



Year 6 Annual Implementation Report

Texas GEAR UP State Grant
Evaluation

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AEIS	Academic Excellence Indicator System
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AP	Advanced Placement
APR	Annual Performance Report
ASPR	Annual Strategic Planning Report
CCREC	College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium
CIS	Communities in Schools
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CTK	Community TechKnowledge
DDI	Data-Driven Instruction
DGB	Data Governance Board
ED	U.S. Department of Education
ELA	English Language Arts
ELL	English Language Learners
EOC	End-of-Course
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FY	Fiscal Year
GEAR UP	Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
GPA	Grade Point Average
GUIDES	GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System
HB	House Bill
HS	High School
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MS	Middle School
NCCEP	National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
NOGA	Notification of Grant Award
PBL	Project-based Learning
PD	Professional Development
PSAT	Preliminary SAT
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
QED	Quasi-Experimental Design
SG	State Grant
STAAR®	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TAPR	Texas Academic Performance Report
TASFA	Texas Application for State Financial Aid
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TG	Texas Guaranteed
THECB	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
TSIA	Texas Success Initiative Assessment
UT	The University of Texas
UT-Austin	The University of Texas at Austin
UT-IPSI	The University of Texas at Austin's Institute for Public School Initiatives

Highlights

Year 6 of the evaluation focused on evaluating the implementation of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant (SG) program when participating students were in Grade 12—with some comparisons to previous years as applicable. The Texas GEAR UP SG was designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education through state and local partnership grants.

Implementation

Implementation shifted from providing opportunities to build awareness and readiness for college to working with students and parents to take concrete steps to apply and enroll in college. Specifically, participation in mentoring, educational field trips, college visits, job site visits, summer programs, and workshops decreased in Year 6 while participation in activities to support college and financial aid applications and decisions (e.g., counseling/advising, financial aid support services) increased. These changes are likely due to the shift in opportunities provided. Indeed, College Preparation Advisors reported that their primary tasks were dedicated to planning for students' postsecondary education and conducted most of these activities in one-on-one settings to tailor conversations to students' specific needs.

Many (89%) of student survey respondents reported they applied to college, and almost three-quarters reported they were already accepted to college. Over two-thirds (68%) of student survey respondents reported they submitted their FAFSA.

Overall, the cohort did not meet Project Objective 4.4, to have more than 70% of students meet the criteria for having knowledge and academic preparedness for college. School L was the only school that met this objective.

Potential Promising Practices

- **Disseminate college information and resources in multiple modes and formats.** One school disseminated college information both online and via print, which students specifically referenced as a helpful practice. Texas GEAR UP SG staff felt that distributing the information in multiple modes contributed to more students accessing and taking advantage of the information.
- **Provide opportunities for students to have one-on-one conversations regarding postsecondary education with staff.** One-on-one conversations on college applications and financial aid forms provided students and families with privacy, confidentiality, and the opportunity to have conversations that were more specific to their needs and questions.
- **Allocate a shared space for postsecondary education information.** Five of the six schools housed their Texas GEAR UP SG staff with other staff from college access programs at the school, which created a central hub in the school for information on postsecondary education. This provided easy access to college resources for students and facilitated collaboration across college access staff.

- **Provide opportunities to visit colleges each year for all students.** Opportunities to visit campuses with Texas GEAR UP SG helped students determine schools that were not the right fit for them, which streamlined their college application process and eased their college enrollment decision making.
- **Provide multiple opportunities for students to participate in college entrance examinations.** Multiple opportunities helped students feel comfortable and confident to succeed on college entrance examinations and helped many students increase their scores.

Recommendations

- **Provide training for all school staff on college entrance requirements and financial aid.** Providing all school staff with training on college entrance requirements and financial aid may increase the awareness of postsecondary education among students and their families, continue to facilitate the college going culture at the school, and sustain the dissemination of college information after the Texas GEAR UP SG—and the grant-funded positions—come to an end.
- **Designate school staff across all grades to take ownership of college advising tasks to increase opportunities for one-on-one conversations.** One-on-one conversations about college admissions or financial aid during Grade 12 have been shown to contribute to postsecondary enrollment (Dunlop Velez, 2016). Because counselors are often overwhelmed with existing workloads, schools may want to consider designating multiple staff as college advisors or mentors.
- **Provide trainings to help teachers incorporate SAT, ACT, and TSIA preparation into coursework.** By integrating test preparation strategies into regular coursework, more students will receive test preparation, which may lead to increased scores for these important college entrance assessments.
- **Encourage all families to submit a FAFSA and to seek financial aid.** School and college access staff should consider encouraging all families and students to seek out financial aid and submit a FAFSA, despite their perceptions of eligibility for financial aid or a student's plans to enroll in a postsecondary institution, so that a lack of financial assistance is not a barrier to college enrollment.
- **Establish regular check-ins among administrators, counselors, and staff leading postsecondary education awareness initiatives.** To facilitate engagement and buy-in for college access among school leadership, schools may want to consider establishing regular check-ins among principals, counselors, and any other school or district staff that lead, oversee, or track college and career readiness initiatives. Such check-ins may provide the principal and other administrators with information about how to promote college and career readiness among the rest of the school staff, students, families, and community partners.

Executive Summary

Overview

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded the Texas Education Agency (TEA) a \$33 million federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant in federal fiscal year 2012. The purpose of the federal GEAR UP program is to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education through state and local partnership grants. The GEAR UP program addresses the challenges faced by low-income students in attaining postsecondary success in an early and ongoing manner by providing services, activities, and resources to students from Grade 7 through the first year of college. GEAR UP is organized around three goals: (1) increasing postsecondary awareness and aspirations; (2) strengthening academic preparation and achievement; and (3) raising postsecondary participation. The cohort of students and parents from four participating districts are provided services through the Texas GEAR UP State Grant (SG) from Grade 7 (the 2012–13 school year) through their first year of postsecondary education (the 2018–19 school year). This report focuses on implementation in Year 6 of the Texas GEAR UP SG (the 2017–18 school year), the cohort's final year in high school (Grade 12).

The Texas GEAR UP SG program includes nine project goals and 26 corresponding objectives, provided in Appendix A of the report. Goals pertain to topics related to student services, including advanced coursework, student support services, and summer programs. Other goals intend to increase data-driven instruction (through teacher professional development [PD]), community collaboration, and access to postsecondary information. Further, goals related to outcomes include on-time promotion, improved high school completion at a college-ready level, college attendance, and college retention. In addition to meeting goals at campuses selected to participate in the program, there are objectives to provide statewide information and professional learning for educators to promote college readiness across the state.

Participating schools and their districts are listed in Table ES.1; throughout this report, schools are identified by letter (e.g., High School H, High School I) in order to protect confidentiality.¹ Program staff facilitate and provide Texas GEAR UP SG services, with support from TEA, statewide collaborators (including the Support Center, which serves as the technical assistance provider), and local stakeholders.² Program staff include College Preparation Advisors who are employed by the Support Center and embedded in the participating schools. They serve in each district alongside Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators, who are district personnel dedicated to the implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG grant services. Texas GEAR UP SG services are intended to impact teachers through the provision of PD and schools/districts through changes

¹ Texas GEAR UP High Schools are labeled High Schools H through M. The seven Texas GEAR UP Middle Schools were identified as Schools A through G.

² The term Texas GEAR UP SG staff is used throughout this report and includes the Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators, College Preparation Advisors, facilitators, tutors, parent liaisons, and data clerks. These are staff located in the districts or at the schools who have key responsibilities to the project either for the district or at the school.

in academic rigor (paired with student support services). Finally, the Texas GEAR UP SG program is intended to make a statewide impact, primarily through the provision of the website (i.e., <http://www.texasgearup.com>), where coordinated information and resources regarding postsecondary opportunities for students and their parents throughout Texas are made available.

Table ES.1. Profile of Texas GEAR UP Schools

District	Middle School (2012–13; 2013–14)	High School (2014–15; 2015–16; 2016–17; 2017–18)
Edgewood Independent School District (Bexar County)	Brentwood, Garcia, Wrenn	Memorial, Kennedy
Somerset Independent School District	Somerset	Somerset
Lubbock Independent School District	Dunbar	Estacado
Manor Independent School District	Decker, Manor	Manor, Manor New Tech

Evaluation of Texas GEAR UP State Grant

The evaluation of the program examines implementation and outcomes (including the relationship between the two) and identifies potential best practices over the seven-year grant period. Evaluation objectives include the following:

- Provide ongoing formative evaluation of implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG (promising practices and recommendations).
- Explore implementation status, mix of implementation, and relationships between implementation and student outcomes.
- Determine the impact on parents, schools, and community alliances.
- Examine access to and use of statewide resources.
- Examine student outcomes.

The longitudinal evaluation design spans seven years and follows a cohort model. Table ES.2 illustrates the timeline and grade level associated with the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort that is the primary focus of the program and evaluation. Appendix B includes additional information about the evaluation design.

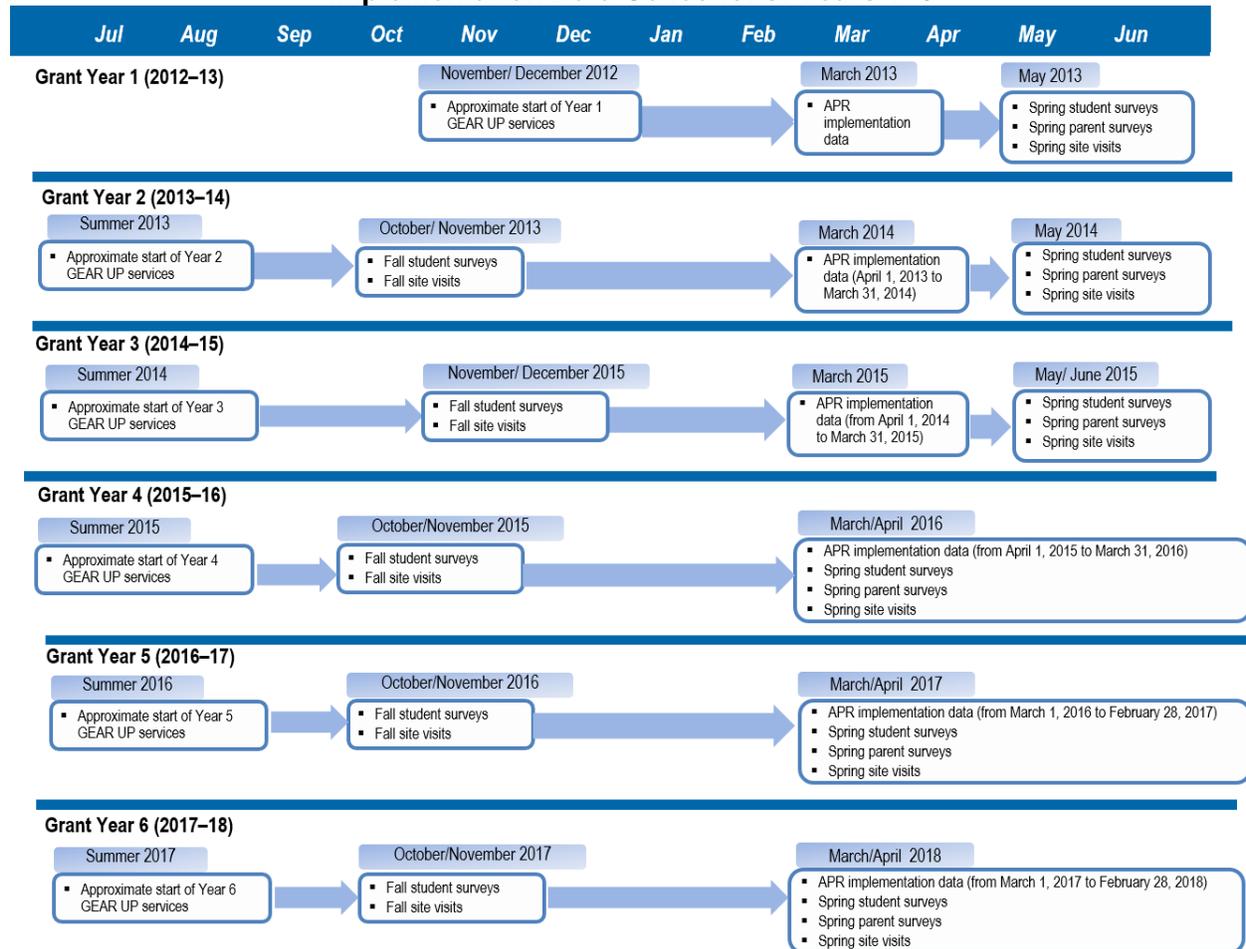
Table ES.2. Evaluation Timeline

Grade in School by Grant Year							
	Grant Year 1 2012–13	Grant Year 2 2013–14	Grant Year 3 2014–15	Grant Year 4 2015–16	Grant Year 5 2016–17	Grant Year 6 2017–18	Grant Year 7 2018–19
Primary Cohort	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	First year of college

This sixth implementation report focuses on formative feedback regarding Year 6 implementation and provides relevant comparisons to implementation in prior years. It was informed by analysis of student- and campus-level data from statewide databases, interviews with TEA and its collaborators, data reported through the GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry

System (GUIDES), student and parent surveys, and qualitative site visit data.³ Districts submitted Year 6 implementation data in GUIDES in line with federal annual performance report (APR) reporting requirements, covering the period between March 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018.^{4,5} Figure ES.1 provides an overview of the timing of data collection in each grant year.

**Figure ES.1. Implementation Timeline and Evaluation
Implementation Data Collections: Years 1–6**



³ TEA’s collaborators on the Texas GEAR UP SG during Year 6 include the Support Center staffed by personnel from the University of Texas at Austin’s Institute for Public School Initiatives (UT-IPSI), AMS Pictures, GeoFORCE, Signal Vine, and FOCUS Training.

⁴ Annual Performance Report (APR) data used in the Year 6 report are from summer 2017 and the 2017–18 school year, but only through February 28, 2018. The evaluation team made the decision to align annual performance data to the federal reporting requirements. Other data (such as surveys and site visits) are collected in the late spring, but still do not capture all activities occurring in the remainder of the school year or summer 2017.

⁵ While forming ideas about the program, readers should keep in mind when data were collected because this report does not capture the entire school year of activities.

Key Findings: Implementation

The federal GEAR UP program encourages grantees to engage in a wide range of implementation practices to support project objectives. In Year 6, implementation practices included activities that have been included in prior years to promote college awareness and readiness (e.g., student support services, college visits, summer programs, workshops, SAT/ACT/TSIA participation), but also new practices to support students and parents regarding applications for college and financial aid.

Implementation shifted to focus on tasks for planning for and enrolling in college. The evaluation team observed a notable shift in implementation from providing opportunities to build awareness and readiness for college to working with students and parents to take concrete steps to apply for and enroll in college. During site visits, College Preparation Advisors reported that their primary advising concentrations were tasks related to planning for students' postsecondary education, such as FAFSA and application completion, enrollment decisions, and financial aid package reviews. Many of these advising activities were conducted in a one-on-one setting so that College Preparation Advisors could tailor conversations and information to meet students' specific needs.

Participation in advising increased in Year 6 while awareness and readiness activities decreased. As a result of the shift in programming to focus on planning for and enrolling in college, participation in many college awareness and readiness activities that were popular in previous years tended to decrease while participation in activities to support college and financial aid applications and decisions tended to increase. Specifically, participation in the following awareness and readiness activities decreased from Year 5 to Year 6: mentoring, educational field trips, college visits, job site visits, summer programs, and workshops. Additionally, the percentage of students who participated in at least four Texas GEAR UP SG activities decreased from nearly half in Year 4 and Year 5 to under one-third in Year 6. However, participation increased between Year 5 and Year 6 for counseling/advising and financial aid and support services—for both participation rates and average number of hours spent. Participation also increased for tutoring in Year 6.

Table ES.3 provides a high-level overview of the range of implementation strategies engaged in, to any extent, by the six high schools in Year 6. While most schools implemented a majority of the strategies, only School M implemented all seventeen strategies.

Table ES.3. Overview of Texas GEAR UP SG Implementation Strategies by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
Implementation Strategies						
Student Support Services: Tutoring	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Support Services: Mentoring	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Support Services: Counseling/Advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Financial Aid Counseling	X	X	X	X	X	X
Educational Field Trips						X
College Visits		X	X	X		X
Job Site Visits/Job Shadowing	X	X	X	X	X	X
Summer Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Workshops/Events	X	X	X	X	X	X
Parent Events		X	X	X		X
Parent Counseling/Advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teacher Professional Development	X	X	X	X		X
College Credit Completion	X	X	X	X	X	X
SAT/ACT Participation	X	X	X	X	X	X
TSIA Participation	X	X	X	X	X	X
College Application Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
FAFSA Completion Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Number of Strategies Implemented (Out of 17)						
	14	16	16	16	13	17

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018; fall 2017 and spring 2018 site visit data.

Note: An "X" indicates that a school reported implementing the strategy, although it does not capture the level or quality of implementation (such as the number of students served) for each strategy.

As a result of this focus on Year 6-specific services provided to students, as of spring 2018, over two-thirds (68%) of student survey respondents reported having submitted their FAFSA—approximately twenty-four percentage points higher than the Texas state average of 44% (Helhoski, 2018). In addition, many (89%) of the student survey respondents reported having applied to college, and of those, almost three-quarters (70%) reported having already been accepted to college. Overall, over one-third (39%) of all student survey respondents had already made the decision on where to enroll in postsecondary education in fall 2018 as of the spring 2018 survey administration. Despite positive rates of college acceptance reported in the student survey, in terms of the cohort's academic preparation for college, the cohort fell below academic targets.

Table ES.4 includes indicators regarding whether each school has met or is on track to meet relevant project objectives in Year 6. Specifically, only High School L had more than 70% of students meet the criteria for having knowledge and academic preparedness for college as stipulated by Project Objective 4.4. In addition, no school was on track to meet TEA's criteria for graduating college ready. However, approximately three-quarters (74%) of students had completed Algebra II and were pursuing an endorsement as of February 28, 2018—suggesting that by the end of Year 6 those students will have fulfilled at least one of the requirements for graduating at the distinguished level of achievement.

Table ES.4. School Progress Meeting Project Objectives, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Project Objectives	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
1.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Program plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average. ⁶	X	X	X	X	X	X
2.3: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.						
3.1: All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL.		X		X		X
3.2: Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.						
4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.			X		X	X
4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.	X	X	X		X	X
4.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.					X	
5.1: By the end of the project's fourth year, all cohort students will complete the ACT Aspire or the PSAT. By the end of the project's fifth year, all cohort students will complete the SAT or ACT.						
5.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.3: The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.5: More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.			X			
7.3: Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.						
7.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.						
	Statewide Completion					
9.1: Annually increase the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Texas Gateway and face-to-face trainings.	ND					
9.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD.	X					

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018; fall 2017 and spring 2018 site visits; and Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: An "X" indicates that a school is making progress toward an objective, although it does not capture the completion or attainment of an objective. An "ND" indicates that the evaluation team did not receive data to measure progress toward the objective. AP = advanced placement.

⁶ For additional information on the Foundation High School Program and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see <http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx>.

Overall, by February 28, 2018, Texas GEAR UP SG was not on track to meet most Year 6 objectives; however, it should be noted that most data for the Year 6 objectives were not yet available for the analysis as the objectives fell outside of the Year 6 reporting period for GUIDES. The full report includes additional details about progress—including successes achieved and challenges faced in implementing the grant in the final year of high school. More definitive findings regarding Year 6 objectives will be reported in the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report.

Summary of Implementation: Year 1 through Year 6

In the report, differences in implementation from across timepoints are highlighted. Table ES.5 summarizes some of the key implementation data comparisons across Years 3 (Grade 9), 5 (Grade 11), and 6 (Grade 12) of Texas GEAR UP SG.

Table ES.5. Summary Comparison of Year 3 (Grade 9), Year 5 (Grade 11), and Year 6 (Grade 12) Implementation Data

Implementation Area	Year 3	Year 5	Year 6
Level and Mix of Implementation	District 3 continued to implement a broad range (and have high percentages of student participation) but additional districts also demonstrated successful mix of implementation.	Districts 1, 3, and 4 implemented and engaged students in the broadest range of services, but the overall level and mix of services across districts continued to be successful.	School M implemented and engaged students in the broadest range of services, but the overall level and mix of services across districts continued to be successful at Schools I, J, and K.
Student Participation in Texas GEAR UP SG Student Support Services	81% of students participated.	93% of students participated.	94% of students participated.
Student Participation in Any Texas GEAR UP SG Activities	95% of students participated.	97% of students participated.	96% of students participated
Number of Advanced Courses	24% of students were enrolled in four or more advanced courses.	14% of students were enrolled in four or more advanced courses.	7% of students were enrolled in four or more advanced courses.
Enrollment in an Advanced Mathematics Course	45% of students were enrolled in advanced mathematics, including Pre-AP Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry.	33% of students were enrolled in advanced mathematics, including courses that were taken at the honors, pre-AP or AP level (e.g., pre-AP Algebra II) or courses that were taken ahead of schedule (e.g., Calculus),	32% of students were enrolled in advanced mathematics, including courses that were taken at the honors, pre-AP or AP level (e.g., pre-AP Algebra II) or courses that were taken ahead of schedule (e.g., Calculus),
Enrollment in Other Advanced Courses^a	39% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 38% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 35% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.	38% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 41% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 36% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.	27% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 18% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 23% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.
Student Knowledge of and Academic Preparation for College	85% of surveyed students plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	55% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	47% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.
Endorsement Selection	Most students (82%) selected one endorsement while 8% selected two or more endorsements. 71% of surveyed students understand how their endorsement will help them prepare for college.	96% of student had chosen an endorsement and 62% reported that they are on track to graduate with an endorsement.	93% of student had chosen an endorsement and 64% of students reported that they expected to graduate with an endorsement
Parental Attendance at Three or More Texas GEAR UP SG Events^b	3% of parents attended three or more events; 49% of parents attended at least one event.	17% of parents attended three or more events; 21% of parents attended in one to two events.	13% of parents attended three or more events; 24% of parents attended one to two events.
Teacher Professional Development and Vertical Teaming	Two high schools held five days of vertical teaming events.	One high school held at least five days of vertical teaming events.	No high school held at least five days of vertical teaming.

