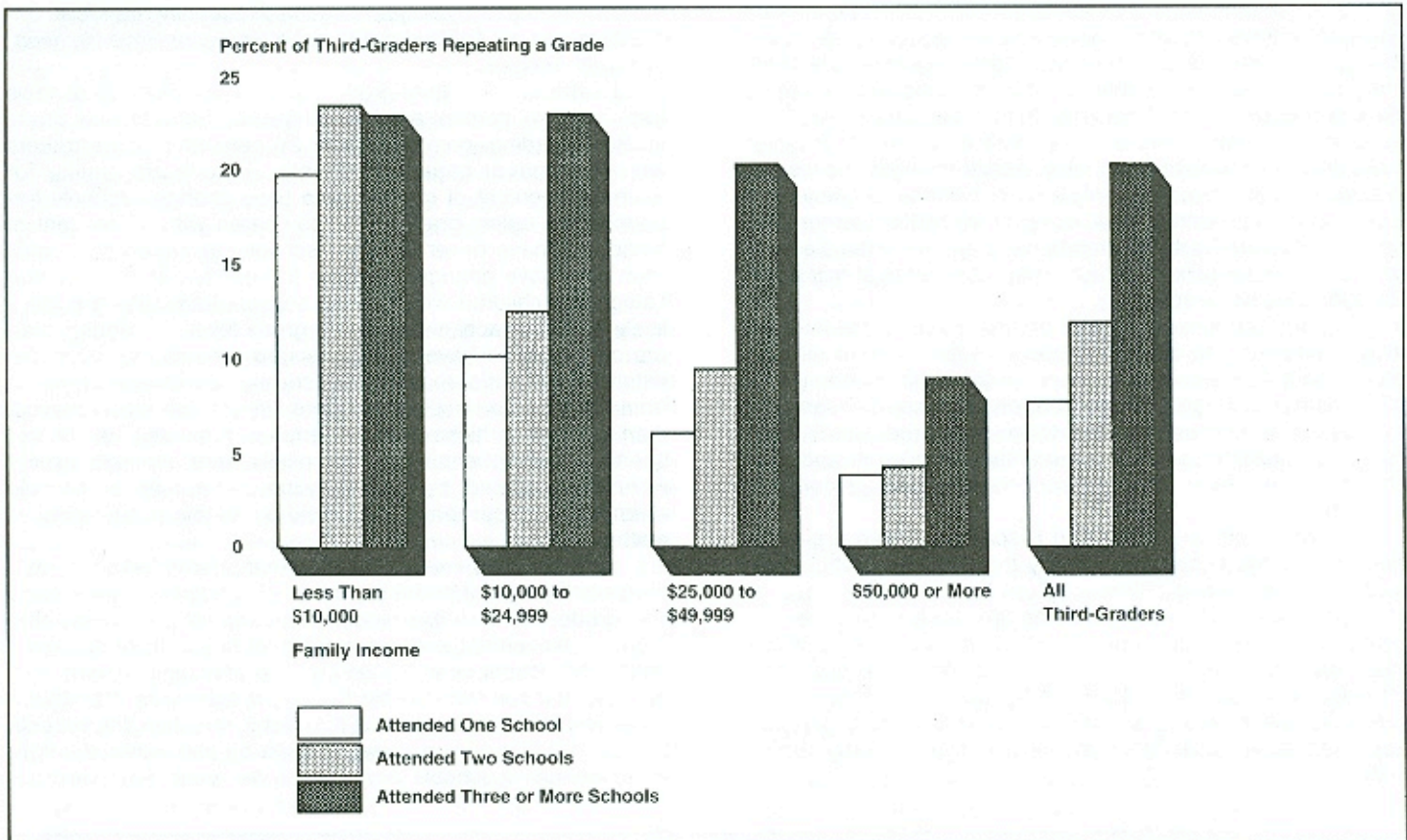


Figure 3. Third-Graders Who Change Schools Frequently Are More Likely Than Those Who Have Never Changed Schools to Have Repeated a Grade, Regardless of Income
(Source: GAO analysis of Prospects Study data.)

