



California State University, Sacramento
Division of Student Affairs

6000 J Street • Lassen Hall 3008 • Mail Stop 6062 • Sacramento, CA 95819
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Department Name: High School Equivalency Program (HEP)

Mission Alignment

The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) at Sacramento State directly supports the university's mission to advance student success, equity, and social mobility. Designed to serve migratory and seasonal farmworkers or their immediate family members, HEP provides essential academic and transition support that enables participants to earn a high school equivalency diploma (HSED) and pursue improved employment, post-secondary education, or military service.

HEP contributes to student success and well-being by offering free, accessible services that include high school equivalency instruction, academic advising, testing services, and post-completion transition support. Each year, HEP serves more than 50 students, the majority of whom come from low-income, agricultural backgrounds. Without this program many participants would be unable to afford private preparation programs or exams, especially those offered in their native language, thus limiting their access to further education and workforce advancement.

HEP also provides vital wraparound support services such as instructional materials, transportation assistance, and individualized case management, ensuring that students have the resources needed to succeed academically and personally. These services address systemic barriers and promote equitable outcomes for a population that has historically faced limited educational access.

The program's staff, including instructors, administrative personnel, recruiters, and student support specialists, are bilingual professionals with deep expertise in serving adult learners from farmworking communities. Their work strengthens the university's capacity to engage with and serve one of California's most vulnerable and underserved populations.

Beyond individual outcomes, HEP has a measurable impact on the broader community. Graduates often go on to careers in healthcare, education, skilled trades, and public service fields that directly contribute to the regional economy and community well-being. Many also become advocates for their children's education, helping to disrupt cycles of poverty and create long-term generational change.

In summary, HEP exemplifies Sacramento State's commitment to access, equity, and student success. Its continuation is vital not only to the individuals it serves but to the broader mission of fostering opportunity, civic engagement, and upward mobility across California's agricultural communities.

Key Achievements for HEP

In the 2025-2026 academic year, the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) at Sacramento State demonstrated strong performance and measurable impact in serving adult learners from migrant and seasonal farmworking backgrounds. Despite significant economic and social barriers, HEP participants achieved notable academic and postsecondary outcomes, reflecting both student perseverance and the effectiveness of the program's comprehensive support model:

- Total Students Recruited: 150
- Total Applications Received: 100



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- Students Enrolled: 50
High School Equivalency (HSE) Graduates: In progress (anticipated completion by December 2026)
- Placement (higher education or training): In progress (anticipated reporting by December 2026)
- Age Range of Participants: 18 to 50
- Gender: 57% Female, 43% Male
- High School Equivalency Program Recognition Ceremony: HEP continues its traditions of honoring student achievement through a formal recognition ceremony that celebrates participants who successfully earn their high school equivalency certificate. This milestone event recognizes student perseverance, academic accomplishment, and serves as an important bridge to postsecondary education, workforce training, and career advancement opportunities.

These outcomes highlight the effectiveness of HEP's comprehensive, student-centered, and culturally responsive support model. Students receive wraparound services such as academic advising, tutoring, leadership development, peer mentoring, and dedicated preparation for completing the High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED).

HEP's long-standing success directly aligns with Sacramento State's mission to promote equity, inclusion, and student achievement. The program not only supports individual educational attainment but also contributes to the vitality of the broader campus and regional community through sustained outreach and collaboration.

Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Efforts (HEP):

The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) plays a vital role in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at Sacramento State. HEP serves first-generation, low-income students from migrant and seasonal farmworking backgrounds that have historically faced significant barriers to educational access and attainment. Through partnerships with programs such as the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), and El Centro Serna, HEP expands educational opportunities and support services for underserved communities.

These collaborative efforts align with Sacramento State's broader commitment to student access and success by increasing representation among first-generation, rural, and economically disadvantaged students. HEP's services contribute meaningfully to the university's goals of fostering an inclusive and equitable campus environment.

To promote inclusive learning and living environments, HEP staff and instructors participate in ongoing professional development focused on equity, cultural responsiveness, and intercultural competency. These efforts inform program policies and practices that support student well-being, belonging, and success, including advocacy for inclusive student services and access to supportive campus resources.

Consistent with Sacramento State's institutional priorities, HEP collects and analyzes student demographic, retention, persistence, and completion data to assess program effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement. Program leadership actively participates in equity-focused initiatives, institutional planning efforts, and continuous improvement processes that strengthen student outcomes and advance educational equity. Through these efforts, HEP serves as a key contributor to the university's mission of fostering student success, social mobility, and inclusive excellence.