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018; Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

^a ELA refers to English Language Arts.

^b Parental attendance is defined as any adult household member attending an event associated with the given student.

Potential Promising Practices

Based on an analysis of implementation in Year 6, the evaluation team has identified the following set of potential best practices:

- **Disseminate college information and resources in multiple modes and formats.** One school disseminated college information both online and via print, which students specifically referenced as a helpful practice. Texas GEAR UP SG staff felt that distributing the information in multiple modes contributed to more students accessing and taking advantage of the information.
- **Provide opportunities for students to have one-on-one conversations regarding postsecondary education with staff.** One-on-one conversations on college applications and financial aid forms provided students and families with privacy, confidentiality, and the opportunity to have conversations that were more specific to their needs and questions.
- **Allocate a shared space for postsecondary education information.** Five of the six schools housed their Texas GEAR UP SG staff with other staff from college access programs at the school, which created a central space in the school for information on postsecondary education. This provided easy access to college resources for students and facilitated collaboration across college access staff.
- **Provide opportunities to visit colleges each year for all students.** Opportunities to visit campuses with Texas GEAR UP SG helped students determine schools that were not the right fit for them, which streamlined their college application process and eased their college enrollment decision making.
- **Provide multiple opportunities for students to participate in college entrance examinations.** Multiple opportunities helped students feel comfortable and confident to succeed on college entrance examinations and helped many students increase their scores.

Recommendations

In addition, the evaluation team has identified the following recommendations for grant implementation—both in terms of continued activities to sustain the grant and support the cohort in Year 7 and in terms of how to implement similar programming in contexts outside of the Texas GEAR UP SG:

- **Provide training for all school staff on college entrance requirements and financial aid.** Providing all school staff with training on college entrance requirements and financial aid may increase the awareness of postsecondary education among students and their families, continue to facilitate the college going culture at the school, and sustain the dissemination of college information after the Texas GEAR UP SG—and the grant-funded positions—come to an end.
- **Designate school staff across all grades to take ownership of college advising tasks to increase opportunities for one-on-one conversations.** One-on-one conversations about college admissions or financial aid during Grade 12 have been shown to contribute to postsecondary enrollment (Dunlop Velez, 2016). Because counselors are often overwhelmed with existing workloads, schools may want to consider designating multiple staff as college advisors or mentors.

- **Provide trainings to help teachers incorporate SAT, ACT, and TSIA preparation into coursework.** By integrating test preparation strategies into regular coursework, more students will receive test preparation, which may lead to increased scores for these important college entrance assessments.
- **Encourage all families to submit a FAFSA and to seek financial aid.** School and college access staff should consider encouraging all families and students to seek out financial aid and submit a FAFSA, despite their perceptions of eligibility for financial aid or a student's plans to enroll in a postsecondary institution, so that a lack of financial assistance is not a barrier to college enrollment.
- **Establish regular check-ins among administrators, counselors, and staff leading postsecondary education awareness initiatives.** To facilitate engagement and buy-in for college access among school leadership, schools may want to consider establishing regular check-ins among principals, counselors, and any other school or district staff that lead, oversee, or track college and career readiness initiatives. Such check-ins may provide the principal and other administrators with information about how to promote college and career readiness among the rest of the school staff, students, families, and community partners.

1. Introduction

In April 2012, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) was awarded a federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The broad purpose of the federal GEAR UP program is to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Through the Texas GEAR UP State Grant (SG), participating schools provide services to a primary cohort of students from Grade 7 (the 2012–13 school year) through their first year of postsecondary education (the 2018–19 school year). Texas GEAR UP SG services are intended to serve individual students and their parents, as well as to support teachers through the provision of professional development (PD) and schools/districts through changes in academic rigor. In addition, the Texas GEAR UP SG is intended to make a statewide impact through the widespread provision of coordinated information and resources for students and their parents regarding postsecondary opportunities. TEA contracted with ICF to provide an external, third-party evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP SG, including the annual implementation reports.

Previous annual implementation reports described implementation during each year of the grant (Spinney et al., 2018a; Spinney et al., 2018b; Briggs et al., 2016; Briggs et al., 2015; O'Donnel et al., 2013; herein referred to collectively as “previous implementation reports”). This sixth annual implementation report focuses on implementation events that occurred in summer 2017 and during the 2017–18 school year. These annual reports provide a snapshot of how the six Texas GEAR UP SG participating high schools located in four districts, TEA, and TEA’s Texas GEAR UP SG collaborators are implementing the program. In order to maintain confidentiality, as in prior implementation reports, the report references districts by number (District 1 through District 4), and high schools by letter (High Schools H through M). In the first two implementation reports, middle schools were also referenced by letter designations (Schools A through G). Separate comprehensive reports examine outcomes and the relationship between implementation and outcomes.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the relevant research literature on student success and college readiness, along with an understanding of these issues in the context of the state of Texas. The GEAR UP program, in general, and the Texas GEAR UP SG are also described. Finally, this chapter provides an overview of the Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation. Appendix B provides more detailed information regarding the evaluation methodology.

1.1. College Readiness Challenge

1.1.1. The National and Texas College Readiness Challenge

The federal GEAR UP program is focused on supporting college readiness for low income students and students who may not otherwise pursue postsecondary educational opportunities. While it is estimated that by 2020, 62% of Texas jobs will require postsecondary education (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2014), only 31% of Texans between ages 25 and 34 had a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2017 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). In addition, college

completion rates in Texas continue to reflect wide gaps based on students' family income. In 2017, the estimated educational attainment rate for a bachelor's degree or higher for individuals 25 years or older living above the poverty level in Texas was 29.6%, which was more than seven times higher than the 4.1% of individuals the same age living below the poverty level who attained a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). This trend aligns with college enrollment and completion trends found at the national level, as well. Specifically, in 2017, the estimated educational attainment rate for a bachelor's degree or higher for individuals 25 years or older living above the poverty level in the U.S. was 32%, which was also more than seven times higher than the 4.3% of individuals the same age living below the poverty level who attained a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018).

College enrollment and completion rates in Texas also reflect gaps according to race and ethnicity. In Texas, 35.5% of Whites, 36.8% of Hispanics, and 13.4% of African-Americans were enrolled in higher education in 2017 (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [THECB], 2018). Additionally, in Texas, of the total Hispanic population in 2017, 14.5% earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24.2% of African-American and 38.6% of White, non-Hispanic populations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). College enrollment gaps according to race and ethnicity at the national level differ from Texas. Specifically, the immediate college enrollment rate for White and Hispanic high school graduates throughout the U.S. was 71% in 2016, higher than the rate for African-American (56%) high school completers (McFarland et al., 2018). According to Krogstad (2016), 35% of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in a two- or four-year college.

While 54% of Texas eighth graders in 2006 had enrolled in a postsecondary institution following their high school graduation, only 22% of the same group earned a postsecondary credential (THECB, 2018). These data suggest that many of those students did not enter college-ready, decreasing the likelihood that they earned a credential. Although improving enrollment is a critical first step in increasing college attainment, students must also be prepared at a level that will move them from enrollment to graduation. Despite the improvements made in recent years regarding college and career readiness in Texas high schools, a large portion of students continue to enter postsecondary education without meeting the state's college readiness standards and must rely on developmental education to prepare them for college-level material. In 2017, 42.6% of first-time students entering higher education were not considered college ready by the state (THECB, 2018). Two-year colleges are particularly likely to encounter students that are not college ready, with 61.0% of first-time students entering without having met college readiness standards compared to 17.7% of first-time students entering Texas universities (THECB, 2018). The impact on students in terms of time, money, and outcomes is significant when students have not achieved college readiness standards and require developmental education. Specifically, only 20.0% of two-year college students who are below the state readiness standard when they enter college complete college within six years of college entry, compared to 41.0% of students who enter college ready (THECB, 2018).

The Texas GEAR UP SG provides an opportunity to support schools serving high percentages of low-income students in new approaches to college readiness—including increasing students' motivation to pursue college. According to a study based on students' motivation to attend postsecondary education, the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the form of

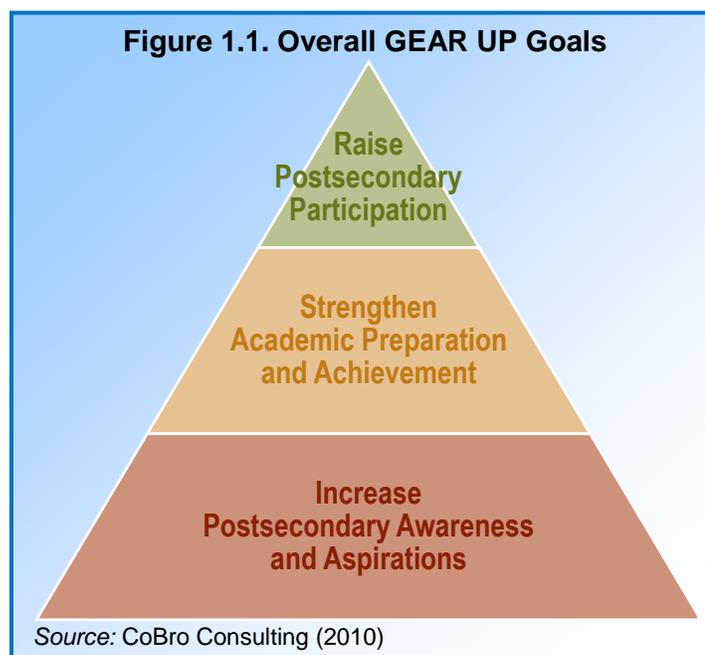
interacting with others, once achieved, nurture motivation for an individual (Abel, Guiffrida, Lynch, & Wall, 2013). GEAR UP programs, including the Texas GEAR UP SG, typically engage in a range of implementation activities that encourage and build on students' motivations to set postsecondary education as a goal, provide academic and social support to students, educate students about postsecondary enrollment, and prepare them for the financial costs associated with postsecondary attendance.

Understanding high school graduation in Texas is important because it is a necessary milestone toward college enrollment. The Texas high school Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate slightly increased from 89.1% for the Class of 2016 to 89.7% for the Class of 2017 (TEA, 2018a). The graduation rate for students in the Class of 2017 identified as being economically disadvantaged (86.9%), however, was almost three percentage points lower than the state average (TEA, 2018a). These trends reinforce the need for Texas GEAR UP SG to support schools with high percentages of students identified as being economically disadvantaged. English language learners (ELL), Hispanic, and African-American youth are also targeted by the Texas GEAR UP SG. TEA data show the graduation rates for these student populations are improving but are still below the overall state rate. For example, students identified as ELL at any point between Grades 9 and 12 in the Class of 2017 had a much lower high school graduation rate (75.5%) than the state (89.7%) for the Class of 2017. Both Hispanic and African-American groups continued to lag behind White, non-Hispanic youth in the state as well, with a Class of 2017 graduation rate of 87.7% and 86.1%, respectively (compared to 93.6% for White, non-Hispanic).

In addition to high school graduation, another way for students to prepare for enrollment in higher education is to earn college credit while in high school through dual credit (college and high school) courses and gain exposure to the rigorous content in advanced placement (AP) classes. Ideally, academic rigor in AP courses exposes students to the typical demands of a college course. Participation in AP courses is another area where various student groups continue to lag in Texas, although progress has also been made (TEA, 2017; TEA, 2018b). Specifically, 28.9% of Texas public and nonpublic students in Grades 11 and 12 took at least one AP exam in the 2016–17 school year, a 7.3 percentage point increase from the previous school year; this is 9.3 percentage points lower than the national average (38.2%; TEA, 2018b). Although participation is equitable, performance for some student groups is low. According to a 2017 College Board data release, the student groups with the lowest mean AP scores in Texas were African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans, with the average scores on a five-point scale at 1.90, 2.10, and 2.41, respectively; this is compared to 2.87 for White students and 2.51 overall in Texas (College Board, 2018). Texas GEAR UP SG, which stresses academic rigor and student engagement in AP courses, has the potential to be part of the effort to help reduce achievement gaps between student groups on AP exams.

1.1.2. About the Federal GEAR UP Program

In response to the national college readiness challenge, the federal GEAR UP program seeks to improve postsecondary enrollment and completion for low-income students. The GEAR UP program addresses the challenges faced by low-income students in attaining postsecondary success in an early and ongoing manner, providing services, activities, and resources to students from Grade 7 through the first year of college. The goals of the program include: (1) increasing postsecondary awareness and aspirations, (2) strengthening academic preparation and achievement, and (3) raising postsecondary participation. Figure 1.1 presents these goals as a pyramid, with each goal building on previously attained goals (CoBro Consulting, 2010).



1.2. Overview of Texas GEAR UP State Grant

Texas GEAR UP SG began serving students in July 2012 through two primary strategies: (1) a district intervention package, which supports the targeted districts' college readiness and success initiatives; and (2) statewide initiatives, which provide guidance, information, and resources related to college access, readiness, and success for all Texas districts and communities. The Texas GEAR UP SG district intervention supports schools in four districts (six high schools) and provides GEAR UP-specific statewide supports through existing and newly developed TEA college and career information resources, which provide a rich array of information and tools for educators, students and their parents to provide guidance regarding postsecondary education.

TEA selected districts to participate in the Texas GEAR UP SG grant based on data from the 2009–10 school year related to poverty and the risk of dropping out of school. At that time, all seven Texas GEAR UP SG middle schools in the four selected districts had greater percentages of students identified as being economically disadvantaged and at risk (i.e., those students identified as being at risk for dropping out of school based on having one or more of 13 factors), compared to the state. The seven middle schools also had higher-than-state-average enrollments of Hispanic/Latino students and three of the schools also had large African-American student populations. Both Hispanic/Latino and African-American students are historically underrepresented in higher education (Editorial Projects in Education, 2013; Krogstad, 2016). Table 1.1 shows a list of the schools who participated in the Texas GEAR UP SG in each school year. Table E.1 in Appendix E presents demographic data for students in

Year 6. As previously stated, schools are identified by a letter and districts by a number throughout this report in order to mask the school and maintain the confidentiality that was promised for the site visits.

Table 1.1. Texas GEAR UP SG Schools

District	Middle Schools (2012–13; 2013–14)	High Schools (2014–15; 2015–16; 2016–17; 2017–18)
Edgewood Independent School District (Bexar County)	Brentwood, Garcia, Wrenn	Memorial, Kennedy
Lubbock Independent School District	Dunbar	Estacado
Manor Independent School District	Decker, Manor	Manor, Manor New Tech
Somerset Independent School District	Somerset	Somerset

Please refer to previous implementation reports for information regarding the transition from middle school to high school as well as the various high school options available for Texas GEAR UP SG students.⁷

1.2.1. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Management and Collaboration

TEA, the grant recipient and fiscal agent, provides oversight and management of the Texas GEAR UP SG. Specifically, TEA provides grants to participating districts, conducts oversight of funds, and provides management and oversight of contracts. Additionally, TEA ensures that the Annual Performance Report (APR) is submitted to ED in a timely manner to meet federal reporting requirements. In Year 6, there was turnover at TEA regarding management of the Texas GEAR UP SG; a new director was brought on after the previous director resigned.

In Year 6, TEA collaborated with the following five organizations on grant implementation: the Texas GEAR UP SG Support Center (a technical assistance provider, herein referred to as the Support Center); AMS Pictures; Signal Vine; GeoFORCE; and Focus Training.

SUPPORT CENTER

The University of Texas at Austin's Institute for Public School Initiatives (UT-IPSI) Office for College Access manages and staffs the Support Center. The Support Center includes full-time staff who focus on the grant including seven College Preparation Advisors who provide advising and support to students on financial aid, college entrance exam participation, and overall college readiness while serving in schools. The approach to how College Preparation Advisors address individual student needs in Year 6 changed from prior years, reflecting a more tailored approach to advising. Unlike previous years in which monthly reports were generated reflecting only percentages and progress in reaching goals, in Year 6, the Support Center provided weekly lists to each school that identified each student's status in completing different financial aid steps. To further support the skills of Texas GEAR UP SG staff, the Support Center provided

⁷ Previous implementation reports can be found here: https://tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/Program_Evaluations/Middle_School,_High_School,_and_College_Preparation/Program_Evaluation_Middle_School,_High_School,_and_College_Preparation_Initiatives/

various PD opportunities to their staff, including the Texas Association of College Admissions Counselor summer training program, the Counselor Institute at the Texas GEAR UP SG State Conference in November 2017, and quarterly college admissions and financial aid trainings. Overall, the Support Center noted that the biggest implementation challenge in Year 6 related to staff turnover at participating schools and districts.

AMS PICTURES

In Year 6, AMS Pictures continued to deliver postsecondary preparation resources and tools for the Texas GEAR UP SG students, parents, school educators, and district administrators. AMS Pictures' goal in Year 6 was to enhance some of the resources already created, such as the "Accepted" online guide aimed at helping high school seniors transition to their freshman year of college. This resource was modified to include more lesson plans, in-depth activities for students, and a version aimed specifically at parents. In addition to these enhancements, AMS Pictures also focused on marketing and expanding the use of their tools to meet the goal of having at least 40% of all Texas public school districts access the resources by the end of Year 6.

FOCUS TRAINING

In Year 6, Focus Training continued to provide college readiness support to students, including summer programming. In summer 2017, Focus Training hosted a five-day summer camp for 130 students, conducted a half-day training for Coordinators, and hosted an overnight retreat for over 50 students in November. It was noted that the planning and program implementation for these summer activities ran more smoothly than they had in previous years and that the interaction between the Texas GEAR UP SG team and FOCUS Training staff included more insight and direction on what was needed to make the programs successful.

GEOFORCE

In Year 6, GeoFORCE continued offering a summer residential geosciences program for 40 students who previously participated in the program from the Texas GEAR UP SG high schools.

SIGNAL VINE

Signal Vine is a company that provides mass texting services to colleges, non-profits, state education agencies, and various GEAR UP grants—including the Texas GEAR UP SG. Although the Support Center had previously been using Signal Vine to send out texts to students regarding Texas GEAR UP SG topics, in Year 6, the Support Center began using the service to message parents and provide outreach regarding summer camps and the GEAR UP conference. In January 2018, a new version of the Signal Vine technology was released, which allowed users to send longer messages to more people in one session and provided more self-service features to customize messages. The Support Center used this technology to send targeted messages to specific groups (e.g., messages to students with a certain grade point average, messages to students at various stages of completing their college applications or their Free Application for Federal Student Aid [FAFSA]).

1.2.2. Statewide Services

TEA works with various Texas GEAR UP SG collaborators to provide statewide services for the grant. Under TEA's direction, these organizations (the Support Center and AMS Pictures, in particular) develop and disseminate supplemental statewide materials, support the statewide coalition of GEAR UP grantees, and plan and implement an annual Texas statewide GEAR UP conference.

One important venue for disseminating resources is through the Texas GEAR UP SG website (<http://texasgearup.com>), operated by AMS Pictures. As in prior years, in Year 6, the website includes resources such as interactive lessons, guides, and college planning toolkits (organized by grade-level). AMS Pictures reported that efforts were focused on expanding existing resources in Year 6 to make them more relevant to the needs of the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort. Additionally, according to AMS Pictures, the percentage of Texas school districts that accessed, engaged, or interacted with resources on the Texas GEAR UP SG website increased from 31% in Year 5 to 56% in Year 6, surpassing the goal of 40% (Project Objective 9.2 states that by the end of the sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD). AMS attributed the twenty-five percentage point increase in website usage to outreach through webinars, trainings, mailers, and social media campaigns.

To provide statewide teacher PD, TEA provided resources through an online communication and teaching platform available to teachers statewide—Texas Gateway (formerly Project Share).⁸ Usage data on Texas Gateway were not available in Year 6. Accordingly, the evaluation team was not able to track whether or not the cohort was on track to meet Project Objective 9.1 (requires an annual increase in the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Project Share and face-to-face trainings).