however, move two or more times during the year. While about 11 percent of children change schools at least once during the school year, only about 2 percent of children change two or more times. In addition, children are about equally likely to change schools within the district as they are to change schools across districts. Those children who change schools within the district are slightly more likely to be below grade level in reading than those who change schools across districts; the results are similar for math.¹⁷

For all children, those who have changed schools frequently are more than twice as likely to repeat a grade as those who have never changed schools. Among children who change schools frequently, about 20 percent repeat a grade; in contrast, among children who have never changed schools, about 8 percent repeat a grade. In all income groups, children who change schools frequently are more likely to repeat a grade than children who have never changed schools; however, the results are most striking for those in families with annual incomes above \$10,000. (See fig. 3.)

Teachers reported that children who change schools frequently, compared with those who have never changed schools, are much more likely to have problems related to nutrition or health and hygiene. Among children who change schools frequently, 10 percent are reported to have nutrition problems, compared with about 3 percent of children who have never changed schools. Similarly, teachers report that 20 percent of children who change schools frequently have health and hygiene problems, compared with 8 percent of children who have never changed schools.¹⁸

Children Who Change Schools Frequently Are less Likely To Receive Support From Federal Education Programs

Children who change schools frequently are less likely to receive educational support from federal programs than those who have never changed schools. For example, migrant children who change schools frequently are less likely to receive migrant education services than those who have never changed schools. In addition, low-achieving children who change schools frequently are less likely to get Chapter 1 services than those low-achieving children who have never changed schools; this is true for children achieving below grade level in reading as well as math.

Of third-graders who have never changed schools and read below grade level, 25 percent receive Chapter 1 reading services. In contrast, 20 percent of third-graders who have changed schools frequently and read below grade level receive these services.¹⁹ In grades kindergarten through 6, approximately 90,000 additional low-achieving children who have changed schools frequently could receive Chapter 1 reading services if the program provided these services at the same rates to these children as to low-achieving children who have never changed schools. Among children who have never changed schools and are below grade level in math, 22 percent receive Chapter 1 math services, compared with 17 percent of those who change schools frequently.

Migrant Program Provisions Allow Many Children Who Have Not Changed School Districts Recently to Receive Services. Provisions of the Migrant Education Act allow services to

migrant children who have not changed school districts for as many as 6 years.²⁰ However, migrant children who have changed school districts more recently have greater educational needs than those who have not changed school districts for 3 or more years, according to our analysis of data presented in a study conducted for the Department of Education by Research Triangle Institute (RTI).²¹ For example, for reading and language arts, about 50 percent of those who have changed school districts within the last 2 years fell below the 35th percentile. In comparison, teachers estimated, about 35 percent or less of those who have not changed school districts within the last 3 years fell below the 35th percentile, about what one would expect from an average group of students.²² Results are generally similar for math.

While states are required to give priority to currently migrant children, these children are less likely to receive either instructional or support services from the Migrant Education Program than children who are formerly migrant (80 versus 85 percent). When we look at instructional services alone, currently migrant children are more likely than formerly migrant children to be served (60 versus 50 percent). However, of all the children who receive instructional services from the Migrant Education Program, the majority (61 percent) are formerly migrant; about half of the formerly migrant children receiving instructional services have not moved within the last 3 years, according to the RTI study.

Lack of Chapter 1 Data to Explain the Lower Chapter 1 Participation Rates of Children Who Have Changed Schools Frequently.

The Department of Education has little information on children who change schools frequently and their participation in the Chapter 1 program, as well as the effects that children moving frequently from school to school have had on Chapter 1 services. Therefore, we were unable to explain why low-achieving children who have changed schools frequently may be less likely to be served by Chapter 1 than low-achieving children who have never changed schools. A 1992 Department of Education policy instructs districts to reserve adequate funds so that migrant children who are eligible for Chapter 1 services—even if they arrive late in the school year—will receive them. But nonmigrant children who change schools frequently and are also eligible for Chapter 1 services are omitted in this policy.