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Partnerships & Collaborations

The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) has established a range of meaningful internal and external partnerships that significantly advance the program's mission and contribute to Sacramento State's broader institutional goals.

One of HEP's strongest campus collaborations is with the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP). HEP participants come from families with children interested in pursuing higher education, and since CAMP eligibility is similar to HEP's, any dependent of a HEP participant would likely qualify for CAMP. This provides a natural next step for those who enroll at Sacramento State. This partnership creates an educational pipeline that supports generational progress and strengthens family engagement in higher education.

HEP's external partnerships also play a critical role in student success. Collaborations with community colleges, the Migrant Education Program (MEP), California Human Development, and various community-based organizations expand the reach and impact of HEP's services. HEP is actively involved in major educational outreach events such as Feria de Educación and Steps to College at the Mexican Consulate, which serve as key access points for prospective students and families from migrant and low-income backgrounds.

Together, these partnerships enhance HEP's ability to recruit, support, and transition students into higher education or career pathways, while aligning with Sacramento State's strategic priorities of equity, community engagement, and student success.

Assessment & Data Highlights (HEP):

The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) relies on ongoing data assessment to evaluate program effectiveness and monitor student progress, particularly given the unique needs of the migrant and seasonal farmworker population it serves. Programmatic and service-based assessments are conducted weekly and monthly to ensure the quality-of-service delivery, identify areas for improvement, and maintain alignment with the program's primary goal of helping students earn their high school equivalency credential within one program year.

Because student success in HEP requires sustained academic engagement and commitment, the program must demonstrate an equal level of responsiveness and support. Data collection and analysis are essential tools for tracking academic progress, informing instructional adjustments, and identifying students who may benefit from targeted interventions. These assessments enable staff to determine whether students are on track to meet program milestones and graduate successfully.

As a result, data serves as a critical component of program effectiveness and continuous improvement. Key performance indicators including retention rates, attendance, assessment completion, academic gains, and HiSET pass rates provide valuable insight into student outcomes and program impact. These metrics guide strategic planning, resource allocation, and decision-making throughout the academic year, ensuring that services remain responsive to student needs and aligned with program objectives.

Strategic Priorities & Future Goals (HEP)



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Expanding Outreach and Recruitment: HEP will increase targeted outreach efforts in agricultural communities across northern and southern Sacramento to grow the applicant pool of HEP-eligible students.

- **Enhancing Data Collection and Analysis:** The program will improve its systems for tracking student retention, academic progress, and service utilization, enabling more responsive program adjustments and stronger outcome reporting.
- **Formalizing Postsecondary Transition Pathways:** HEP aims to develop a structured placement process that supports graduates in transitioning to higher education, including a defined transfer pathway to Sacramento State.
- **Strengthening Campus Collaborations:** The program will deepen partnerships with campus units such as El Centro Serna; to provide holistic, coordinated support that addresses the academic and personal needs of HEP students.
- **Maintain Sacramento State HEP as an Official testing site:** HEP will continue to serve as an authorized HiSET testing and proctoring site, ensuring that students have accessibility to ensure they complete their high school equivalency examination. Maintaining this capacity supports educational attainment, reduces barriers to testing.

Long-Term Vision (3-5 years)

HEP's long-term vision is to expand its reach, deepen its impact, and position itself as a regional and national model for promoting the success of migrant students. Strategic goals for the next three to five years include:

- **Developing a Comprehensive Retention and Support Model:** HEP will design and implement a robust student success framework that includes academic and career advising, résumé-building workshops, and internship preparation.
- **Establishing an Alumni Network:** The program will build a formal alumni network to support mentorship opportunities, foster professional networking, and promote continued engagement with the HEP community.
- **Scaling Culturally Responsive Programming:** HEP will expand programming that affirms students' cultural identities, promotes academic belonging, and supports identity development as a means of increasing student engagement and success.
- **Increasing Retention and Graduation Rates:** Through the implementation of multi-year, wraparound support services, HEP will work to improve long-term educational outcomes for migrant students.
- **Contributing to Research and Practice:** HEP aspires to contribute to scholarship on effective strategies for supporting first-generation, migrant, and rural students, solidifying its role as a thought leader in equity-focused student services.