1.2.3. Program Leadership at Schools and Districts

Within each district, the implementation of the Texas GEAR UP SG was overseen by a Coordinator, a district employee. At least one College Preparation Advisor, employed by the Support Center, worked in each school to provide college readiness advising and support. Schools and districts also used grant funding to hire additional GEAR UP staff, such as parent liaisons, data clerks, and tutors. Other school personnel, such as district administrators, school parent engagement staff, and bookkeepers were also described as important members of the Texas GEAR UP SG staff. In Year 6, the primary responsibilities of grant-funded positions within the participating schools and districts remained consistent with prior years, although there were some changes in program leadership. Texas GEAR UP SG District Coordinators continued efforts in building and maintaining relationships with community alliances, facilitating communication between the Texas GEAR UP SG team and school administrators and staff, and overseeing the implementation of grant-funded activities.

⁸ Project Share—now Texas Gateway—is an online communication and teaching platform that is available to teachers statewide. For more information, please visit <https://www.texasgateway.org/>

College Preparation Advisors also continued to offer services to students in group and one-on-one settings while serving in schools; in Year 6, the focus of these services included financial aid, college applications, and the scheduling of postsecondary entrance exams.

As for the individuals leading Texas GEAR UP SG in the participating districts and schools, there was some turnover in Year 6 in Districts 1, 2, and 4. Of the two College Preparation Advisors that left, one was replaced. In District 4, a new District Coordinator was hired for Year 6 and brought on in mid-October following the resignation of the previous District Coordinator. Two new College Preparation Advisors were also hired for Year 6 to replace a previous College Preparation Advisor, with one serving one school and the other serving both schools. In District 4, weekly leadership meetings were initiated by school administrators to take place every Friday to better assist Texas GEAR UP SG team members, school staff, and others to learn new strategies in working together collaboratively across groups. These meetings were not focused solely on Texas GEAR UP SG implementation, but as a larger effort to change school culture around activity planning, collaboration, and implementation.

1.3. Evaluation Objectives, Research Questions, and Project Objectives

1.3.1. Year 6 Evaluation Objectives and Research Questions

The evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP SG program over the seven-year grant period focuses on providing formative feedback on grant implementation and summative feedback on grant outcomes. Evaluation activities related to grant implementation are focused on identifying promising practices and recommendations for future implementation. A full list of evaluation objectives and research questions is provided in Appendix A.

1.3.2. Year 6 Project Objectives

This report includes findings aligned to the project goals and objectives set by TEA. Table 1.2 provides a status of each project objective in Year 6 and notes whether the objective was previously addressed, is addressed in this report, or will be addressed in the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report. All the objectives addressed in this report are shaded in light blue and include the location where relevant findings are addressed.

Table 1.2. Texas GEAR UP SG Project Objectives

Project Goal 1: Improve instruction and expand academic opportunities in mathematics and science.		
Project Objective 1.1	By the end of the project's second year, 30% of cohort students will have completed Algebra I in the 8th grade. By the end of the project's third year, 85% of students will have completed Algebra I.	Determined to have been met in AIR 3
Project Objective 1.2	By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Program plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 6, Chapter 4
Project Goal 2: Increase access to and success in quality advanced academic programs.		
Project Objective 2.1	By the end of the project's fourth year, all participating high schools will make opportunities available for each student to complete 18 hours of college credit (through AP, dual credit, or concurrent enrollment) by the time he or she graduates from high school.	Determined to have been met in AIR 4
Project Objective 2.2	By the end of the project's fifth year, 60% of the cohort, including limited English proficient (LEP) students, will complete a pre-Advanced Placement (AP) or AP course.	Determined to have been met in AIR 5
Project Objective 2.3	By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.	See AIR 6, Chapter 4
Project Goal 3: Provide PD for strong data-driven instruction		
Project Objective 3.1	All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL.	See AIR 6, Chapter 2
Project Objective 3.2	Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.	See AIR 6, Chapter 2
Project Goal 4: Provide a network of strong student support services to promote on-time promotion and academic preparation for college.		
Project Objective 4.1	By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.*	See AIR 6, Chapter 2
Project Objective 4.2	Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.	See AIR 6, Chapter 2
Project Objective 4.3	By the end of the project's third year, the on-time promotion rate of cohort students will exceed the state average.	Determined to have been not met in AIR 4
Project Objective 4.4	By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.*	See AIR 6, Chapter 3
Project Goal 5: Promote high school completion and college attendance		
Project Objective 5.1	By the end of the project's fourth year, all cohort students will complete the ACT Aspire or the PSAT. By the end of the project's fifth year, all cohort students will complete the SAT or ACT.*	See AIR 6, Chapter 3
Project Objective 5.2	By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 6, Chapter 3
Project Objective 5.3	The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 6, Chapter 3
Project Objective 5.4	The cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average.	Will report on in AIR 7

Table 1.2. Texas GEAR UP SG Project Objectives (Continued)

Project Objective 5.5	More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.	See AIR 6, Chapter 4
Project Goal 6: Support first-year college retention.		
Project Objective 6.1	The student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average.	Will report on in AIR 7
Project Objective 6.2	At the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.	Will report on in AIR 7
Project Goal 7: Provide postsecondary information and opportunities		
Project Objective 7.1	By the end of the first year, the state office will make information regarding college options, preparation, and financing will be made available to students, parents, and educators throughout the state.	Determined to have been met in AIR 2
Project Objective 7.2	By the end of the first year, information and workshops aimed at linking college attendance to career success will be available to 100% of cohort students and their parents.	Determined to have been met in AIR 2
Project Objective 7.3	Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.	See AIR 6, Chapter 2
Project Objective 7.4	By the end of the project's fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.*	See AIR 6, Chapter 2
Project Goal 8: Build and expand community partnerships		
Project Objective 8.1	All participating districts will form business alliances that support higher student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.	Determined to have been met in AIR 5
Project Objective 8.2	Participating campuses will form alliances with governmental entities and community groups to enhance the information available to students regarding scholarships, financial aid, and college awareness.	Determined to have been met in AIR 5
Project Goal 9: Promote college readiness statewide		
Project Objective 9.1	Annually increase the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Texas Gateway and face-to-face trainings.	See AIR 6, Chapter 1 (Section 1.2.3)
Project Objective 9.2	By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD.	See AIR 6, Chapter 1 (Section 1.2.3)

*Some Project Objectives from previous years continued to be addressed in the Year 6 Annual Implementation Report. Project Objective 4.1, regarding comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring in Year 2, was able to continue to be measured in subsequent years and was a topic of interest to program staff; as such, the evaluation team has continued to report on this objective in each year following Year 2. Project Objectives 4.4, 5.1, and 7.4 were for Year 5; however since data reported in GUIDES only went through February 28, 2017, the evaluation team was not able to make a definitive assessment on these objectives in the Year 5 Annual Implementation Report.

1.4. Evaluation Design and Methods

The Texas GEAR UP SG implementation evaluation uses a mixed-methods longitudinal design to evaluate the Texas GEAR UP SG over the seven years of the program. Data collected by TEA are used when possible (e.g., State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness [STAAR] results). GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System (GUIDES) data submitted by the schools regarding Texas GEAR UP SG activities and services are a primary source of implementation data, supplemented by site visits, and student and parent surveys.

The appendices of this report provide additional details regarding evaluation methodology and results:

- Appendix B provides additional information regarding the evaluation design, methods, data sources, and analyses.
- Appendix C provides an overview of the data submitted to GUIDES.
- Appendix D contains copies of all surveys and site visit protocols.
- Appendix E includes all results from the GUIDES analysis.
- Appendix F includes all results from the survey analysis; in particular, Tables F.1–F.5 describe the survey administration and respondents; the remaining tables describe findings.

Data Sources included in the Year 6 Analysis of Annual Implementation

- GUIDES data (March 1, 2017– February 28, 2018)
- Student surveys in fall 2017 and spring 2018
- Parent survey in spring 2018
- Site visits to all six schools in fall 2017 and spring 2018 which included interviews and focus groups with key grant implementers and stakeholders
- Telephone interviews with program staff at TEA, the Support Center, and TEA collaborators
- Extant data (e.g., Texas Academic Performance Reports [TAPR], College Board score reports, online resource usage data from the Texas GEAR UP website)

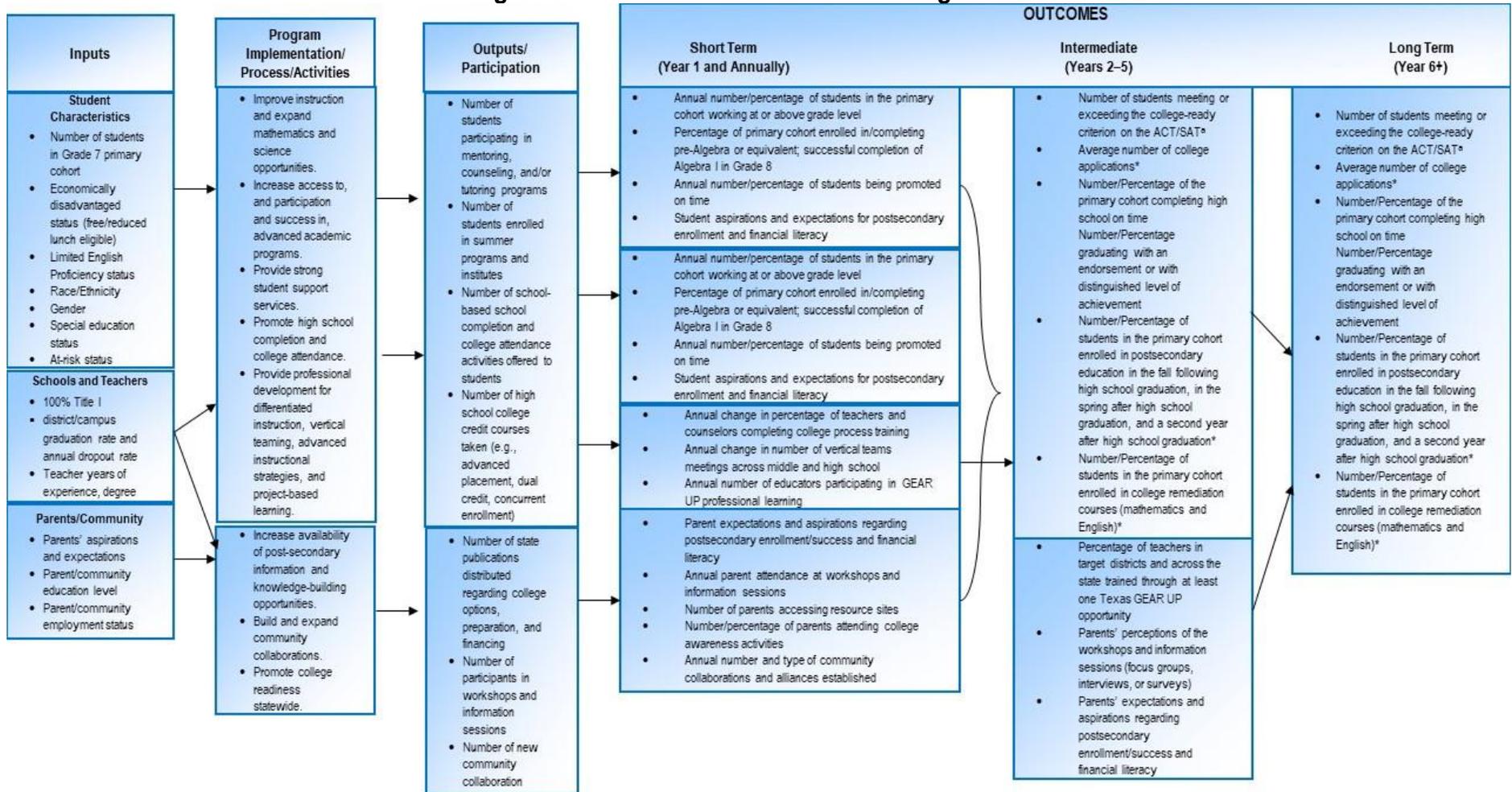
1.4.1. Logic Model

The evaluation design depicts how change is conceptualized to occur via the Texas GEAR UP SG (Figure 1.2). The logic model maps the inputs, program implementation activities, and intended outcomes of the program.

The first column on the left identifies important inputs for the program. These inputs are the existing conditions that the students, parents, and schools bring with them as they begin participation in the Texas GEAR UP SG. Many of these inputs are not subject to change by the program (e.g., economic status, education level). The next column shows the school-based activities provided to students, teachers, and parents; also included is the development of materials for statewide distribution. Outputs related to levels of participation are the extent to which individual students, parents, and teachers participate in such activities and the patterns of participation. Understanding what activities are implemented and the trends in participation are critical to understanding the potential effect of participation on outcomes.

Several outcomes of the project are measured annually to establish changes in trends related to Texas GEAR UP SG activities. For example, students' educational aspirations and expectations are measured each year to understand changes over the course of the grant period. These and other annual measures inform the evaluation's longitudinal analyses.

Figure 1.2. Texas GEAR UP Evaluation Logic Model



Assumptions

Program Implementation/Process/Activities: The evaluation team assumes that processes and activities will change, will be ongoing, and will have varied effects on project outputs and outcomes. As program elements and activities are implemented, evaluators will identify specific expected outputs and short- and long-term outcomes. This process will continue during each stage of the project.

Outputs/Participation: Evaluators will monitor changes in outputs as a result of project processes and activities. We will also assess, to the extent possible, the relationship between changes in outputs and short- and long-term outcomes.

Short-Term and Long-Term Outcomes: Several outcomes will serve as annual measures of program success, including, for example, STAAR results, grade-level performance, and so forth. Items marked with an asterisk (*) will be compared to project goals, historical performance, matched comparison groups from like students and schools, or the state average performance on these measures. Successful attainment of short-term outcomes will also be considered in understanding successful completion of long-term outcomes.

^a PSAT is the Preliminary SAT. ACT Aspire is the pre-ACT test. SAT and ACT are tests used for college admission.

1.5. Overview of the Report

This annual implementation report addresses the evaluation objectives with respect to Year 6 implementation activities. Information regarding Year 6 implementation of the Texas GEAR UP SG, including summer 2017 and the 2017–18 school year, is found in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 presents intermediate student academic outcomes. Chapter 4 includes findings related to students' postsecondary planning. A summary of findings, along with actionable recommendations, including potential promising practices are provided in Chapter 5. In reporting findings, school and district names have been masked using letters and numbers, respectively.

1.5.1. Limitations and Next Steps

A key limitation of the annual implementation reports is that they are based on incomplete data for the year—data reported through March 31 (in Years 1–4) or February 28 (Years 5–6) instead of through the end of the school year.⁹ The evaluation team made the decision to report on data from this time period in order to align the findings from the implementation reports to the APR that is required to be delivered to ED as part of the GEAR UP grant. Given this limitation, caution is urged in interpreting the findings. Additional information related to implementation and outcomes will be included in the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report, following the receipt and analysis of additional data.

1.5.2. Forthcoming Reports

TEA will publish the final annual implementation report for Year 7 in 2019. In addition, ICF will also publish in 2019 a final comprehensive evaluation report that includes an examination of all activities conducted to date, key impact findings to date, and interpretations of these findings. The forthcoming final comprehensive evaluation report will include high school outcomes and an examination of the relationships among implementation and outcomes through the 2018–19 school year.

⁹ Annual Performance Report (APR) data used in the Year 6 report are from summer 2017 and the 2017–18 school year, but only through February 28, 2018. Other data (such as surveys and site visits) are collected in the late spring, but still do not capture all activities occurring in the remainder of the school year or summer 2017.

2. Participation in and Perceptions of Texas GEAR UP State Grant Activities for Students

This chapter focuses on the implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG activities—for students, parents/families, teachers, and community stakeholders—across the six participating high schools in four districts. The chapter addresses what activities were implemented, rates of participation, how the activities were implemented, and perceptions of the activities based on an analysis of data available through GUIDES, site visits, the student and parent surveys, and telephone interviews. Findings are presented in the context of relevant project objectives, as applicable.

2.1. Participation in and Perceptions of Texas GEAR UP State Grant Activities for Students

As part of the Texas GEAR UP SG, various activities were offered to the 1,490 students across six participating high schools (see Table E.1, Appendix E for characteristics of the cohort). Activities included student support services, college visits, job site visits/job shadowing, summer programs, and workshops/events, among others. The sections that follow summarize the implementation of those activities for students as well as students' and parents' perceptions of those activities in Year 6.

2.1.1. Student Support Services: Academic Tutoring, Mentoring, and Counseling/Advising

Student support services include academic tutoring, mentoring, and counseling/advising. In reporting implementation of student support services, the following project objective is relevant:

- Project Objective 4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.

While objective 4.1 specifies a Year 2 outcome, it has been interpreted to mean beginning in Year 2 and then continuing in each year thereafter. This section includes findings about students' participation in each type of student support service in Year 6.¹⁰

STUDENT ACADEMIC TUTORING

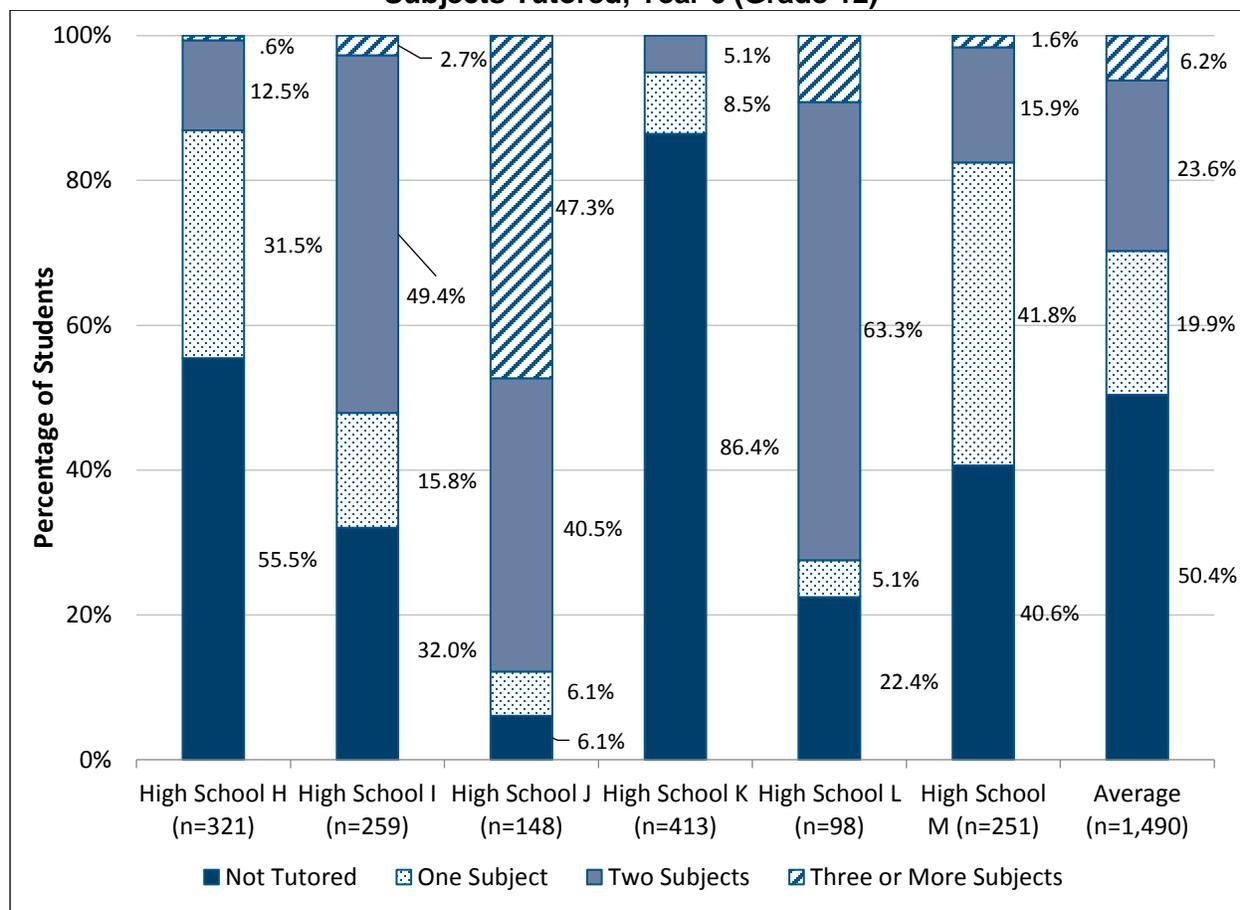
As required by their grants, all schools offered academic tutoring to students.¹¹ The College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC) and the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) (2013) defined GEAR UP tutoring/homework assistance

¹⁰ Schools were provided with standard definitions of all terms, including tutoring, mentoring, and counseling, in order to submit GUIDES data. These definitions can be found in Appendix C and were developed by the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium and the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (2013).

¹¹ The term *tutoring* is used in this section, although in the definition it is referred to as tutoring or homework help.

as “additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students.” According to data reported in GUIDES, on average, half (50%) of Texas GEAR UP SG students received tutoring in at least one subject in Year 6, which is an increase of six percentage points from Year 5 (Figure 2.1). However, there were large differences among the schools; High School K tutored some (14%) of students in at least one subject while High School J tutored most (94%) students in at least one subject. In terms of time, students received on average 6.9 hours of tutoring, the fewest number of hours during the grant (Table E.2, Appendix E). Across schools, the largest percentage of students received tutoring in English Language Arts (ELA) (38%), while the smallest percentage of students received tutoring in science (6%). For more information in tutoring data broken out by subject area, see Appendix E, Tables E.3–E.6.