Timely and Comparable Student Record Systems Are One Way to Help Children Who Have Changed Schools Frequently, Including Migrants

Without student records containing recent assessment data, classroom placements may not reflect children's needs for services. In some districts with high rates of student mobility, no assessments of late entrants may be conducted because of a lack of staff time, even when no student records are available. For example, one educator, surveyed in a California study, noted that "if a student comes in our busiest time . . . without a transcript, we put her in her age-appropriate class. Sometimes it takes weeks before the teacher realizes a mistake has been made. We simply don't have time to do extensive testing anymore."²³

According to some researchers, as well as state and district officials, timely and comparable record systems are one way to help children who move frequently, including those served by federal education programs, to better adjust to a new school.²⁴ Across districts and states, current student record systems vary as to (1) data elements included and (2) how the records are transferred, by mail or electronically. The most commonly used mode of transferring student records—by mail—can be cumbersome and time-consuming. In one state, local offi-

cial reported, it often takes 2 to 6 weeks before a new child's records arrive. In a school with a high mobility rate, teachers rarely used student records to place children, teachers we interviewed noted, because these records usually arrived days or weeks after the children transferred or not at all.

The MSRTS, the federal system that tracks migrant children, is slow, incomplete, and used infrequently, according to recent studies.²⁵ With the MSRTS, records take about 1 week, on average, from the time of a request to the arrival of a hard copy; however, it is not uncommon for records to take up to a month to arrive. Because few school districts are on-line, records must be printed out at the MSRTS center in Little Rock, Arkansas, and mailed to the school districts; sometimes, records must first go through a regional Migrant Education office. Over half of all student records lack test data and, frequently, instructional and health data. School staff working in the Migrant Education Program are much more likely to use records sent from the old school than records from the MSRTS, staff report, primarily because of the small proportion of migrant children in most school districts.

The operation of the MSRTS system is expected to be considered this year in conjunction with the reauthorization of the Migrant Education Program of the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988. Public Law 103-59, enacted in August 1993, extended the contract for the operation of the MSRTS until such time as the Secretary of Education determines is necessary, but not later than June 30, 1995. The cost to operate the MSRTS center in Little Rock, Arkansas, averages about \$6 million annually; this does not include the cost of data entry and system maintenance at the state and local levels, which has been estimated to be over \$9 million annually.

New Record Transfer System Shows Promise. California is one of a few states that have recently begun to pilot an electronic student record format, ExPRESS; it is expected to be used to transfer the records of all children, not just migrants. The format is based on common data standards for transferring student records and was developed by a group of state and local educators with experience in information management; these efforts were funded by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). With ExPRESS, California officials estimate, the use of these common data standards would reduce the time needed to evaluate the content of a student record—for example, to determine whether a student has taken the equivalent of a certain type of course.²⁶ The use of ExPRESS to electronically transfer student records may also generate savings by cutting costs of record transfer, retesting, and reimmunization, as well as reporting student data to state and federal agencies. A full evaluation to assess costs and benefits of ExPRESS has not yet been conducted, however, because ExPRESS has only been piloted in a few states and has not been fully implemented in any state.

The National Education Goals Panel believes that as states and districts adopt comparable student record systems, (1) educators will be equipped with better data to help children and (2) policymakers will be better able to monitor progress towards the National Education Goals because the progress of all children can be recorded, even that of those who change schools, school districts, or states. To help in monitoring progress towards the goals, the panel has recommended developing a voluntary, uniform state and district record system for children. The panel recommended that the data elements contained in these records be consistent with those developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and NCES. Better student record systems may improve states' and districts' ability to determine whether children who change schools frequently are provided with the help they need.

Conclusions

Children who change schools frequently face many challenges to their success in school. Such change can cause disruption and add to the other challenges—low income, limited English proficiency, and migrant status—that make learning and achievement difficult for them. Nevertheless, many of the children who change schools frequently may be less likely to receive Migrant Education and Chapter 1 programs services than other children meeting program eligibility standards.

