

Greenbush, Kansas

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The Southeast Kansas Education Service Center-Greenbush is situated in the southeast corner of Kansas in Crawford County. Located eight miles west of Girard on Highway 47, the service center serves as a hub of services to rural schools in the area, as well as throughout the state. The Southeast Kansas Education Service Center, or Greenbush, as it is commonly known, started in 1976 as three employees in a small, vacant school building donated by USD 248 Girard, on the basis that it would provide area school districts a way of accomplishing things that would be too costly individually.

Greenbush has expanded to include more than 200 programs and services and 500+ employees. Services extend far past the physical boundaries of the Greenbush property, which has expanded to include over 500 acres, four permanent buildings, and a fleet of mobile education vehicles. Programs range from education in state corrections facilities to the provision of interpreters for deaf and hearing impaired students in schools, to home-based education for parents of toddlers and pre-schoolers, to helping establish mentoring programs in communities.

The Migrant Education Program is one of the newest and fastest growing programs Greenbush provides. Identification and Recruitment of students throughout southeast Kansas began in 2001 with service delivery swiftly following the summer of 2002. Currently, the Greenbush Migrant Program serves families and students in 14 school districts spread over 12 counties.

Migrant families are not new to southeast Kansas. Migrant farm workers have been moving in and out of communities here for years to find work in order to provide for their families. With each move, the families begin anew...looking for low cost housing, food, clothing, utilities, medical services and most importantly enrolling their children in school.

Greenbush has identified migrant families in 19 cities of residence in 12 counties in Kansas with students attending 14 districts. Those counties¹ include Allen, Anderson, Bourbon, Cherokee, Crawford, Greenwood, Labette, Lane, Linn, Montgomery, Neosho, and Wilson. Within these counties, 97.5% of the population is considered white. The average family income per year is \$10,000 less than the state average, with the per capita income falling at \$16,202. The number of children receiving food stamps is at 16%, while 20% of the population in these counties receives TANF assistance. Services in the rural counties are scarce. In 2 of the 12 counties there are no licensed pre-schools, and an additional 2 counties have only 1 pre-school to serve the entire county leaving an inadequate number of slots given the population.

²Considering the 14 districts – Erie, Fort Scott, Girard, Iola, Blue Mound, Pleasanton, LaCygne, Garnett, Eureka, Coffeyville, Neodesha, Healy, St. John, Fredonia, Parsons, Baxter Springs, Chanute, Madison, Prescott – 96% of the students are considered white, 49% are eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, and 17% of the students live in poverty. In addition, 5 districts did not make Adequate Yearly Progress in 2003.

It is obvious given the geographic location of many of the districts served, the lack of local services available, and the high level of need, the Greenbush migrant students are at risk of academic failure due to many risk factors, only one of which is their migrant lifestyle. The

¹ County level data has been averaged together to assess need.

Greenbush Migrant Education Department works with schools, community agencies and directly with migrant families to assist in providing children of migrant farm workers what they need in order to succeed in school.

Greenbush recognized the need for a program in southeast Kansas with the recent increase in migrant workers due to growth in agriculture and industries like cotton in the south central part of the state and processing and packing throughout many Kansas communities. There are numerous agricultural businesses in Southeast Kansas who employ seasonal or temporary workers including, dairies, nurseries, corn, grain and seed companies, feed and rendering plants, horse ranches, and mushroom farms, just to name a few.

The Greenbush Migrant staff works in communities daily to identify migrant families. Families qualify if they have moved across school district boundaries in the last 3 years to obtain seasonal or temporary work that is agricultural in nature. Our Identification and Recruitment Specialists have been trained to work with agri-businesses to determine if the work being done is considered a qualifying activity. Once the qualifying activity is verified, the workers are interviewed to gather necessary family information so a Certificate of Eligibility can be completed and approved through the statewide approval process.

In 2004, our Migrant Education Project, in coordination with the State Department of Education completed a comprehensive revalidation process. All identified migrant families in our project have been re-interviewed based on the new No Child Left Behind Non-Regulatory Guidance set forth by the U.S. Department of Education. Greenbush participates fully in all quality assurance processes for child eligibility set forth by the State, in order to create consistency with identification of migrant families.