Figure 2.1. Percentages of Grade 12 Students Participating in Tutoring by the Number of Subjects Tutored, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.
 Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Difference across schools: $\chi^2(15) = 1060.3, p < .001$.

Students, teachers, and Texas GEAR UP SG staff provided insights during site visits about tutoring efforts across the six schools. Schools H, I, J, K, and L relied on teachers to provide tutorial sessions outside of class time. In addition, School J provided tutors from local colleges and universities for in-class and afterschool tutoring. School M relied on a school-based tutor hired as part of the Texas GEAR UP SG team as well as two peer tutors to provide in-class and

afterschool tutoring for students. Additionally, Schools H, I, and K reported that most tutoring was received by students who took initiative to seek help outside of class from teachers. At Schools J and M, school and Texas GEAR UP SG staff identify students in need of support to participate in tutoring.

Texas GEAR UP SG staff across all four districts reported that they struggled to collect accurate tutoring data to be reported in GUIDES. While explaining that tutoring percentages appeared low in GUIDES, they were unsure if the percentages accurately reflected the amount of tutoring that occurred because of the minimal reporting from teachers. Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported that it was difficult to collect timely and complete tutoring logs from teachers. A Texas GEAR UP SG staff member from School J said she found it most effective to visit with teachers face-to-face to collect tutoring logs because it created accountability for teachers to provide the information.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COMPREHENSIVE MENTORING

As required by their grants, all Texas GEAR UP SG schools offered comprehensive mentoring to students in Year 6. CCREC and NCCEP (2013), defined GEAR UP comprehensive mentoring services as those provided to students identified to potentially benefit from an “ongoing supportive relationship with a trained, caring adult or older student and must provide students with financial aid information, encourage students to stay in school, enroll in rigorous and challenging coursework, and apply for postsecondary education.” According to GUIDES data, across Texas GEAR UP SG schools, just over one-quarter of Grade 12 students received comprehensive mentoring in Year 6, which was lower than the past two years (Table E.7, Appendix, E). The average amount of time spent on mentoring was 4 hours (Table E.7, Appendix E).

School J had a much greater percentage of students mentored compared to the other schools; over three-quarters (78%) of students participated in mentoring from School J compared to 18%–25% of students at the other schools (Table E.7, Appendix E).

Site visit participants described that community alliances (e.g., Big Brothers Big Sisters, Communities in Schools [CIS]), local university students, Texas GEAR UP SG staff, and Grade 12 teachers served as mentors to students.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COUNSELING/ADVISING

Counseling/advising is another student support service that all Texas GEAR UP schools offered to students. CCREC and NCCEP (2013), defined GEAR UP counseling and advising as tasks including assistance with and discussions on topics such as personal growth, decision making, problem solving, goal setting, attendance, behavior concerns, family issues, course selection, college and/or career choices, and college and/or career planning. According to data reported in GUIDES, across schools, almost all (94%) students participated in counseling in Year 6, the highest reported percentage during all years of implementation (Table E.8, Appendix E). All high schools had over 90% of students participating in counseling/advising. On average, Grade 12 students who received counseling/advising experienced 4.9 hours of the service in Year 6,

which is also the greatest number of hours reported during all years of implementation (Table E.8, Appendix E).

According to GUIDES data, approximately three-quarters of students met with their College Preparation Advisors in Year 6 (Table E.9, Appendix E). During site visits, College Preparation Advisors reported many one-on-one advising sessions with students focused on the individual needs of students. One College Preparation Advisor reported that many advising sessions were spent on completing tasks, such as contacting college admission offices or reviewing financial aid packages, instead of having conversations about students' future plans like in previous years. Confidentiality requirements also required College Preparation Advisors to work with students on a one-on-one basis when reviewing sensitive financial information. College Preparation Advisors across districts reported that their primary advising concentrations in the fall semester were on FAFSA completion and application submission. Enrollment tasks, such as deciding on institutions to attend, verification questions, and acceptance of financial aid packages, were concentrated on more in the spring semester. It was also reported across all schools that school counselors and staff from other school-based college access programs at the schools (e.g., Advise TX) provided advising and support services to students, similar to those provided by Texas GEAR UP SG.

Approaches to Advising in Year 6

In Districts 3 and 4, College Preparation Advisors reported that they prioritized support for students in the top 25% of the cohort since they were more likely to apply and enroll in colleges with earlier deadlines. Texas GEAR UP SG staff, parents, and an administrator from School M reported that some students below the top 25% felt neglected by this policy and had only minimal access to the College Preparation Advisor; however, students in the focus group reported that some of their peers had negative perceptions of the College Preparation Advisor due to his persistent reminders to complete tasks.

At School L, an administrator reported that the school counselor and a Social Studies teacher began to work together in Year 6 to provide similar advising services to students, in an effort to embed postsecondary education advising into the school culture. The counselor focused on academic and readiness advising while the teacher focused more on discussions of future plans, college applications, and financial aid counseling. This effort was to help sustain advising services and supplement the lack of advising from Texas GEAR UP SG.

FINANCIAL AID SUPPORT SERVICES

A variety of financial aid-specific support services were offered to students in Year 6, including financial aid-related support while participating in counseling/advising, mentoring, and other services. According to data reported in GUIDES, over three-quarters (78%) of students received financial aid counseling and/or mentoring in Year 6, a similar percentage to Year 5 (75%) (Table E.10, Appendix E). Participation in financial aid counseling and/or mentoring ranged from 65–99% by school (Table E.10, Appendix E). Participating students experienced an average of 3.2 hours of financial aid counseling and/or mentoring in Year 6, an increase from Year 5 (1.8 hours). Notably, School J had an average of 8.9 hours of financial aid counseling and/or

mentoring per student and nearly all (99%) of students received the service (Table E.10, Appendix E). Additional estimates regarding the provision of financial aid support services to students were provided by the survey; see Table F.6 and Table F.7 in Appendix F for more information.

In Year 6, site visit participants reported that financial aid was a high priority topic in Texas GEAR UP SG advising and events. Texas GEAR UP SG staff at each school collaborated with other school-based college access staff to provide this support by leading FAFSA drives, hosting in-class workshops, providing information and guidance for the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA), and providing opportunities for one-on-one meetings with students and their parents. College Preparation Advisors and District Coordinators explained that financial aid information was offered to students and their families during workshops (both during and after school), but most often during one-on-one sessions or meetings. Most College Preparation Advisors noted that the one-on-one sessions seemed to be most helpful for students and their parents because the conversations could be tailored to the students' or parents' specific questions and because conversations regarding financial aid often included very personal information. One College Preparation Advisor explained further that students seemed to struggle to apply general financial aid information given in workshops or larger group settings to their own personal situations. The Support Center provided College Preparation Advisors with financial aid training that included information on the verification process. Two College Preparation Advisors commented that the training was too general and only provided guidance for the "perfect scenario" (e.g., no unique questions or paperwork were requested), which was only a rare occurrence. In addition to the College Preparation Advisors, Texas GEAR UP SG staff also provided support for submitting FAFSAs, the verification process, and interpreting financial aid award letters.

Disseminating the Latest Scholarship Information

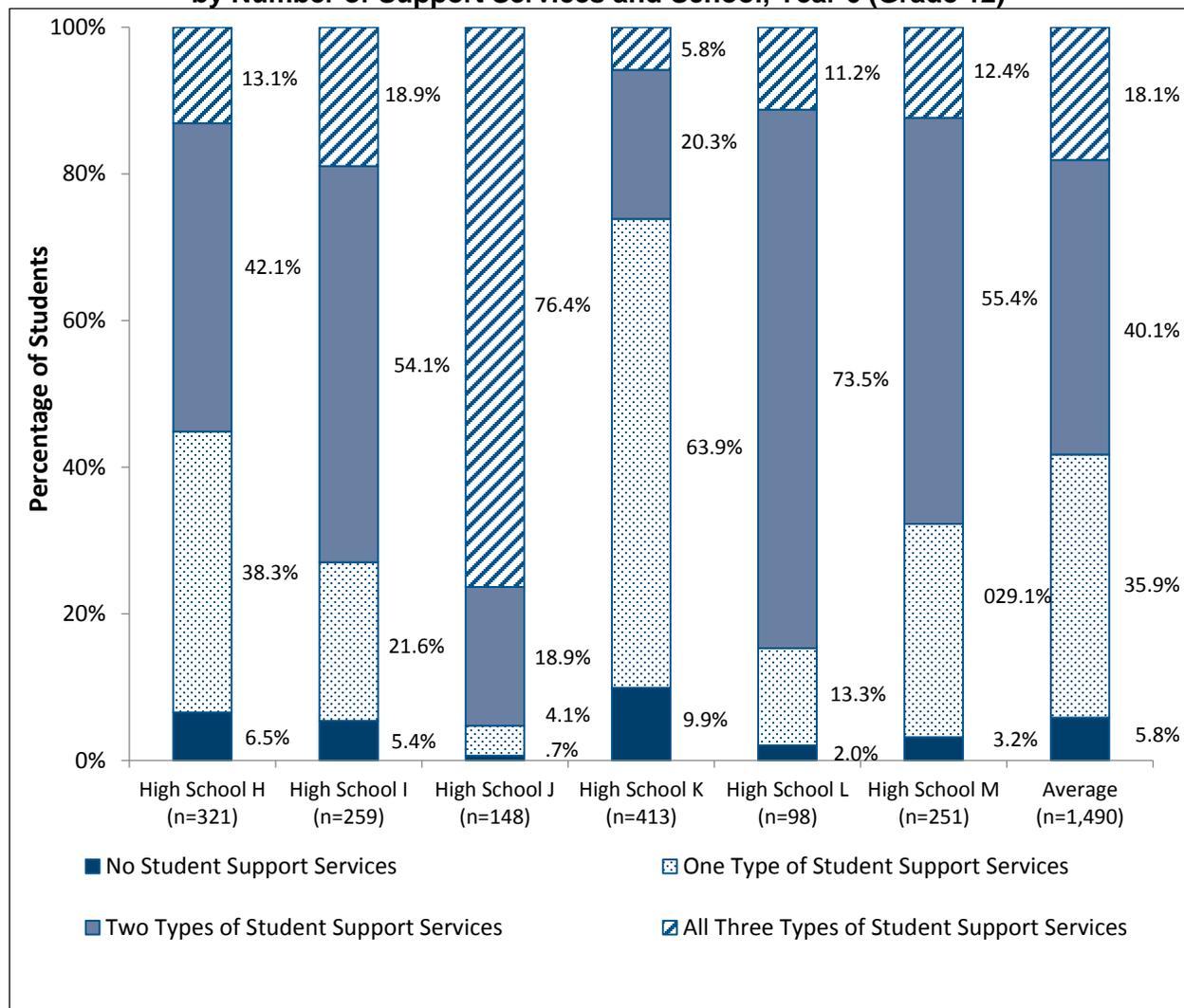
District 2 provided frequently updated scholarship information on the district's website, including links to applications, qualifications, and deadlines. Students commented that access to scholarship information provided in this format, made it very easy to find up-to-date information and submit the application quickly online.

Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported in site visits that the Year 6 fall semester financial aid activities focused primarily on supporting students and their parents in their FAFSA submission and the spring semester was a time to help students find other sources of financial aid to fill in any gaps in their award packages. Scholarship information was made available to students through in-class presentations/workshops, school announcements, applications in GEAR UP offices and counseling offices, Signal Vine and other text messaging, and over social media.

STUDENT IMPLEMENTATION MIX WITHIN STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

According to data reported in GUIDES, most (94%) Grade 12 students participated in at least one of the three types of core student support services (i.e., tutoring, mentoring, counseling; see Figure 2.2), achieving Project Objective 4.1 that 75% of students would receive student support services. Additionally, all high schools each individually met Project Objective 4.1 of at least 75% of students participating in student support services.

Figure 2.2. Percentages of Grade 12 Students Participating in Student Support Services by Number of Support Services and School, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.
 Note: Difference across schools: $\chi^2(15) = 623.6, p < .001$.

Project Objective 4.1 specifies that participation in student support services should be based on the results of teacher/counselor input and/or diagnostic data. The percentage of Grade 12 students who had participated in student support services based on the results of teacher/counselor input and/or diagnostic data was nearly three-quarters (73%), just below the project objective goal of 75% (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Students Receiving Student Support Services from Teacher/Counselor Input, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Teacher/ Counselor Input
High School H	321	68.5%
High School I	259	49.0%
High School J	148	98.0%
High School K	413	69.5%
High School L	98	98.0%
High School M	251	82.5%
Total	1490	72.6%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

2.1.2. Educational Field Trips

Texas GEAR UP SG supported educational field trips for students to promote college readiness. According to data reported through GUIDES, field trips were not offered widely in Year 6—only School M held one or more educational field trips for students and only a small percentage (4%) of the students at School M participated (Table E.11, Appendix E).

2.1.3. College Visits

College visits are one strategy recommended by the federal GEAR UP program to develop postsecondary education awareness and readiness. College visits allow students who visit a

campus to think about how they may (or may not) fit in at a particular college.

Because college visits provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge about college, participation in college visits also serves as one indicator regarding the cohort's progress toward meeting Project Objective 4.4 (By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, the necessary academic preparation for college), as described in more detail in Chapter 3.

Data reported in GUIDES showed that compared to previous years, there were far fewer college visits in Year 6. In Year 5, there was a range of 7–21 college visits across the schools and nearly half (49%) of students participated in one or more visits. In Year 6, there was a range of 0–3 visits across the schools, with only a small percentage (9%) of the

Ivy League College Tour

Texas GEAR UP SG staff in District 4 took their top academic students on a trip in the summer to visit several Ivy League schools in the Northeast. A College Preparation Advisor commented that the tour of schools exposed students to opportunities and postsecondary options they likely would not previously have considered. The college visits included campus tours as well as discussions with students and staff. Among the topics of discussion at most schools was the importance of diversity at each campus and how important it is for them to provide opportunities for and serve students like the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort. The College Preparation Advisor said that students would likely not have been aware of this before visiting these campuses and would likely not have considered these colleges and universities, assuming students with backgrounds similar to theirs do not attend those schools.

cohort participating in one or more visits (Table E.12, Appendix E). This was the lowest recorded percentage during any year of grant implementation.

To explain the decline in college visits, the School H College Preparation Advisor explained that students' time spent with Texas GEAR UP SG staff was of high value in Year 6 and college applications and financial aid were the highest priorities. However, some site visit participants noted that more staff from colleges and universities, mostly admissions staff and recruiters, were visiting with students on the high school campus to provide them with information about their schools, answer student questions, and sometimes even offer "on-the-spot admission."

Most college visits discussed by site visit participants were described as "standard campus tours" and occasionally included visits to classrooms and dorms. Both students and College Preparation Advisors commented that college visits were important sources for decisions regarding college applications and enrollment. Additionally, administrators and College Preparation Advisors explained that the college visits were instrumental in helping students consider schools and programs outside of their local communities. A community alliance member in District 4 who has worked with Grade 12 students for multiple years stated that more students applied and were accepted to non-local colleges due to the number of college visits they attended away from their community.

Administrators in two districts stated they hope to see college visits sustained but have concerns about the ability to fund the number of visits made available to the GEAR UP cohort without the funding provided by the grant.

2.1.4. Job Site Visits/Job Shadowing

Engaging in job site visits is also a recommended federal GEAR UP strategy to provide students with relevant information about potential future jobs and careers, as well as the education required to attain those jobs/careers. According to data reported in GUIDES, all schools reported that at least some students had engaged in job site visits and job shadowing in Year 6 (ranging from two to 16 activities across the schools) (Table E.13, Appendix E). Overall, approximately one-fifth of students participated in job site visits/job shadowing in Year 6, a decrease of 18 percentage points from Year 5.

Job site visits and shadowing opportunities continued to be offered based on students' endorsements, interests, and postsecondary education plans, according to Texas GEAR UP SG staff. As in previous years, schools worked with local organizations and businesses to identify and develop opportunities. Some Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported that opportunities to participate in job site visits at companies that have a variety of positions and staff (e.g., management, accounting, administrative) are most efficient, because many students are able to participate in one trip. Maintaining contact and relationships with these organizations will be important for schools and districts to sustain job site visits, which were identified as important career exploration activities by students throughout the years of Texas GEAR UP SG implementation.

2.1.5. Summer Programs

In reporting implementation of student support services, the following project objective is relevant:

- Project Objective 4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.

Overall, according to data reported in GUIDES, over one-third (39%) of students participated in summer 2017 programs which represents the lowest level of participation since Year 3 (Table E.14, Appendix E). Despite this decrease, Project Objective 4.2 was met in Year 6. Summer program participation included student workshops (35%), college tours (14%), educational field trips (7%), job/site visits (3%), and parent/family workshops (1%).

Student survey data from the fall 2017 survey administration provide additional details related to the location of summer programs. Specifically, of the approximately one-quarter (26%) of respondents who reported participating in at least one summer program, half (50%) participated in a summer program at a community college or university in Texas and over one-third (39%) attended a summer program in their school district (see Table F.6 and Table F.8, Appendix F). The least frequently reported locations included another school district in Texas (5%) and a business or community organization in Texas (5%).

A variety of summer programs were offered to students in summer 2017 (see Table F.9, Appendix F). More than half (57%) of the students indicated they participated in a college readiness program designed to help them learn to successfully apply to college. This was followed by students who participated in a program designed to increase knowledge about financial aid for college, and a program to help them learn more about careers, at 36% and 28%, respectively. The summer programs with the lowest attendance included tutoring programs and credit recovery programs, at 8% and 4%, respectively. Twenty percent of students, however, indicated “*Other*” as summer program topics, citing money management, specific career fields (e.g., medical, music, engineering), and college social life as topics. For more detail regarding types of summer programs, see Table F.9 in Appendix F.

Respondents also provided feedback about the summer programs. For instance, 89% of students indicated that they either *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* with the statement that they enjoyed the activities offered during the summer program(s) they attended (see Table F.10, Appendix F). Additionally, most students also reported that they either *Agreed* or *Strongly Agreed* with the statements that they have a better understanding of the benefits of college after attending and that the summer program(s) provided them with the skills to help in their high school classes (e.g., time management, organization) at 93% and 89%, respectively. The statement with the lowest level of agreement was that students felt more prepared to take AP, pre-AP, or college credit courses after attending the summer program, at 74%. For more detail regarding types of summer programs and students’ level of agreement with summer programs, see Table F.10 in Appendix F.

In addition to the summer programs mentioned, the Support Center coordinated with collaborators to offer approximately 130 Texas GEAR UP SG students the opportunity to

participate in the 2017 GEAR UP SG Summer Camp. The camp spanned five days and was held at Concordia University in Austin; a collaborator reported that the location of the camp was changed in Year 6 to ensure that students had the opportunity to visit as many college campuses as possible while in high school. Students and grant collaborators indicated that students received support on guidance for writing college essays and attended sessions on college fit, financial aid, and social settings to expect in college. Students who attended the summer camp and participated in fall site visits expressed positive feedback about their time at the camp and found the additional level of support helpful.

2.1.6. Student Workshops/Events

Another GEAR UP implementation strategy is conducting workshops and events for students. The following project objective relates to this effort:

- Project Objective 7.2: By the end of the first year, information and workshops aimed at linking college attendance to career success will be available to 100% of cohort students and their parents.

Although Project Objective 7.2 was a Year 1 objective, the evaluation team has continued to track data on student workshops/events in subsequent years as an indicator of grant implementation. According to data reported in GUIDES, in Year 6, Texas GEAR UP SG high schools held a total of 102 workshops across all six schools (with a range of 9–26 events across schools), which is less than half of the number of workshops held in recent previous years (Year 5: 253; Year 4: 255) (Table E.15, Appendix E).

The workshops and events were hosted in a variety of formats (e.g., in-class presentations, after school sessions, one-on-one meetings, group discussions, assemblies) and covered a range of topics, including:

- High school graduation requirements
- College applications
- Discussions with college admissions staff
- General college information
- Career exploration
- Financial literacy and financial aid
- Test preparation

In terms of student participation in workshops and events, approximately two-thirds (67%) of students participated in at least one event, a twenty-five percentage point decrease from Year 5 and the lowest recorded percentage during all years of grant implementation (Table E.16, Appendix E). Despite lower levels of participation in Year 6, because all schools offered several events to students, all schools continued to meet Project Objective 7.2 of 100% of students having access to events.