As the nation moves to setting high standards for all children, those who are failing by current standards may be even more likely to fail. How can low-achieving and migrant children who change schools frequently be helped to meet these high standards? One potential help is improved access to Chapter 1 services, for which such children are often eligible but not necessarily served. Another possibility is to better focus Migrant Education Program funding on the migrant children most in need of services, for example, migrant children who have changed school districts in the last 2 school years. If funding were more focused on these children, a greater proportion of these children could be served by local migrant education programs or such programs could offer those children most in need more intensive services.

Finally, another potential area of assistance is improved or new student record systems. These systems would not guarantee better delivery of services to children who change schools frequently, but they could help school personnel to make more timely and informed judgements about the services these students need, including those that federal programs might provide. In addition, improved state and local record systems, which are intended to cover all children, could make the existing separate federal record system for migrant children (MSRTS) unnecessary in the long run.

Final Note

Shortly after our related report was issued, Representative Marcy Kaptur introduced an amendment to H.R. 6, the House bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, authorizing the Secretary of Education to fund "programs designed to reduce excessive student mobility." Such programs also include those which "retain students who move within a school district at the same school, educate parents about the effect of mobility on a child's education and encourage parents to participate in school activities." This amendment was adopted by the House in H.R. 6 and included, among other activities, in Part A of Title III, related to the Fund for the Improvement of Education.

Endnotes

1. The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of GAO. We would like to thank Laurel Rabin, who provided excellent editorial assistance to us in our earlier report, *Elementary School Children: Many Change Schools Frequently, Harming Their Education*, GAO/HEHS-94-45, (February 4, 1994), on which this article is based. We would also like to thank Linda Morra and Cornelia Blanchette, Director and Associate Director of the Education and Employment Issue Area, for their very helpful comments on our earlier report.
2. Early in 1990, President George Bush and the nation's governors agreed to a set of six National Education Goals for the year 2000 concerning (1) readiness for school, (2) graduation from school, (3) academic achievement and citizenship, (4) math and science achievement, (5) adult literacy, and (6) drug- and

violence-free schools. The third and fourth goals, in particular, call for high academic standards in certain school subjects. In 1994, the National Education Goals Panel added two additional goals; one related to parental participation and another related to teacher education and professional development.

3. Unless otherwise noted, the term migrant children applies to both currently and formerly migrant children.
4. Joan Newman, "What Should We Do About the Highly Mobile Student?," *Research Brief* (Mount Vernon, Washington: Educational School District 189, 1988). See also, C. Sewell, "The Impact of Pupil Mobility on the Assessment of Achievement and its Implications for Program Planning" (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Community School District 17, 1982).
5. Andrea A. Lash and Sandra L. Kirkpatrick, "A Classroom Perspective on Student Mobility," *The Elementary School Journal* (Nov. 1990): 177-191.
6. According to our analyses of data from the RTI study and the 1993 *Digest of Education Statistics*, the number of elementary school children who change schools frequently is about 10 times the total number of migrant children in elementary school. Therefore, the majority of children who change schools frequently are unlikely to receive help.
7. We did not focus on smaller programs that may also serve children who change schools frequently, such as Part A of the Bilingual program, the Immigrant Education program, and the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.
8. See MPR Associates, "Characteristics of At-Risk Students in NELS:88," Conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Department of Education, NCES 92-042, (Aug. 1992): 15.
9. Ridge A. Hammons and Miles C. Olson, "Interschool Transfer and Dropout: Some Findings and Suggestions," *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin* (Sept. 1988): 136.
10. Children who moved frequently, that is, in the top 10 percent of families surveyed, were 77 percent more likely to have four or more behavioral problems than those with no or infrequent moves. For more information, see David Wood and others, "Impact of Family Relocation on Children's Growth, Development, School Function, and Behavior," *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Sept. 15, 1993): 1334-38.
11. The Department of Education provided us with cross-tabulation data from its Prospects Study, a congressionally mandated study to determine the short- and long-term consequences of children's participation in the Chapter 1 program.
12. Research Triangle Institute, *Descriptive Study of the Chapter 1 Migrant Education Program, Volume 1, Study Findings and Conclusions* (1992).
13. We use the term Migrant Education Program to refer to services authorized in Part D, Subpart 1, Chapter 1 of Title 1 of the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988. We use the term Chapter 1 to refer to services authorized in Part A, Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies, of Chapter 1.
14. About one-quarter, or 24 percent, of third-graders have attended two schools; the remaining 59 percent of third-graders have remained in the same school since first grade.