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Resource Needs & Support Requests

To achieve its short- and long-term goals, the High School Equivalency Program (HEP) requires targeted institutional support and strategic investment. As a federally funded program supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, HEP's long-term sustainability is closely tied to external funding opportunities. Given the uncertainty surrounding future grant funding, institutional commitment is essential to maintaining and strengthening the program's impact.

Key resource needs include:

- **Operational Funding:** Dedicated resources are needed to support the development, enhancement, and implementation of core HEP services, including instructional delivery, outreach, advising, and wraparound student support.
- **Institutional Support:** HEP seeks broader institutional backing to ensure the successful execution of program activities, increase campus integration, and promote student participation in academic and testing services. This includes logistical support, access to campus resources, and collaborative engagement with academic and student affairs units.

Strategic investment in these areas will help ensure that HEP continues to provide equitable access to education for migrant and seasonal farmworker populations and contribute meaningfully to Sacramento State's broader goals of student success, equity, and community engagement.

Assessment & Data-Driven Insights

HEP continues to promote student engagement through a variety of academic, leadership, and college-readiness activities designed to support persistence and long-term success. Student participation in workshops, advising sessions, tutoring, and campus-based events demonstrate a strong commitment to educational attainment and personal growth.

Key engagement initiatives during the reporting period included:

- **Steps to College Workshops:** Students participated in workshops focused on college admissions, financial aid, academic planning, and postsecondary transition opportunities.
- **Feria de Educación (Education Fair):** HEP actively encouraged student participation in educational fairs and outreach events that connected students with colleges, universities, workforce training programs, and community resources.
- **College and Career Exploration Activities:** Students were encouraged to attend campus visits, informational sessions, and career development events to increase awareness of educational and employment pathways.

These efforts contribute to increased student persistence, stronger connections to educational opportunities, and successful transitions into higher education and workforce pathways.



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Data Challenges & Needs

While HEP continues to strengthen its data collection and reporting processes, several challenges remain. One of the most significant factors affecting student engagement and retention is the uncertainty surrounding federal funding and the long-term sustainability of the program. Concerns about program continuity may impact on student confidence, participation, and long-term educational planning.

Use of Assessment for Improvement

Financial Overview (*Optional or as required*)

The Sacramento State High School Equivalency Program (HEP) is a federally funded initiative supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. With many federally funded programs, HEP's ability to provide comprehensive services is dependent upon continued federal investment. Due to ongoing uncertainty and administrative transitions within the U.S. Department of Education, concerns remain regarding the timing and availability of future funding opportunities, creating challenges for long-term planning and program sustainability.

While HEP remains committed to serving its students and communities, the uncertainty surrounding federal funding has raised concerns regarding the program's ability to maintain services at current levels and continue expanding educational opportunities for eligible participants.

Budget Overview

HEP operates as a high-touch, student-centered program that requires significant personnel and operational resources to effectively deliver its services. Many program resources support direct student services, including recruitment and outreach, academic instruction, advising, case management, tutoring, HiSET preparation, testing support, and postsecondary transition services. These investments are essential to helping students successfully obtain their high school equivalency credential and transition into higher education, workforce training, or employment opportunities.

Major Financial Challenges and Sustainability Considerations

The continued uncertainty surrounding federal funding presents challenges for program planning, staffing, and service delivery. Without stable funding, HEP may face limitations in its ability to recruit new participants, provide comprehensive support services, maintain its role as an authorized HiSET testing site, and expand postsecondary transition opportunities for graduates.

Institutional support from Sacramento State would be critical in ensuring continuity of services should funding challenges or delays arise. HEP serves adult learners from migrant and seasonal farmworking backgrounds, many of whom are first-generation students and come from low-income households. These students often face significant educational, economic, and social barriers that make access to supportive educational programs essential for their success.

Continued support for HEP aligns directly with Sacramento State's mission of advancing educational equity, access, belonging, and student success. Institutional investment in HEP helps ensure that



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historically underserved populations continue to have pathways to educational attainment, workforce advancement, and lifelong learning opportunities.

By supporting HEP during periods of funding uncertainty, Sacramento State reinforces its commitment to social mobility, community engagement, and educational opportunity. Sustaining HEP not only benefits individual students and families but also strengthens the university's broader efforts to serve diverse communities throughout the region and create pathways to higher education for migrant and seasonal farmworker populations