2.1.7. Student Participation in Multiple Texas GEAR UP State Grant Activities

In addition to the data presented by activity type (e.g., tutoring, mentoring) in prior sections, findings on participation in multiple activities illuminated other important trends. To understand

College Corner

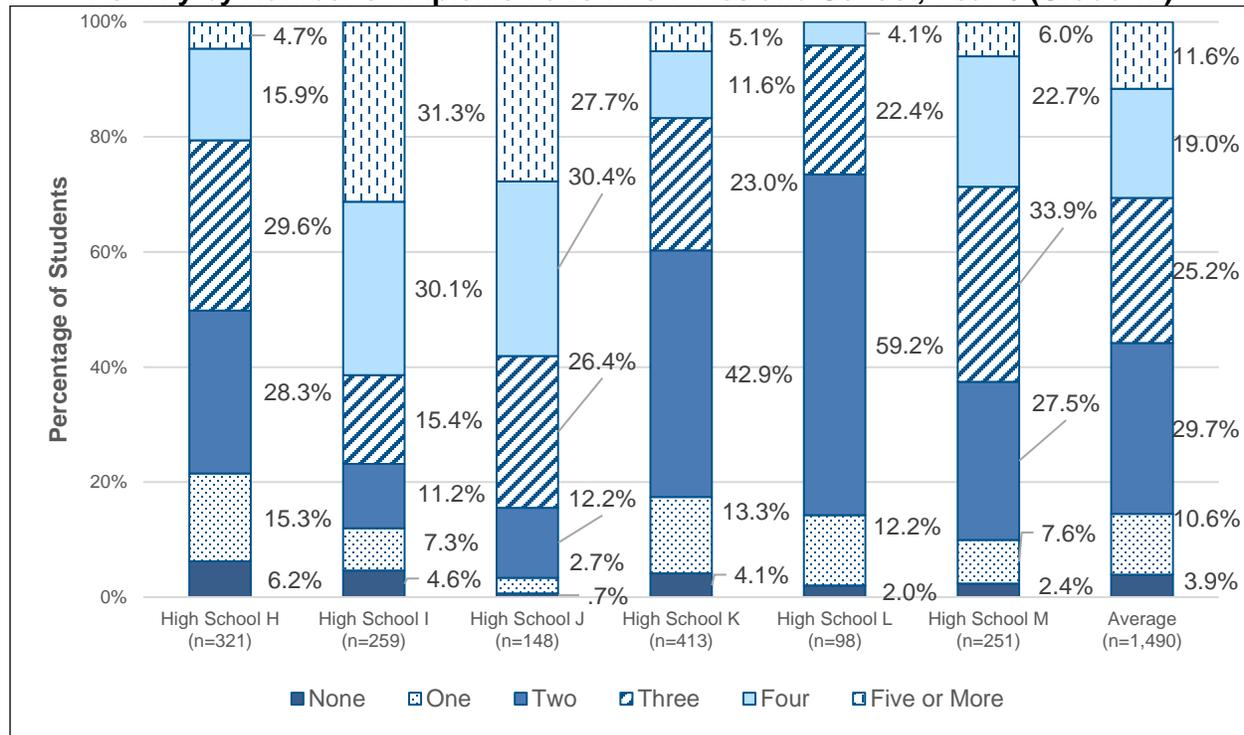
In Year 6, the principal at School J initiated a “College Corner” in each classroom—a place for teachers to hang information about upcoming college-related events, testing, and support available to students. Teachers with Grade 12 students hung information and deadlines related to the FAFSA, SAT, Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA), and other upcoming deadlines related to postsecondary education—which ultimately encouraged participation across multiple college readiness activities. Teachers reported that much of the information they posted was from Texas GEAR UP SG staff. Other teachers hung information about upcoming end-of-course (EOC) dates as well as tutorial time and dates. The principal commented during a site visit that this initiative was intended to increase the opportunities school staff have to promote a college going culture.

student participation in multiple activities across schools, ICF examined how many students participated in more than one implementation activity. Specifically, ICF identified the following eight activities and coded which students participated in each activity: tutoring, mentoring, counseling, college visits/shadowing, job site visit/shadowing, parent/family event, educational field trips, and student workshops. Figure 2.3 shows the results of this analysis and includes the percentage of students who participated in zero, one, two, three, four, or five or more activities—at each school and overall.

As shown in Figure 2.3, nearly all students (96%) participated in one or more implementation activities in Year 6. In contrast to the previous two years, when nearly half of the cohort participated in four or more activities, in Year 6, fewer than one-third of students participated in

the same number of activities. As previously discussed, in Year 6, College Preparation Advisors focused on group and one-on-one services related to financial aid, college applications, and the scheduling of postsecondary entrance exams—which may explain the decline in participation in other GEAR UP activities.

Figure 2.3. Percentages of Grade 12 Students Participating in Any Implementation Activity by Number of Implementation Activities and School, Year 6 (Grade 12)



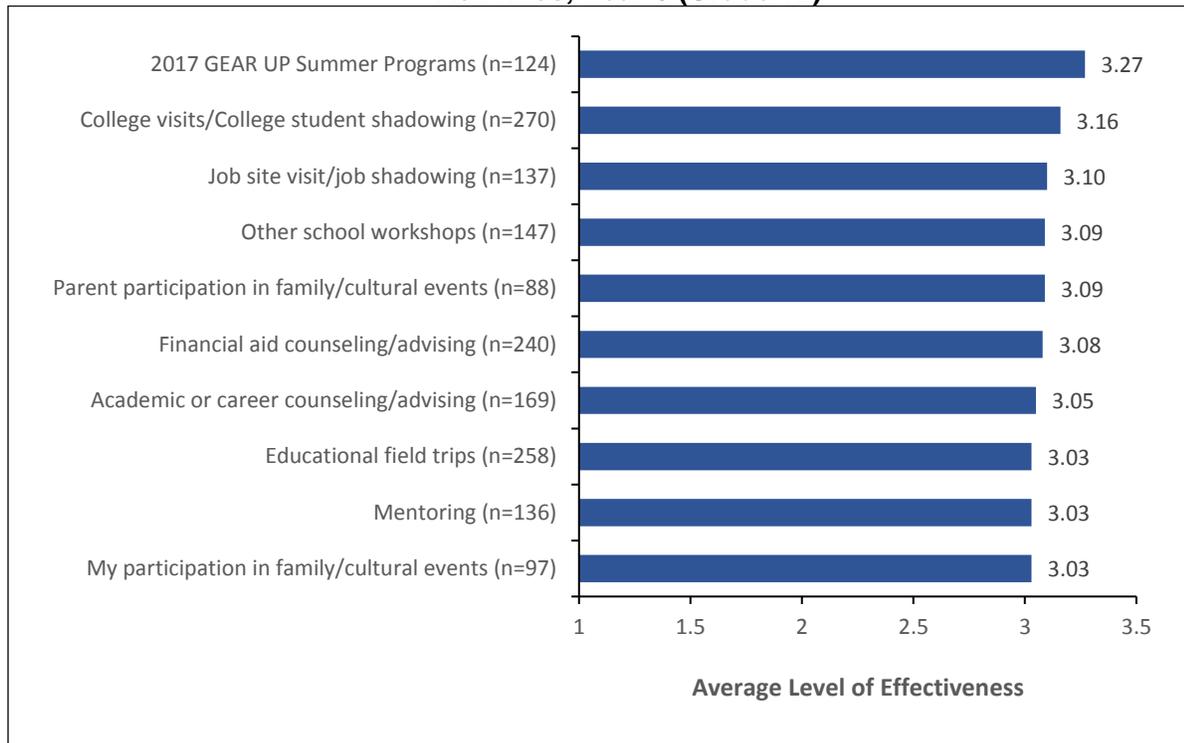
Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Note: Difference across schools: $\chi^2(25) = 373.6, p < .001$.

Implementation activities included the following eight categories: tutoring, mentoring, counseling, college tours/shadowing, job site visit/shadowing, parent/family event, education field trips, student workshops.

Students rated their perceptions on the effectiveness of these activities by selecting one of the following response options: 1 = *Not Effective*, 2 = *Slightly Effective*, 3 = *Mostly Effective*, or 4 = *Very Effective*. Students rated most of the activities as mostly effective (see Table F.11 and Figure 2.4). As in prior years, students rated the GEAR UP summer programs as the most effective activity and family/cultural events as the least effective activity; however, the difference between these mean ratings was small (0.24 points). Students also rated their levels of satisfaction with their relationship with their College Preparation Advisor and their experience in the Texas GEAR UP SG. Overall, 92% of students reported being *Satisfied* or *Strongly Satisfied* with their College Preparation Advisor and 80% reported being *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with their experience in the Texas GEAR UP SG (Table F.12, Appendix F). For more details regarding student-reported perceptions of effectiveness and levels of satisfaction from the student survey, please see Tables F.11 and F.12 in Appendix F.

Figure 2.4. Student Perceptions on the Level of Effectiveness of Texas GEAR UP SG Activities, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey, Year 6 (Spring 2018).

In addition to providing feedback on the level of effectiveness of the activities, students also suggested different types of information, support or activities that would be helpful. As shown in Table 2.2 below, responses in Year 6 included more information on financial aid and scholarships (48%), opportunities to participate in college visits (46%), and more information on college entrance requirements (40%). These three topics were consistently mentioned as needs across all years. Information presented in other languages during Texas GEAR UP SG activities was needed the least (13%), as was the case in previous years.

Table 2.2. Students' Input on Needed Information/Support/Activities, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Information/Support/Activity	n= 585
More information on financial aid/scholarships	48%
Opportunities to participate in college visits	46%
More information on college entrance requirements	40%
More information on GEAR UP program/how to participate	34%
More advanced classes	30%
Tutoring/Individualized care	29%
Information about taking college entrance exams	29%
Job shadowing	24%
Information about college student clubs and sports	23%
Job visit	23%
Information about dual credit courses where I can earn both	22%
Information about endorsement options	21%
Bilingual	13%
Other	6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP Student Survey, Year 6 (Spring 2018).

2.2. Participation in and Perceptions of Texas GEAR UP State Grant Activities for Parents

Parental participation in Texas GEAR UP SG activities is also encouraged in the federal GEAR UP model.¹² For Texas GEAR UP SG, the following project objective relates to this effort:

- Project Objective 7.3: Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.

In Year 6, no school successfully achieved Project Objective 7.3 (50% of cohort parents attending three or more college awareness activities). However, similar levels of participation were reported in Years 5 and 6 than in earlier years. Specifically, few (13%) parents attended three or more events/workshops in Year 6, which is a few percentage points lower than Year 5 (17%) (see Table E.19, Appendix E). As in Year 5, all six high schools had at least some parents attend three or more events/workshops. In addition, almost half (40%) of parents attended at least one event/workshop, which is an increase from the previous year (38%). In addition to attendance at parent events/workshops, in Year 6, over half (58%) of parents also participated in counseling/advising (see Table E.20, Appendix E). Based on site visit data, parent participation in counseling/advising most likely consisted of one-on-one sessions with College Preparation Advisors for assistance filling out the FAFSA.

¹² While the term parent is used here given the context of the project objective, parental attendance is defined as any adult household member attending an event associated with the given student.

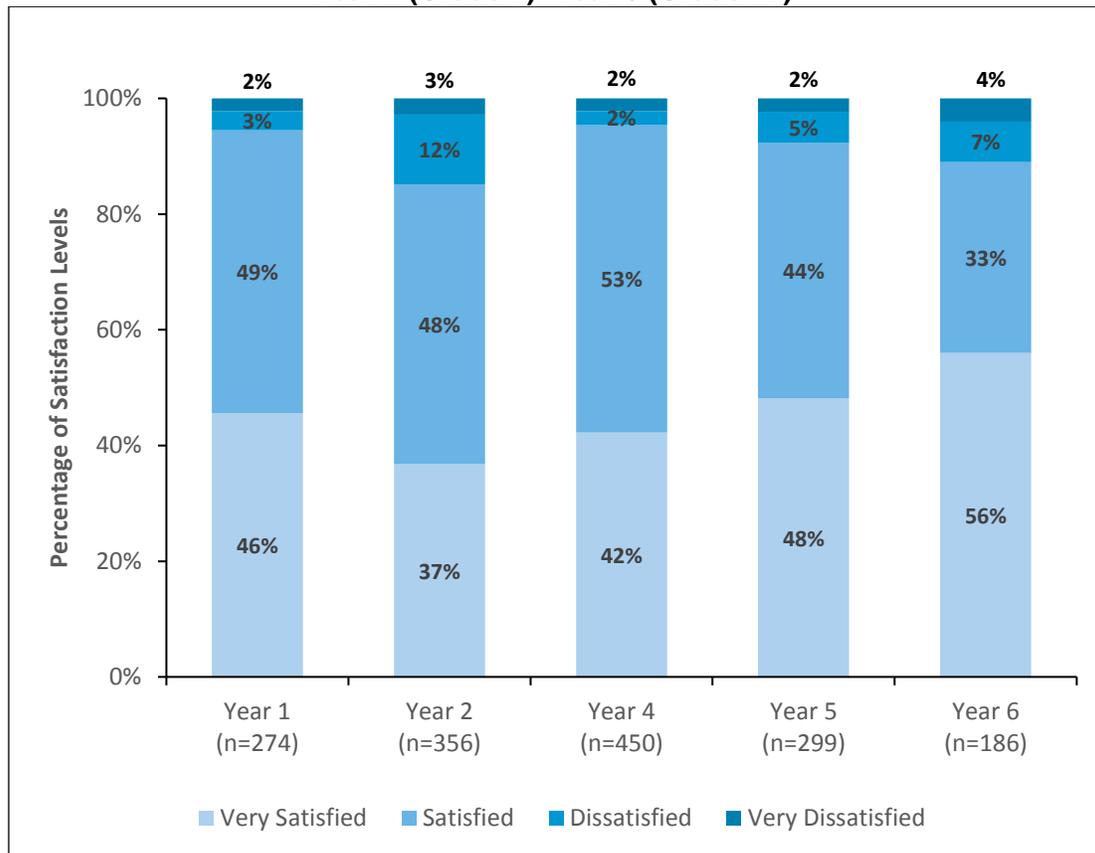
Texas GEAR UP SG staff across all four districts reported that despite promoting parent and family events with flyers, social media, phone calls, and emails, they struggled to initiate contact and build relationships with parents with whom they had not previously engaged. Parent events in Year 6 provided information regarding financial aid options, college applications, and school events (e.g., Decision Day, Senior Breakfast), in addition to the FAFSA drives held throughout the school year (described in more detail in Section 2.1.1). While Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported that the FAFSA drives had mixed success rates, they found it most successful to make contact with parents on a one-on-one basis either over the phone or for an appointment at the school to complete the FAFSA.

The level of parents' satisfaction with the College Preparation Advisor at their child's school has been consistent throughout all implementation years, with the percentage of parents who reported being either *Satisfied* or *Very satisfied* ranging between 85% and 95%. As shown in Figure 2.5, in Year 6, most (89%) parents reported being either *Satisfied* or *Very satisfied* with Texas GEAR UP SG College Preparation Advisors (see Table F.12, Appendix F).

Challenges in Providing FAFSA Support to Parents

Lack of computer and technological literacy among parents was an unexpected barrier at FAFSA events for families, according to the Parent Liaison at School J; the Parent Liaison added that it was very difficult to help parents fill out and submit FAFSAs since many struggled to use the school-provided Chromebooks.

**Figure 2.5. Parent Satisfaction with Texas GEAR UP SG College Preparation Advisors:
Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)***



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Notes: Percentages in Figure 2.5 reflect responses after removing respondents that selected the following response option: “Does not apply; I did not participate in any GEAR UP events this school year.” Year 3 (Fall 2014–Spring 2015) is not included because the parent survey response rate was too low to conduct analysis in spring 2015, so the evaluation team re-administered in fall 2015 during Year 4.

*Parent responses differed significantly across all years: $\chi^2(12) = 62.7, p < .001$.

2.3. Participation by Teachers in Professional Development Activities

Texas GEAR UP SG includes the following project objectives related to teacher PD:

- Project Objective 3.1: All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL.
- Project Objective 3.2: Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.
- Project Objective 7.4: By the end of the project’s fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.

Teacher PD opportunities are offered to support the broad goal of improving academic rigor at participating schools. In total, there were 72 PD sessions offered, which is fewer than half the number of sessions offered in Year 5 (181) and the lowest since Year 3. The number of PD sessions ranged from 0–24 sessions across the schools and benefited a total of 220 teachers (approximately two-thirds of the number who received PD in Year 5 and the lowest number since Year 3) (Tables E.21–22, Appendix E). According to Year 6 data reported in GUIDES, only three of the six schools offered Texas GEAR UP SG-supported PD on all three of the topics required in Project Objective 3.1—differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and project-based learning (PBL)—indicating that Project Objective 3.1 was not met in Year 6 (Table E.21, Appendix E). In addition, no schools offered training on the college admissions and financial aid process, according to data reported in GUIDES; therefore the program did not meet Project Objective 7.4. There were seven financial literacy PD events across five of the six schools that benefited 50 teachers; this is an increase from a single event in Year 5 that benefited 16 teachers. Considering the cohort’s need to apply for financial aid in Year 6, this increase in financial literacy PD is both helpful and timely. Only one school, School J, offered a vertical teaming event (E.21, Appendix E). As such, the schools did not meet Project Objective 3.2 in Year 6.

Site visit and telephone interview data provided insights related to the offered PD. The Support Center explained that the Educator Outreach Coach provided PD in a train-the-trainer model to build capacity for attendees to provide support to other teachers in their schools and to promote sustainability in schools. As a result, the Educator Outreach Coach conducted fewer class observations and in-person coaching in Year 6 as compared to previous years. Teachers received workshops on classroom management, differentiation, advanced instruction, and PBL. In addition to the in-school training provided by the Educator Outreach Coach, PD was provided directly through GEAR UP at the state and national GEAR UP conferences. Texas GEAR UP SG funds were also used to provide PD to teachers on test preparation for the TSIA and SAT.

Challenges Cited with SAT PD

Teachers who participated in the SAT PD in District 2 reported that the content and timing of the session was not a good fit, as it was administered after students participated in the SAT in the fall semester and only provided test-taking strategies to be used by students, rather than strategies for teachers to prepare students for the assessments.

2.4. Participation by Community Stakeholders in Texas GEAR UP State Grant

Texas GEAR UP SG staff site visit participants reported that collaboration with community alliances, both on and off campus, increased in Year 6. The alliances supported GEAR UP efforts such as college application and FAFSA drives, parent and family events, advising and counseling sessions on enrollment and career decisions, and other events and workshops. Texas GEAR UP SG schools and districts divided the work among the on-campus community alliances and Texas GEAR UP SG staff. In some cases, organizations partnered to provide services to students. In other cases, organizations were assigned to lead specific tasks while others provided support as needed.

Partnering for FAFSA Support

In District 4, another college access program worked to provide FAFSA support to all students and will continue to provide FAFSA support to students while they are enrolled in postsecondary education; because of this, school-based Texas GEAR UP SG staff referred students to the other college access program, while providing additional support as needed.

2.5. Summary

Chapter 2 described the participation of student, parent, and teachers in Texas GEAR UP SG activities as well as their perceptions of the activities. Among the objectives discussed in this chapter were three related to student participation: Project Objective 4.1 (related to student participation in student services), Project Objective 4.4 (related to student participation in summer programs and Project Objective 7.2 (related to opportunities for students to participate in workshops and events). Despite lower levels of participation in most activities, the cohort continued to meet all three objectives. Parent participation in Texas GEAR UP SG was also tracked for Project Objective 7.3 (at least 50% of cohort parents will attend at least three college awareness activities); while all six schools had some parents attend three or more events, no school was able to meet the objective in Year 6. Three schools met Project Objective 3.1 (opportunity for all core content teachers to participate in training for differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL). In addition, no school was able to meet Project Objective 3.2 (middle school and high school teachers will complete five days of vertical teaming) or 7.4 (teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process).

3. Intermediate Student Academic Outcomes

This chapter presents findings related to intermediate academic outcomes for the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort in Year 6. Year 6 outcomes addressed in this chapter include earning college credit, progress toward graduation, postsecondary education exams, and academic preparation for college. Advanced course enrollment is tracked longitudinally in this report, but as it is less pertinent in Year 6, relevant findings are presented in the appendices (Tables E.23–E.25 and Figures E.1–E.2 in Appendix E and Table F.14 and Figure F.1 in Appendix F).

3.1. Opportunities to Earn College Credit

Students have two primary avenues in which to earn college credit—by earning a score of three or higher on AP course examinations and through successful completion of dual credit courses. Project Objective 2.3 states that by the end of the project’s sixth year, at least 50% of students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit. Although data were not available through GUIDES regarding the cohort’s performance on AP course examinations through February 28, 2018, data were available on students’ completion of dual credit courses and AP courses.

Over half (52%) of the cohort had completed an AP course and a smaller percentage (14%) of the cohort had completed a dual credit course prior to February 28, 2018 (Tables E.26–E.27, Appendix E). Completion rates varied across schools; School J had the lowest rates of AP and dual credit course completion (28% and 5%, respectively) and School L had the highest rates of AP and dual credit course completion (93% and 48%, respectively) (Tables E.26–E.27, Appendix E). As AP test score data were not yet available, it is not possible to state definitively whether or not the cohort was on track to meet Project Objective 2.3. Based on dual credit course completion alone, the cohort was not on track to meet the objective; however, with just over half of students having completed an AP course, it is likely that many of those students will go on to receive a 3 or higher on the exam—suggesting that Project Objective 2.3 may be within reach. The Year 7 Annual Implementation Report will contain more definitive data regarding how the cohort performed with respect to this objective by the end of Grade 12.

Student survey data from spring 2018 also provided insights regarding AP and dual credit courses (see Tables F.15 and F.16, Appendix F for survey results related to dual credit and AP course completion and course taking patterns). As shown in Table 3.1, students found advanced courses to be challenging. Between AP and dual credit courses, AP courses were more challenging with over two-thirds (68%) of students responding that these courses were *Challenging* or *Extremely challenging*, compared to over half (56%) of students who reported the same for dual credit courses.