As soon as families are identified as eligible for the program, our Migrant Services Specialist begins working with the school to determine the student's level of need. This could be basic needs such as food and clothing to tutoring and text books. Collaboration with local human service agencies, medical providers and businesses help link families with services. We also provide information and training for school administrators and classroom teachers on the latest strategies in teaching language acquisition as well as providing support for these students in all core academic areas. Our ESOL Specialist assists the districts in working toward the Kansas State ESOL Standards set forth by KSDE.

Migrant Program Services

The Greenbush Migrant Education program provides a wide variety of services to Migrant children, families and school districts including:

Family/Student Advocacy:

Migrant families often are in need of a variety of community social services. Our staff works with community coalitions throughout Southeast Kansas on behalf of migrant families in order to keep informed about community resources and create awareness among community agencies of the presence of the migrant population. Our Staff work directly with migrant families to inform them of their rights as well as laws and procedures of living in a Kansas community. We also have staff members experienced in the Citizenship process, who assist Migrant families with questions and concerns about immigration procedures and laws.

Tutoring:

For migrant students who need assistance meeting state standards in core academic subjects, tutors or tutorial resources are provided. This is typically in the form of:

- Para-professionals working with students during the school day under the direction of a classroom teacher
- Before/After school tutoring
- Summer school
- Online tutorials through Virtual Greenbush
- Virtual Prescriptive Learning online tutorial program
- Plato Learning Lightspan software

Interpreting/Translating:

For non-English speaking families, communication with a school teacher, doctor, or banker can be an impossible task. Our bilingual staff works with school districts, community agencies and businesses to assist non-English speaking families with communication. If we don't have a staff person who speaks a common language, we work to identify someone within the community who can assist them. In addition we offer translation of important school documents so parents can receive vital information in their native language.

Credit Accrual for High School Students:

Often times, migrant and/ESOL high school students are lacking credits toward graduation. This is due to the loss of school days as a result of frequent moves and/or the language barrier. We provide a variety of ways that students can work toward making up the needed credits to graduate.

- Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS)
- Greenbush Community Learning Centers "*Seniors for Credit*"
- Virtual Prescriptive Learning

ESOL Classroom Resources:

One goal of our program is to make available a multitude of classroom curriculum resources for teachers in rural schools and classrooms. Our ESOL Teacher Resource Kits include a variety of teaching tools geared toward particular ages and grade levels. These kits are housed in the school buildings on permanent loan. The Migrant/ESOL lending library was created in 2003. **We currently have nearly 100 different items to lend and the library continues to grow as the needs of our classroom teachers grow.** Our lending library is housed in the Greenbush Media Center and can be accessed on line or by phone. A few examples of our resources include:

- Bilingual books/novels
- ESOL Leap Pads by Leapfrog
- Text books for ESOL students
- Math and Reading Summer Curriculum Kits
- Math, Science, Social Studies test preps
- Educational software such as Lightspan and Rosetta Stone

Professional Development:

Workshops were offered on an ongoing basis for teachers, administrators and community members covering a variety of research based strategies. Our ESOL Specialist also traveled to districts to do on-site teacher training.

Workshop topics have included:

- Six Trait Reading
- A Framework for Understanding Poverty
- Culture and English Language Learners
- ESOL Strategies by The Center for Applied Linguistics
- The Rights of Immigrant and Migrant Students in Public Schools
- How to Administer, Score and Interpret the LAS family of tests (LAS is an English Proficiency Assessment tool used to measure progress)
- Para-Professional Training

Migrant Education Summer Science Camps:

During the summer of 2004 Greenbush hosted the first Migrant Education Summer Science Camps. Nearly 30 Migrant/ESOL students from southeast Kansas traveled to the Greenbush Abernathy Science Center to learn about topics on astronomy and the rain forest. Curriculum was tailored to meet the unique needs of the English Language Learners and Spanish speaking interpreters were present to assist students and instructors. The participants experienced hands on exploration, learned about other parts of the world, and created art projects reflecting the rain forest and planets.