15. In one school district, Rochester, New York, landlords and school officials have begun to work together to decrease the rate of mobility for elementary school children whose parents are renters by (1) providing parents with information about how mobility is related to lower achievement and (2) advertising apartment vacancies by elementary school attendance zone. See also David Schuler, "Effects of Mobility on Student Achievement," *ERS Spectrum* (Fall 1990): 17-24.
16. Unless noted, we did not control for other factors in our analysis.
17. One might expect that those students who move across districts will find a greater change in educational environment and, therefore, will be more likely to be low achieving. Those who move within the district, however, may be more likely to have characteristics that increase their likelihood of low achievement, such as being from a low-income family, as was suggested by our case study data. Thus, the net differences in rates of low achievement between the two groups may be small.
18. For a discussion of comprehensive school-based programs that may help at-risk children with education and health or behavioral problems, see *School-Linked Human Services: A Comprehensive Strategy for Aiding Students at Risk of School Failure*, GAO/HRD-94-21, (Dec. 30, 1993).
19. When we excluded those children in schools or grades where Chapter 1 reading services were not available, we found similar differences between the two groups of children: 43 percent of low achievers who have never changed schools receive Chapter 1 reading services compared with 37 percent for those low achievers who have changed schools frequently.
20. Children who have changed school districts within the year, that is, currently migrant, are eligible for migrant education services. Moreover, they may receive services as formerly migrant children for an additional 5 years, up to a total of 6 years.
21. Research Triangle Institute, *Descriptive Study of the Chapter 1 Migrant Education Program, Volume I, Study Findings and Conclusions* (Research Triangle Park, North Carolina: Research Triangle Institute, 1992). Prepared under contract to the U.S. Department of Education.
22. It is clear that (1) children who have changed school districts within the last 2 years are substantially more likely than average to be low achieving and (2) those who have not changed school districts for 3 or more years appear no more likely than average to be low achieving. However, the case is less clear for children who have changed school districts between 2 and 3 years—they are only somewhat more likely than average to be low-achieving.
23. California Student Information System, "A Study of the Feasibility of Implementing a Statewide Process for Electronically Sharing Student Information: Executive Summary," A Collaborative Effort by the California Department of Education, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, and the California Education Data Processing Association, (Oct. 1992): 5.
24. See, for example, Andrea Lash and Sandra Kirkpatrick, "A Classroom Perspective on Student Mobility," *The Elementary School Journal* (Nov. 1990): 177-191; "Highly Mobile Students: Educational Problems and Possible Solutions," ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, N.Y., N.Y. (June 1991); The Project Description of the California Student Information System, California Department of Education (Apr. 13, 1992); and Joan Newman, "What Should We Do About the Highly Mobile Student?", (1988).
25. See Research Triangle Institute, *Descriptive Study of the Chapter 1 Migrant Education Program, Volume I, Study Findings and Conclusions* (1992). See also, National Commission on Migrant Education, *Keeping Up with Our Nation's Migrant Students: A Report on the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS)* (Bethesda, Maryland: National Commission on Migrant Education, 1991).
26. California Student Information System, "A Study of the Economic Feasibility of Implementing Electronic Student Record Transfer in California: A Benefit-Cost Analysis," A Collaborative Effort by the California Department of Education, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, and the California Education Data Processing Association, Review Draft (Feb. 6, 1993).