Table 3.1 Student-Reported Ratings of How Challenging Advanced Courses Have Been, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	Pre-AP courses (n=635)	AP courses (n=643)	Dual Credit courses (n=627)
Percentage of students who reported being currently enrolled	29.0%	43.7%	25.5%
So far, how challenging would you say these courses, on average, have been for you academically?			
	(n=127)	(n=223)	(n=109)
Not at all challenging	14.2%	4.9%	7.3%
A little challenging	51.2%	26.9%	36.7%
Challenging	29.1%	53.8%	45.0%
Extremely challenging	5.5%	14.3%	11.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

During the site visits, administrators and teachers continued to express, as they have in previous years, that they did not perceive many of the students enrolled in AP and/or dual credit courses to be academically prepared to succeed in those courses. Some noted they felt students were placed in the AP or dual credit courses to meet district Texas GEAR UP SG goals (rather than because the students were up to the challenge of more advanced curricula). The level of perceived readiness to succeed in college-level courses varied across schools, although most teachers reported that at least some of their students in advanced courses were likely to succeed academically in postsecondary education.

District Policy on Course Grades

An administrator at School K reported frustration with a district policy that he perceived to have a negative impact on the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort's academic readiness. This policy required 75% of a student's academic grade to be based on participation in class; the administrator felt this was not an adequate representation of the students' academic performance or readiness.

3.2. Progress toward Graduation Programs

One way to measure student progress toward high school graduation relates to Project Objective 1.2 (By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students graduating on the Foundation High School Program plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average).¹³ According to GUIDES data, as of February 2018, most (93%) Grade 12 students were pursuing an endorsement as part of their graduation plans, which is the same percentage as the past two years (Table E.28, Appendix E).¹⁴ The two most popular endorsements were Business and Industry (32%) and Public Services (27%). Algebra II completion is a requirement for obtaining the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program; in Year 6, almost three-quarters (74%) of Grade 12 students had completed Algebra II and were pursuing an endorsement—

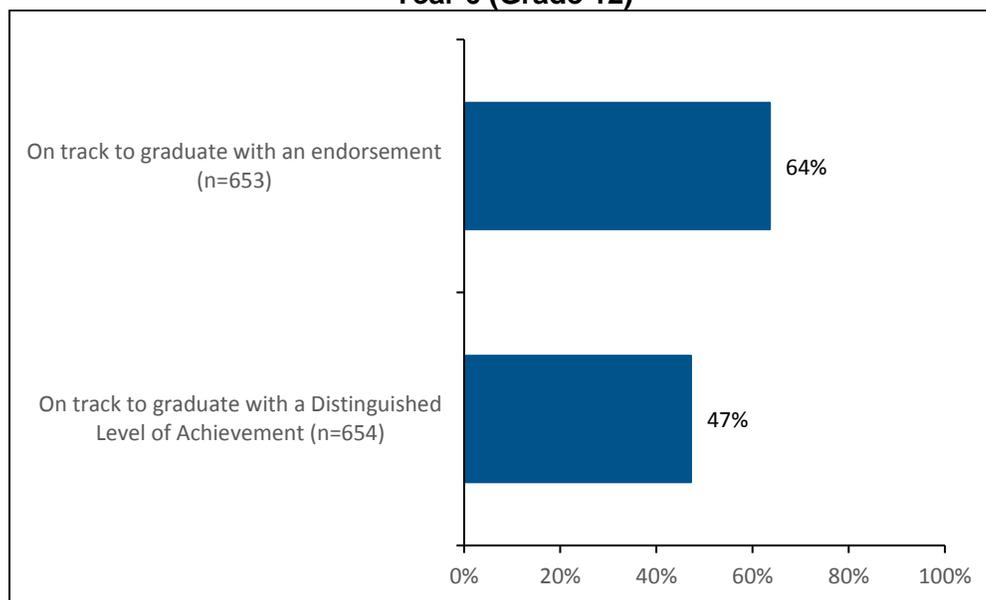
¹³ For additional information on the Foundation High School Program and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see <http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx>.

¹⁴ For those students who were not on the Foundation High School Program or had not selected an endorsement, it is possible that they entered Grade 9 prior to the 2014–15 school year, prior to when the Foundation High School Program went into effect with the enactment of Texas House Bill (HB) 5, or that they dropped their endorsement at the end of Grade 10 with permission from a parent/guardian.

suggesting that those students will have fulfilled at least one of the requirements for graduating at the distinguished level of achievement (Table E.29, Appendix E).

Student survey data also provided insights on graduation plans. Overall, nearly three-quarters (73%) of students reported being either *Confident* or *Very confident* that they would be graduating in spring 2018 (See Table F.17, Appendix F). As shown in Figure 3.1, almost two-thirds (64%) of student respondents reported that they were on track to graduate with an endorsement and almost half (47%) reported that they were on track to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement (see Table F.18, Appendix F).

Figure 3.1. Students' Progress and Plans Regarding Endorsements, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Surveys, Year 6 (Spring 2018).

3.3. Postsecondary Education Exam Completion

College readiness in Texas is measured through standardized assessments, including the SAT, ACT, and TSIA. By February 2018, most students had been presented with opportunities to take and prepare for these assessments; this section will explore those opportunities, outcomes, and test preparation efforts.

3.3.1. SAT and ACT

All four Texas GEAR UP SG school districts participated in an SAT School Day in Year 6, as they did in Year 5. SAT School Day allows students to take the SAT during the school day for free. School staff continued to take the lead in the coordination and logistics of the SAT School Day, but Texas GEAR UP SG staff as well as staff from other college access programs provided support for registration and promotion.

Project Objective 5.1 states that by the end of the project's fifth year, all students will complete the SAT or ACT. According to GUIDES data, by the end of Year 5 (Grade 11), just over half (55%) of students had taken the SAT or ACT, indicating that the cohort had not met Project

Objective 5.1 (Table E.30, Appendix E). GUIDES data shows that 55% of students participated in the SAT and 5% participated in the ACT. In Year 6, nearly three-quarters (72% of students) participated in the SAT or ACT by February 28, 2018 (Table E.31, Appendix E). Specifically, 71% of students participated in the SAT and 5% participated in the ACT. An analysis of cumulative participation across Grade 11 and Grade 12 reveals that 84% of students had participated in the SAT and 10% had participated in the ACT by February 2018. While no school was able to meet the objective, the percentage of students who participated did increase from Grade 11 to Grade 12. Table 3.2, which provides student-reported data from the student survey, also provides student-level participation in the ACT and SAT in Grade 12. According to student survey respondents (a much more limited sample than those included in the GUIDES data), 40% reported participating in the ACT in Grade 12 and 76% participated in the SAT. While the percentage who reported participating in the SAT is in line with GUIDES data, there is a large discrepancy between student-reported ACT participation and GUIDES data on ACT participation. The source of this discrepancy, however, is unclear.

Across Year 5 and Year 6, students achieved an SAT mean score of 449 in math, 446 in reading, 4 on writing and language, and an overall total score of 890. For the ACT, students achieved an ACT mean score of 18 in mathematics, 16 in English, and a composite score of 18. Project Objective 5.2 states that by the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average. As of February 2018, only a small percentage (11%) of the cohort had met criterion on the SAT (a score of 1180 or higher) or ACT (a composite score of 24 or higher). The most recent state average data is from the 2016–17 school year in which almost one-quarter (22%) of the state's graduating examinees met criterion.¹⁵ Accordingly, the cohort was not on track to meet Project Objective 5.2.

Table 3.2. Student Reported Participation in ACT and SAT, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	ACT	SAT
Have you taken the SAT/ACT in the 2017–18 school year?	(n=675)	(n=669)
Yes, I have taken	40.3%	76.4%
No, but I plan on taking before the end of the school year	24.7%	14.1%
No, I have not taken, and I have no current plans to take this school year	35.0%	9.6%
If yes...		
Have you <u>tried</u> to increase your score by taking it multiple times? (Percentage that indicated Yes)	45.3% (n=265)	60.8% (n=505)
Were you <u>able</u> to increase your score by taking it multiple times? (Percentage that indicated Yes)	63.3% (n=120)	74.5% (n=306)
How satisfied are you with the best, or only, overall score you received?	(n=268)	(n=509)
Very Satisfied	16.4%	13.6%
Satisfied	53.7%	63.5%
Dissatisfied	23.1%	19.3%
Very Dissatisfied	6.7%	3.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Students reported on site visits that multiple opportunities to take the SAT increased their comfort level with the assessment, thus improving their test-taking confidence. As shown in

¹⁵ For more information, see the 2016–17 SAT and ACT results in the 2017-18 Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) at <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/state.pdf>.

Table 3.2, student survey data confirms this finding; specifically, taking the SAT or ACT multiple times was shown to increase the scores of students. Specifically, almost two-thirds (61%) of SAT-takers took the assessment multiple times; of those, three-quarters (75%) were able to increase their score. Similarly, nearly half (45%) of ACT-takers took the assessment multiple times; nearly two-thirds (63%) of those were able to increase their score. Overall, over three-quarters (77%) of respondents who had taken the SAT were *Satisfied* or *Very satisfied* with their scores and 70% of respondents felt similarly regarding the ACT.

3.3.2. Texas Success Initiative Assessment

The TSIA determines students' readiness for college coursework, including dual credit coursework while in high school, and identifies the needs for any developmental coursework.¹⁶ According to data reported through GUIDES, almost two-thirds (64%) of students had taken the TSIA in Reading and a similar percentage (65%) had taken the TSIA in Mathematics by February 2018 (Table E.33, Appendix E). Of the students that took the assessments, over one-third (39%) passed the TSIA in Reading and one-quarter (25%) passed the TSIA in Mathematics. These pass rates are higher than the most recent statewide averages published by TEA; specifically, in 2016–17, the state average for the TSIA was 23.4% for Reading and 19.8% for Mathematics.¹⁷

Of the almost half (48%) of student survey respondents who reported retaking a section of the TSIA, 74% reported being able to increase their score. Overall, over three-quarters (77%) of students were either *Satisfied* or *Very satisfied* with their best score.

Table 3.3 Student Experiences with the TSIA, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Did you take the entire TSIA? (n=675)	
Yes	44.6%
I have taken some, but not all sections of the TSI/TSIA	26.8%
No, I have not taken any section of the TSI/TSIA	28.6%
Have you ever retaken a section of the TSIA? (n=473)	
Yes	48.0%
Were you able to increase your score by retaking a section multiple times? (n=223)	
Yes	74.0%
How satisfied are you with the best, or only, overall score you received? (n=469)	
Very Satisfied	23.5%
Satisfied	53.5%
Dissatisfied	17.7%
Very Dissatisfied	5.3%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported working with testing coordinators and counseling staff to plan for and recruit students to participate in the TSIA in Year 6. Texas GEAR UP SG staff added that they intended to provide at least one opportunity for every student (who was not exempt from the exam due to their SAT score) to participate in the TSIA. Most schools coordinated 1–2 days devoted to administering the TSIA for every Grade 12 student who had

¹⁶ For more information, see <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=DB386300-1C05-11E8-BC500050560100A9>.

¹⁷ Statewide data on the TSIA in 2016–17 may be found at the following URL: <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/state.pdf>.

not yet passed; however, participation during these administrations was not required. Most Texas GEAR UP SG staff noted this worked well logistically for testing the majority of students and also built awareness about the assessment for students. An administrator explained that when all students are tested together, at the same time, overall awareness increases because students often discuss the test date and preparation with one another. Among the conversations and advising sessions with students in Year 6, most College Preparation Advisors reported they found that they had to explain to students the importance and purpose of the TSIA—the impact it can have on the need for remedial courses (which will need to be paid for and not count towards their major). Texas GEAR UP SG staff in all four districts also expressed concerns about the very low pass rates at their respective schools and explained that they wished more time was spent discussing and preparing for the TSIA during class time before Grade 12. One College Preparation Advisor commented that students are not taught or encouraged to think about the TSIA in the same way that they are about the SAT; thus, many students do not understand the importance of participating multiple times if they are not passing and do not take the initiative to seek out support in the same way they do for the SAT.

3.3.3. Graduating “College Ready”

Project Objective 5.3 states that the number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average. In the context of Texas GEAR UP SG, college readiness has been defined as meeting the College Board’s College and Career Readiness Benchmarks in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (an SAT score of 480) and Math (an SAT score of 530), meeting criterion on the TSIA (a score of 351 or greater on Reading and a score of 350 or greater on Mathematics), or meeting criterion on the ACT (an English ACT score of 19, a Math ACT score of 19, and a composite score of 23).¹⁸ In Year 6, approximately 17% of students were on track to graduate college ready according to these criteria, which is below the 2016–17 state average of 47.0% (Table E.34, Appendix E); overall, the cohort was not on track to meet Project Objective 5.3 as of February 2018.¹⁹

3.3.4. Test preparation

In Year 6, as in previous years, test preparation opportunities continued to be offered at each Texas GEAR UP SG school. Test prep was provided for the SAT, the TSIA, and AP exams, among other assessments. According to site visit participants, most fall test preparation activities focused on the SAT in preparation for the SAT School Day while spring test preparation activities focused on preparation for final administrations of the TSIA. A variety of test preparation strategies were implemented by districts, as well as contracted out to other organizations—strategies included in-class and afterschool workshops, boot camps, workshops with community alliances, provision of test booklets, and PD opportunities for teachers. Most sessions included test-taking strategies; some also included review of content included on the

¹⁸ SAT and ACT cutoff scores for graduating college ready were determined based on the criteria required to be exempt from the TSIA as stipulated in 19 TAC Code §4.54, 2019, amended to be effective February 28, 2018.

¹⁹ For information on the state average for students who graduated college-ready in 2017, please visit the 2017–18 TAPR: <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/state.pdf>

assessments. Many Texas GEAR UP SG staff agreed that the test booklets were not useful for students; one College Preparation Advisor suggested that interactive, online, and game-oriented preparation sources are a better fit for the students. Additionally, Texas GEAR UP SG staff and students commented that support from a person in a small group or one-on-one setting worked well because it allowed the session to be tailored to individual needs. Teachers in one district commented that they were unaware of the TSIA test preparation that was coordinated through English classes by the GEAR UP Coordinator and would have liked the opportunity to contribute to the test preparation in their classes.

Student survey data also provided insights on test preparation for AP exams. As shown in Table 3.4, according to student survey data, various activities were used to help students prepare for their AP exams. Students reported preparing, or planning to prepare, for AP exams through tutoring (33%), test prep classes through the school (20%), AP test prep books (18%), and AP test prep sessions conducted by teachers (17%).

Table 3.4. Student-Reported Ways to Prepare for AP Tests, Year 6 (Grade 12)

In what ways are you preparing, or planning to prepare, for your AP test(s) this semester? (Select all that apply)	(n=699)
Tutoring	32.9%
N/A I am not taking any AP tests	32.0%
AP test prep classes provided by my school	19.7%
AP test prep books	17.7%
AP test prep session offered by my AP teachers	16.7%
Kahn Academy	14.9%
AP test prep classes that I heard about through GEAR UP staff	13.2%
Online research on TX GEAR UP website	7.9%
Online resource through a non-TX GEAR UP Website	4.6%
Other	2.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

3.4. Academic Preparation for College

Project Objective 4.4 states, “By the end of the project’s fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.”²⁰

There are numerous ways to measure whether a student is knowledgeable about and academically prepared for college; accordingly, a variety of indicators were used in measuring progress toward Project Objective 4.4. Specifically, students are considered to have met the requirements of Project Objective 4.4 if they meet the following criteria: participation in at least one “in-person” college visit and any one of the following: (1) meeting or exceeding the TSIA criteria in both ELA and mathematics; (2) completing one or more mathematics courses beyond Algebra II; (3) enrolling in a coherent sequence of career and technical education (CTE) courses as part of a four-year plan of study; and/or (4) having a personal graduation plan at the end of

²⁰ Although this is a Year 5 indicator, measuring progress toward this objective requires data through the end of the 2016–17 school year; since the Year 5 Annual Implementation Report only included data through February 28, 2018, progress toward this objective is measured definitively in this report.

Year 5 that includes the Foundation High School Program with a multidisciplinary studies endorsement.²¹ Based on data reported in GUIDES, over half (60%) of students met these criteria (Table E.35, Appendix E). Only High School L met the objective in Year 5, with over three-quarters (78%) of students meeting criteria. Overall, the cohort did not meet Project Objective 4.4 in Year 5.

3.5. Summary

Chapter 3 presented findings related to the intermediate academic outcomes as the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort completes high school. Project Objective 2.3 states that by the end of Year 6, at least 50% of students will graduate with college credit earned through AP exams or dual credit course completion. This objective will be reported on definitively in Year 7, but students were not on track to meet this objective as of February 2018. Student participation in postsecondary education exams such as the SAT and ACT were discussed in this section as well as their related objectives: Project Objective 5.1 (related to 100% of student participation in the SAT or ACT by Year 5) and Project Objective 5.2 (related to the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT exceeding the state average). No school was able to meet either of these objectives. The cohort was also not on track to meet Project Objectives 5.3 (the number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average) and 4.4 (70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college by the end of Year 5).

²¹ Meeting criterion on the TSIA in ELA requires a score of 351 or higher; meeting criterion on the TSIA in mathematics requires a score of 350 or higher.

4. Postsecondary Planning

In Year 6, with students in Grade 12, they are tasked with finalizing their postsecondary plans and taking steps to put their plans into action. This chapter provides an overview of the status of students' and their parents' thinking about postsecondary education—including knowledge about college, understanding of financial aspects related to college, educational aspirations and expectations, anticipated postsecondary plans, and the perceived impact of the Texas GEAR UP SG on education plans.

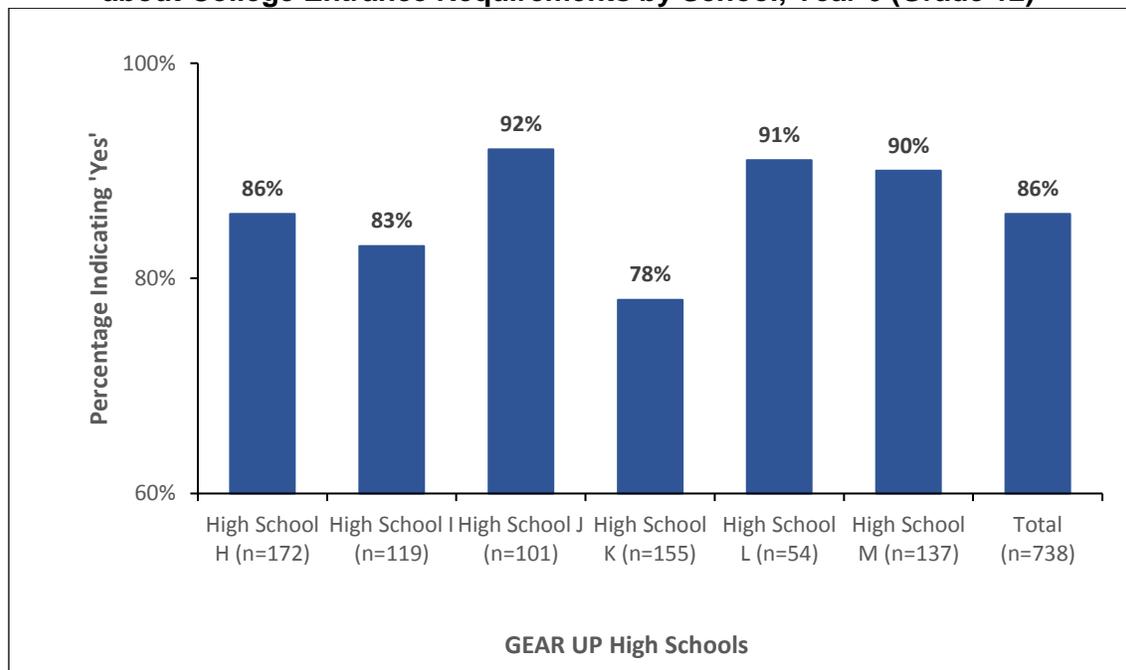
4.1. Knowledge about College

An understanding about specific terms and concepts related to college may be essential for students to make appropriate postsecondary plans and decisions. Survey data provide insights regarding knowledge about college, including sources of information as well as knowledge of specific college terms and concepts.

4.1.1. Sources of Information

In an effort to build student knowledge about a range of college topics, it helps to understand students' various sources of information. In Year 6, most student respondents (86%) received information about entrance requirements—from Texas GEAR UP SG or school staff (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Percentage of Students Reporting “Yes” to GEAR UP Discussions about College Entrance Requirements by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*



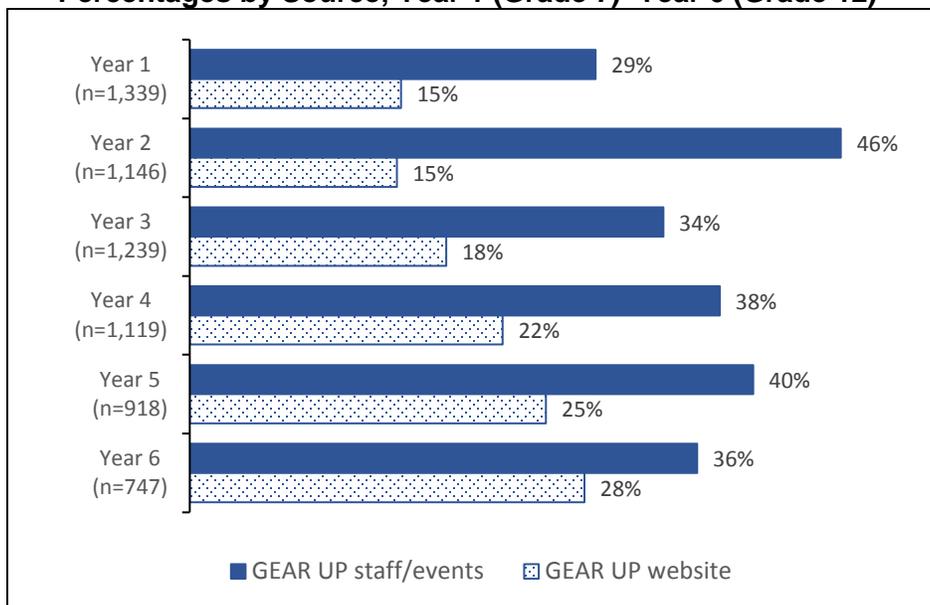
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: These data include responses to the following item: “Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about college entrance requirements?”

*Students who reported speaking with staff about college entrance requirements differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 14.4, p < .05$.

Regarding college information more generally, as shown in Figure 4.2, in Year 6, over one-third (36%) of students reported having received such information from Texas GEAR UP SG staff—which is consistent with findings from Years 3–5. In addition, just over one-quarter of students reported receiving college information from the Texas GEAR UP website, which represents an increase since Year 2. For more details regarding college information sources, students' knowledge about college terms and concepts, and parent discussions with GEAR UP staff on college entrance requirements, see Tables F.19–F.22 in Appendix F.

Figure 4.2. Student-Reported College Information Sources: Percentages by Source, Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)*



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

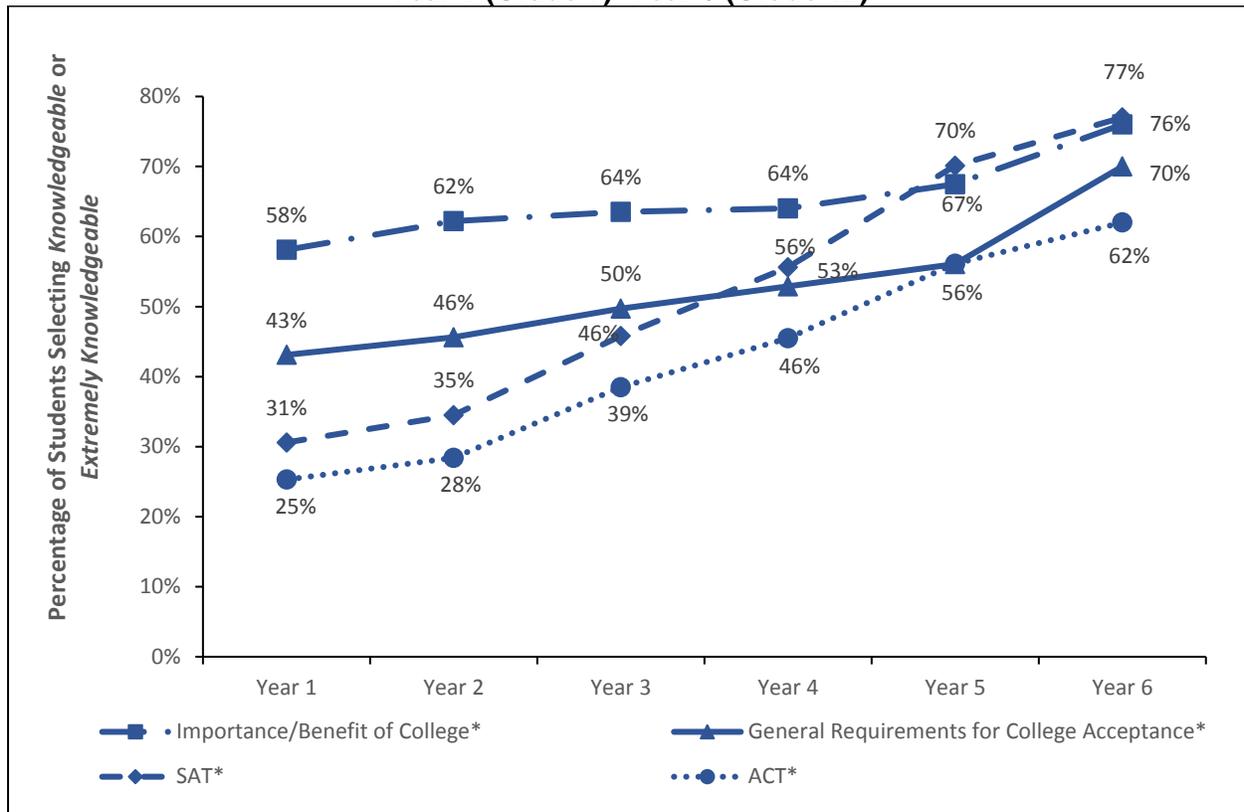
Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. *N* counts for each year are included in the full data presented in Table F.19, Appendix F. Due to anonymity, responses are not linked to an individual respondent, thus comparisons over time are based on aggregate responses.

*There were significant differences across all time points for: Research on GEAR UP website: $\chi^2(5) = 90.0, p < .001$; Information from GEAR UP staff/events: $\chi^2(5) = 85.7, p < .001$.

4.1.2. Knowledge about College

Student surveys asked respondents to indicate how knowledgeable they were about various college-related terms on a four-point knowledge scale, with 1 equaling *No knowledge* and 4 equaling *Extremely knowledgeable*. As shown in Figure 4.3, students' perceived knowledge of the importance and benefit of college, general requirements for college acceptance, the SAT, and the ACT have steadily increased since Year 1, which points to the success of Texas GEAR UP SG in building that knowledge over time (see F.23 in Appendix F for more details regarding student knowledge of college terms and concepts).

Figure 4.3. Students’ Perceived Knowledge of College Terms and Concepts: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)



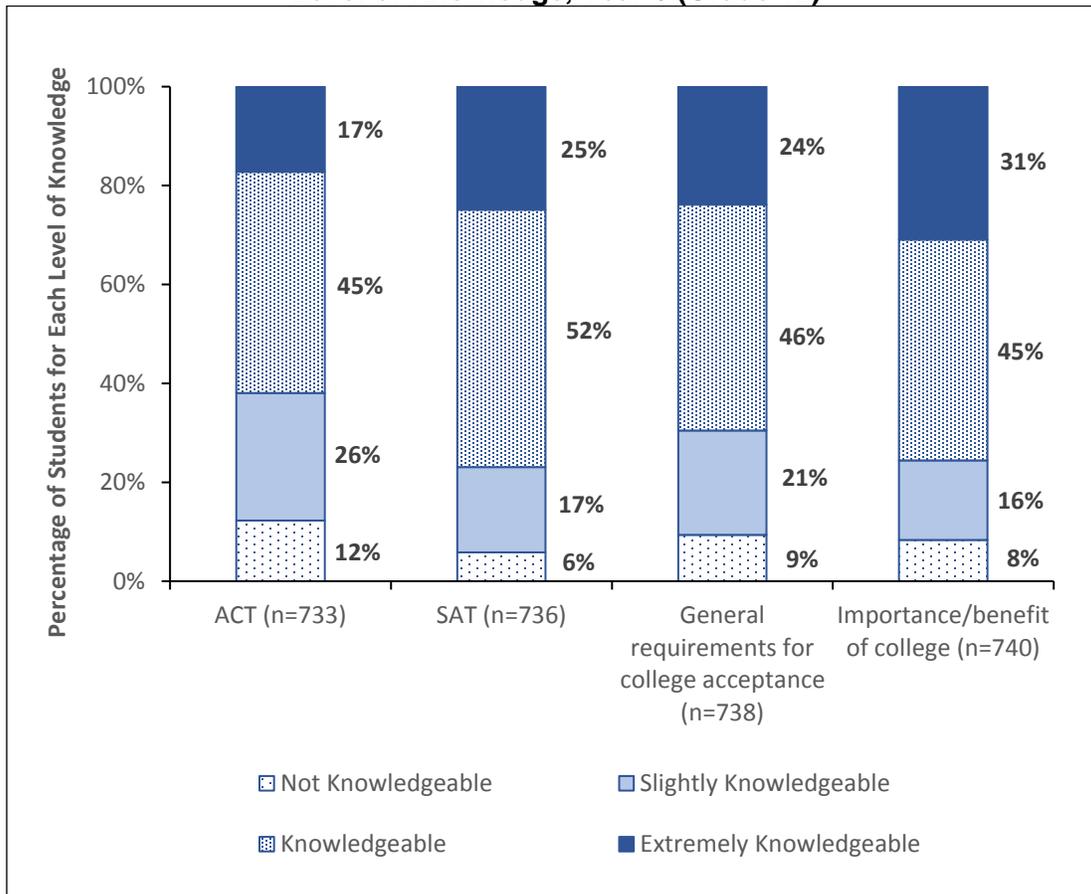
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: Response options to the question “How much do you know about each of the following?” were scaled as follows: 1 – No Knowledge, 2 – Slightly Knowledgeable, 3 – Knowledgeable, and 4 – Extremely Knowledgeable. *N* counts for each item and each response option are included in the full data presented in Figure 4.3. Due to anonymity, responses are not linked to an individual respondent, thus comparisons over time are based on aggregate responses.

*Students’ self-reported knowledge differed significantly across schools for the following items: SAT: $\chi^2(15) = 54.5, p < .001$; ACT: $\chi^2(15) = 60.4, p < .001$; General Requirements for College Entrance: $\chi^2(15) = 57.8, p < .001$; Importance/Benefit of College: $\chi^2(15) = 58, p < .001$.

The level of perceived knowledge among students in Year 6 was high across the four topics: ACT, SAT, general requirements for college acceptance, and the importance and benefit of college (Figure 4.4). Between almost two-thirds and three-quarters of student respondents reported being *Knowledgeable* or *Extremely knowledgeable* about all terms. Additional details regarding students’ perceived knowledge of college terms by year and by school are provided in Tables F.23 and F.24, Appendix F.

Figure 4.4. Students' Perceived Knowledge about College: Percentages by Level of Knowledge, Year 6 (Grade 12)

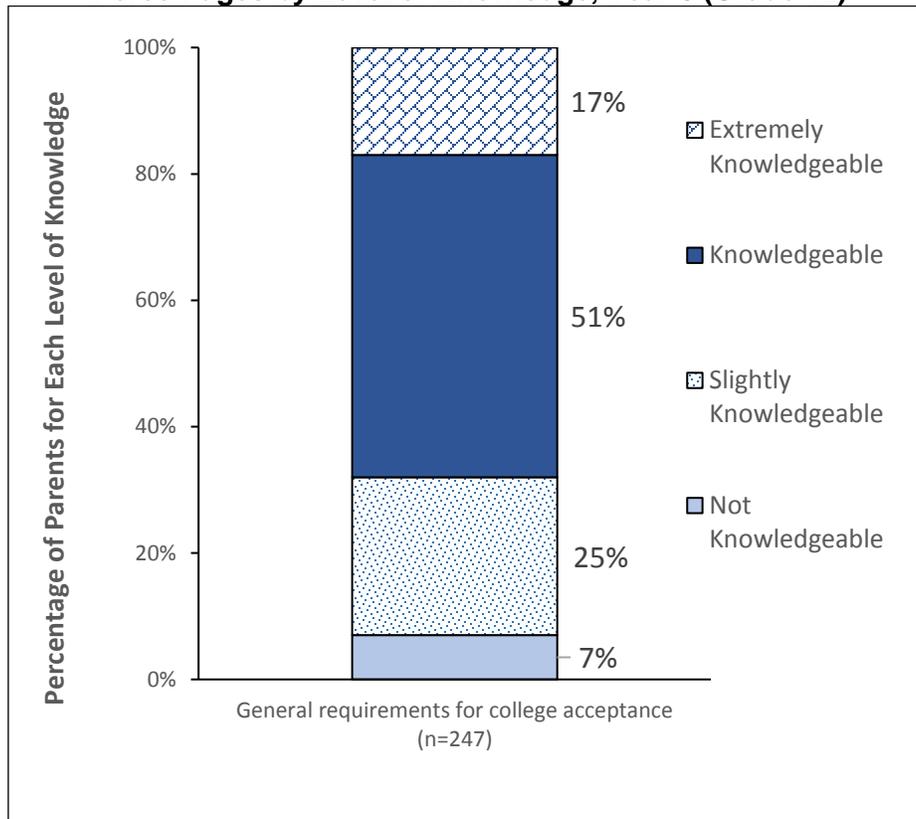


Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Parents were also asked about their level of knowledge about general requirements for college acceptance. In Year 6, over two-thirds (68%) of parents indicated that they were *Knowledgeable* or *Extremely knowledgeable*, which is an 11 percentage point increase over Year 5 (Figure 4.5; for additional details on parents' level of knowledge of college terms, see Table F.25, Appendix F).

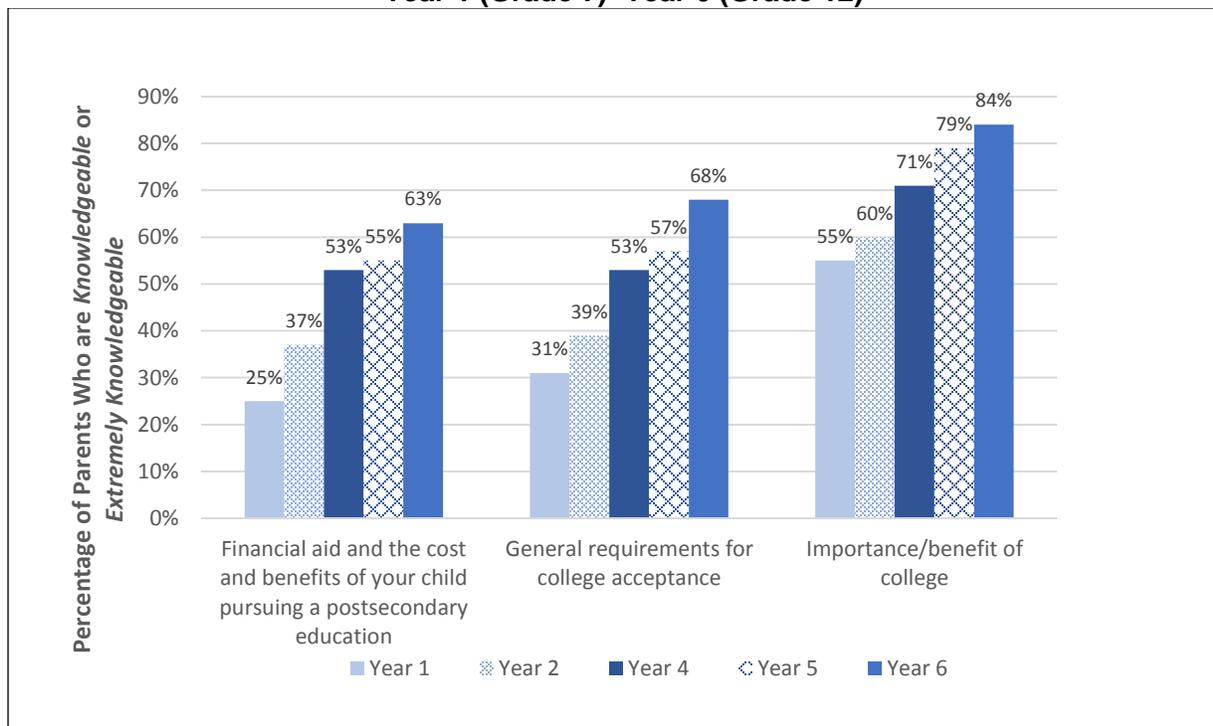
Figure 4.5. Parents’ Perceived Knowledge about College: Percentages by Level of Knowledge, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).
 Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

The percentage of parents who are either *Knowledgeable* or *Extremely Knowledgeable* in each of the areas shown in Figure 4.6 has increased each year of implementation. In Year 6, the area with the highest percentage of parents who reported being *Knowledgeable* or *Extremely knowledgeable* was “Importance or benefit of college” (84%), followed by “General requirements for college acceptance” (68%) and “Financial aid and the cost and benefits of your child pursuing a postsecondary education” (63%). Overall, the increases in parent knowledge point to the success of Texas GEAR UP SG in building parent awareness regarding college.

Figure 4.6. Percentages of Texas GEAR UP SG Parents Who Are Knowledgeable or Extremely Knowledgeable About Financial Aid, College Acceptance Requirements, and the Importance and Benefits of College: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)*



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: These data were not collected in Year 3 due to low parent response rates in the spring 2015 survey administration.

*Parents' self-reported knowledge differed significantly across all years for the following items: Financial aid and the cost and benefits of your child pursuing postsecondary education: $\chi^2(4) = 2,579, p < .001$; General Requirements for College Entrance: $\chi^2(5) = 116.5, p < .001$; Importance/Benefit of College: $\chi^2(5) = 98.1, p < .001$.

4.2. Understanding of Financial Aspects Related to Postsecondary Education

Texas GEAR UP SG aims to provide information to students and parents to increase their financial literacy about college. Several survey items were presented to students and parents to better ascertain their thinking about money and college in Year 6. The following subsections explore that thinking in more detail.

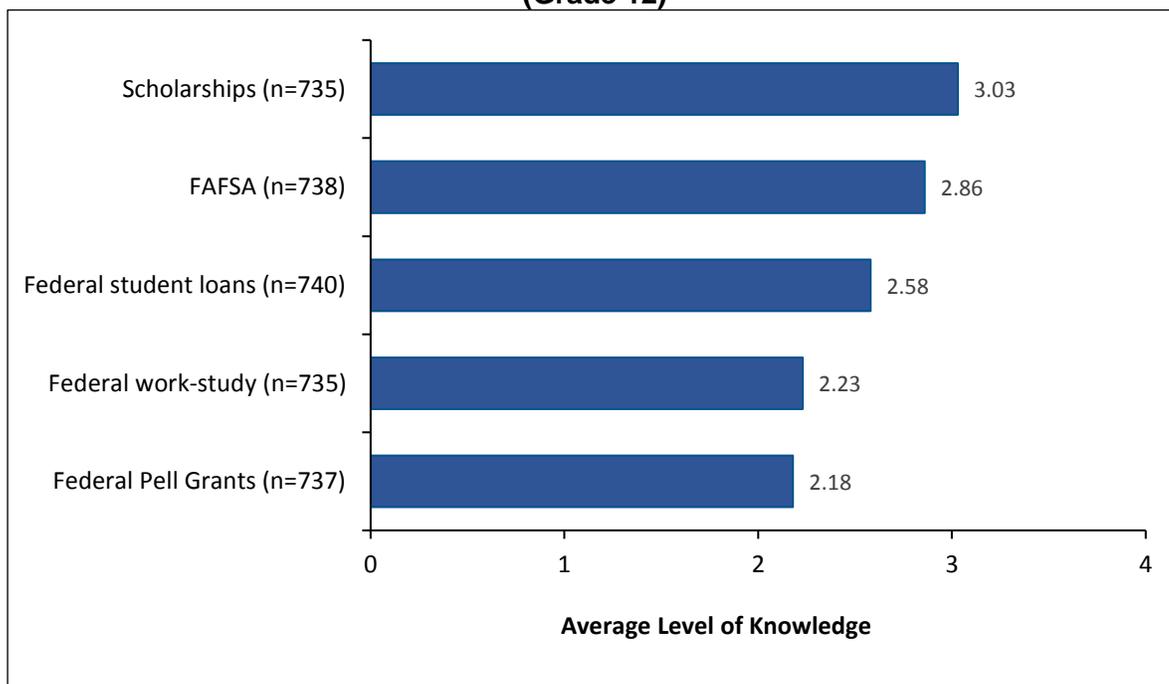
4.2.1. Knowledge about Financing College

Existing literature points to the importance of providing information about and assistance with the financial aid process to students and parents. Bettinger, Long, Oreopoulos, & Sanbonmatsu (2009) found that high school seniors and recent graduates from low- and moderate-income families who received information about and assistance with the FAFSA application were 25–30% more likely to enroll in college than those who did not.

Student surveys asked respondents to indicate how knowledgeable they were about various topics related to financing college on a four-point knowledge scale, with 1 equaling *no*

knowledge and 4 equaling *Extremely knowledgeable*. As shown in Figure 4.7, students reported being *knowledgeable* about scholarships (3.03), FAFSA (2.86) and federal student loans (2.58). Students reported being only *Slightly knowledgeable* about federal work-study (2.23) and federal Pell grants (2.18). The lower level of knowledge about the Pell grant is particularly concerning considering that many students in GEAR UP qualify for a Pell grant which provides up to \$6,095 in funding for postsecondary education during the 2018–19 school year (and is not required to be paid back).²² For additional details regarding students' perceived knowledge regarding financing college and discussions with Texas GEAR UP SG staff about financial aid, see Tables F.26 and Figure F.2 in Appendix F.

Figure 4.7. Students' Average Perceived Knowledge of Financial Aid Terms, Year 6 (Grade 12)



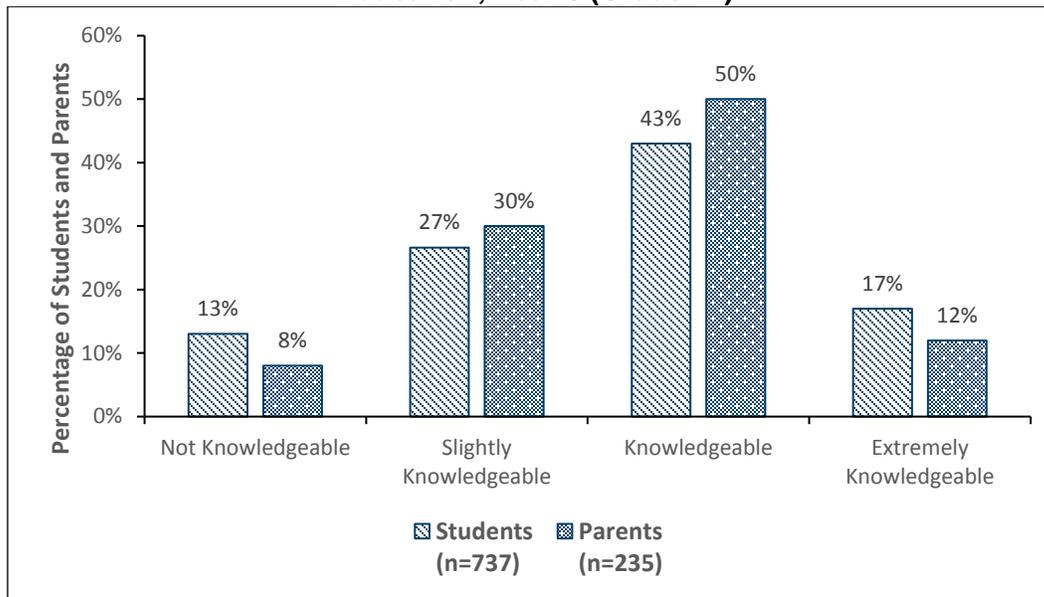
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Response options to the question "How much do you know about each of the following?" are scaled as follows: 1 – No Knowledge, 2 – Slightly Knowledgeable, 3 – Knowledgeable, and 4 – Extremely Knowledgeable. *N* counts for each item are included in the full data presented in Table F.26, Appendix F. FAFSA is Free Application for Federal Student Aid; however, the survey items used only the acronym.

Generally, parents and students were similarly knowledgeable regarding financial aid and the cost and benefits of pursuing a postsecondary education in Year 6, as shown in Figure 4.8. Nearly half (43%) of all students, and half (50%) of parents, indicated they were *Knowledgeable* about financial aid and the cost and benefits of pursuing a postsecondary education. For details regarding student and parent knowledge of college terms, see Tables F.23 and F.25, respectively, in Appendix F.

²² For more information about the federal Pell grant, please visit: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/pell>.

Figure 4.8. Parents' and Students' Perceived Knowledge Regarding Financial Aid and the Cost/Benefits of Pursuing Postsecondary Education, Year 6 (Grade 12)

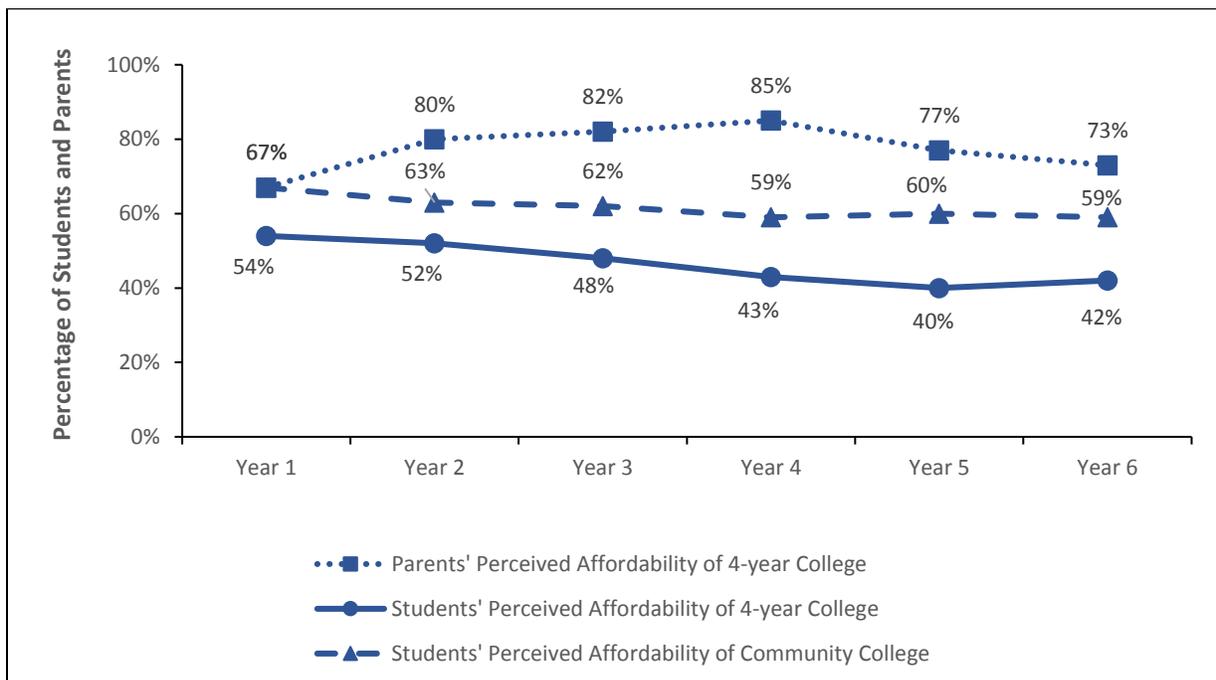


Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

4.2.2. Perceived Ability to Afford Postsecondary Education

As shown in Figure 4.9, students' perceptions of college affordability have remained generally static over the last few years of the Texas GEAR UP SG. Specifically, students' perceptions that they can *Probably* or *Definitely* afford a four-year college have hovered around 40% since Year 4 and their perceptions that they can *Probably* or *Definitely* afford a two-year or community college have hovered around 60% since Year 2. However, parents' perceptions of affordability have declined since Year 4 from a high of 85% to a low of 73% in Year 6. Compared to students, parents' perceived affordability of a four-year college was higher across all six years, with a 31 percentage point gap in Year 6. For additional details regarding students' and parents' perceptions of affordability, see Tables F.28 and F.29 in Appendix F.

Figure 4.9. Parents' and Students' Perceptions of College as Being *Probably* and *Definitely* Affordable: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)*



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Notes: Response options include *Definitely not*, *Probably not*, *Not sure*, *Probably*, and *Definitely*; however, *Not sure* was not available as a response option for parents on the Year 3 (Spring 2015), Year 4 (parents, Fall 2015), Year 4 (students, Spring 2016), and Year 5 (Spring 2017) survey. Parents' perceived affordability of four-year college and students' perceived affordability of community college were both at 67% in Year 1 (Spring 2013). Given the low parent response rate in Year 3 (Spring 2015), parent survey results are not reported. In Year 4 (Fall 2015), parent surveys were administered again due to low response rates in Year 3 (Spring 2015). Additionally, low parent response rates in spring Year 1 ($n=397$), Year 2 ($n=463$), and Year 5 ($n=352$) warrant caution in interpreting the trend data included on parent surveys. N counts for each item and each response option for Year 6 student surveys ($n=697$) are included in the full data presented in Table F.28, Appendix F.

*Students that reported themselves as either *Definitely* or *Probably* able to afford the following types of higher education significantly differed over time: Local public community college: $\chi^2(5) = 24.3, p < .001$; Public 4-year college: $\chi^2(5) = 306.2, p < .001$.

When asked about their belief that they will have enough financial aid for their education, almost two-thirds (65%) of student survey respondents reported that they were not sure and were searching for additional aid or they did not believe they will have adequate financial aid (see Table F.27, Appendix F).

4.2.3. Perceived Cost of Higher Education

When asked how much two-year and four-year colleges cost in tuition and fees for one year, a majority of students overestimated the cost as more than the state average cost, at 72% and 63%, respectively, as shown in Table 4.1 below. Only a small percentage of students could correctly state the average for tuition and fees at two-year (28%) and four-year colleges (12%), respectively. The general overestimation of costs could be related to why only about 40–60% of

students reported being able to *Probably* or *Definitely* afford the costs of postsecondary education, as discussed in the previous section.

Table 4.1. Students' Perceived Cost of Higher Education, Percentages by Cost Grouping, Year 6 (Grade 12)

How much do you think or would you guess it costs (tuition and fees only) to attend for one year at ...	<i>n</i>	\$1 to \$1,000	\$1,001 to \$1,900	\$1,901 to \$3,000	\$3,001 to \$6,500	\$6,501 to \$9,400	\$9,401 to \$13,000	\$13,001 to \$18,000	More than \$18,000
Your local public two-year community college?	692	10%	15%	28%	23%	13%	6%	3%	4%
A four-year public college in your state?	689	4%	4%	6%	12%	15%	20%	17%	24%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

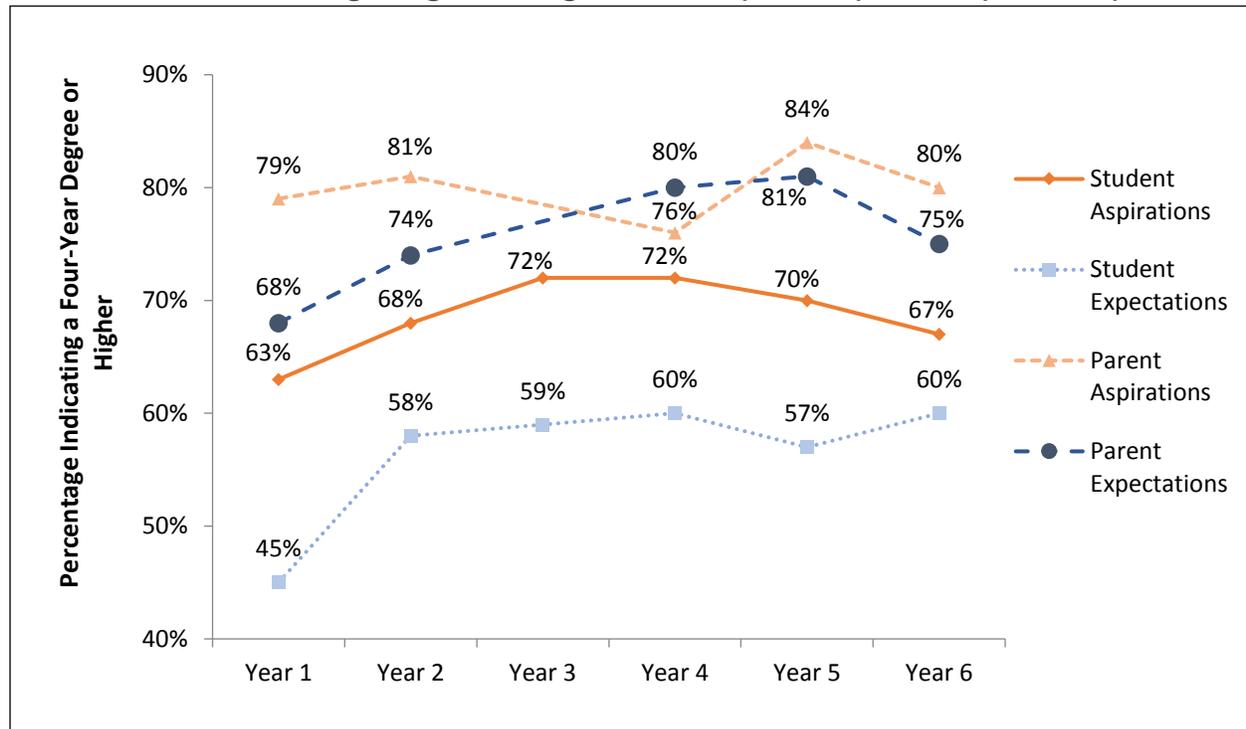
Note: Grey boxes indicate the actual cost ranges for each higher education option.

4.3. Educational Aspirations and Expectations

As shown in Figure 4.10, since Year 2, between 67–72% students reported aspiring and 57–60% reported expecting to obtain a four-year college degree or higher. The gap between aspirations and expectations slightly narrowed in Year 6 to seven percentage points from a range of 10–13 percentage points in Years 2–5. This narrowing may be due to students' postsecondary education plans becoming more finalized by the spring 2018 survey administration.

Parents' aspirations and expectations were consistently higher than those of students; however, both parental aspirations and expectations decreased from Year 5 to Year 6 (four and six percentage points respectively). These decreases, like those for students, were most likely due to their students' postsecondary education plans having materialized by the spring 2018 survey administration. For additional details regarding student and parent aspirations and expectations, including findings by school, please see Tables F.30–F.36 in Appendix F.

Figure 4.10. Percentages of Parents and Students Who Aspire and Expect to Obtain a Four-Year College Degree or Higher: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)*



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018). Note: Given the low response rate in Year 3, parent survey results are not reported. In fall 2015 of Year 4, parent surveys were administered again due to low response rates in spring 2015. Additionally, low parent response rates in Year 1 and Year 2 warrant caution in interpreting the trend data included on parent surveys. Due to anonymity, responses are not linked to an individual respondent, thus comparisons over time are based on aggregate responses. *N* counts for each item are included in the full data presented in Table F.30, Appendix F. Additionally, parent and student aspirations by expectations in Year 6 can be found in Table F.35 and Table F.36, respectively.

*There was a significant difference between student and parent *expectations* for completing a 4-year degree or higher in year 6 ($\chi^2(1) = 32.0, p < .001$). There was also a significant difference between student and parent *aspirations* for completing a 4-year degree or higher in year 6 ($\chi^2(1) = 5.4, p < .05$).

4.4. Anticipated Postsecondary Plans

At the time of the spring 2018 survey administration, many students' postsecondary education plans had been finalized. More comprehensive data on college applications, financial aid, and postsecondary enrollment will be reported on in the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report. In this report, survey data from Year 6 provide an estimation as to the students' anticipated postsecondary plans.

4.4.1. College Applications

According to student survey respondents, many (89%) students had applied to one or more institutions of postsecondary education as of spring 2018 (Table F.37, Appendix F). Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported during site visits that they encouraged students to apply to at least three "safe" schools (i.e., schools with acceptance requirements they definitely met), three "target" schools (i.e., schools with acceptance requirements they were very likely to meet), and

three “reach” schools (i.e., schools with higher selectivity rates). Staff hoped that this initiative would provide students with multiple options, allowing students to select schools that were the best fit (e.g., academically, financially, geographically) for the student. According to survey data, roughly equal percentages applied to three to four schools (36%) as applied to one or two (35%). About one-fifth applied to five or more schools (19%) (Table F.37, Appendix F). Students also reported on the types of schools they applied to: over half (55%) applied to a four-year college, over half (58%) applied to a two-year college, almost one-tenth (9%) applied to a technical school, and fewer (2%) applied to “other” (Table F.38, Appendix F).

To support students’ college applications, Texas GEAR UP SG staff held workshops and worked with students one-on-one. Staff introduced students to the ApplyTexas system and helped students use it to submit an application to a local community college.²³ This activity enabled students to create an account in the system and provided students with support to submit an initial college application that could also be used as a standard application when applying to additional schools in the system.

Students cited several resources as helpful when preparing and submitting college applications. The resources selected most often included the GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor (67%), followed by teachers (33%), parents or family members (30%), other GEAR UP staff (28%), and school counselors (27%) (Table F.39, Appendix F). Over four-fifths (81%) of parent respondents reported that they found Texas GEAR UP SG staff members to be helpful or extremely helpful in providing assistance on the college application process (Table F.40, Appendix F). In addition, a similar percentage (85%) of parent respondents reported that they found the ApplyTexas system to be *not at all challenging* or *a little challenging* (Table F.41, Appendix F). Additional details regarding the college application process may be found in Tables F.42 and F.43 in Appendix F.

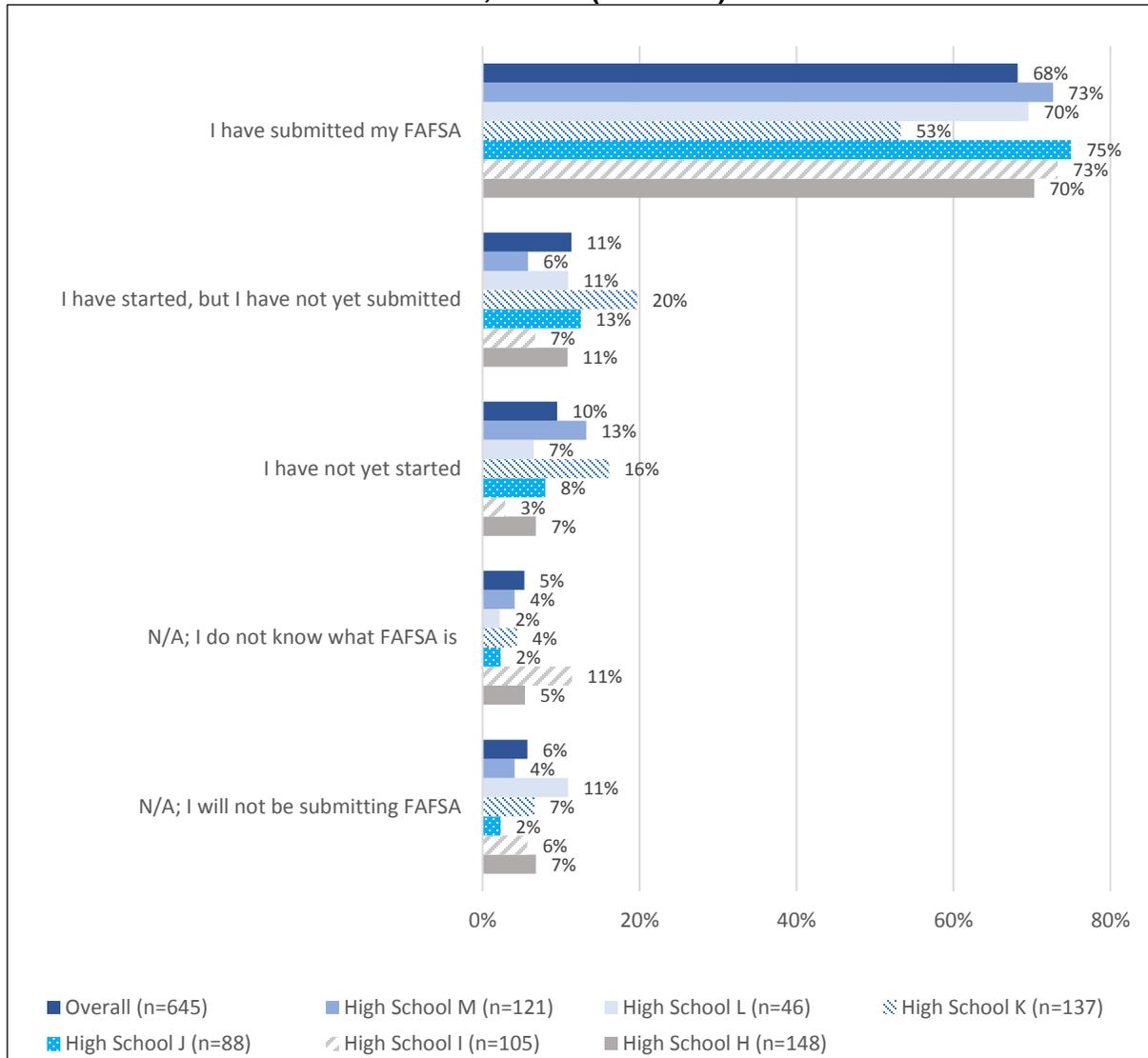
4.4.2. Financial Aid

According to the 2018 FAFSA Study conducted by NerdWallet, 44% of Texas graduates from the Class of 2018 did not submit a FAFSA (Helhoski, 2018). As of spring 2018, approximately 68% of student respondents reported having submitted their FAFSA (ranging from 53–75% across the schools), signifying that the GEAR UP students exceeded the statewide average in terms of FAFSA submissions by approximately 24 percentage points (Figure 4.11 and Table F.44, Appendix F). Another approximately one-tenth (11%) of student respondents reported starting, but not yet submitting their FAFSA. While one school (High School I) had approximately one-tenth (11%) of students indicate that they did not know what the FAFSA is, the largest percentage across the schools, this school also had one of the highest FAFSA completion rates across the schools (73%). Of the small percentage (6%) of students who indicated that they will not be submitting a FAFSA, students cited the following top three reasons: *I do not plan on applying for financial aid* (38%), *I am not eligible for federal student aid*

²³ ApplyTexas is a centralized means for both Texas and non-Texas students to apply to many postsecondary institutions in Texas. For information, visit <https://www.applytexas.org/>

(27%), and *My parents and/or I do not feel comfortable providing personal information on financial aid applications* (22%) (Table F.45, Appendix F).

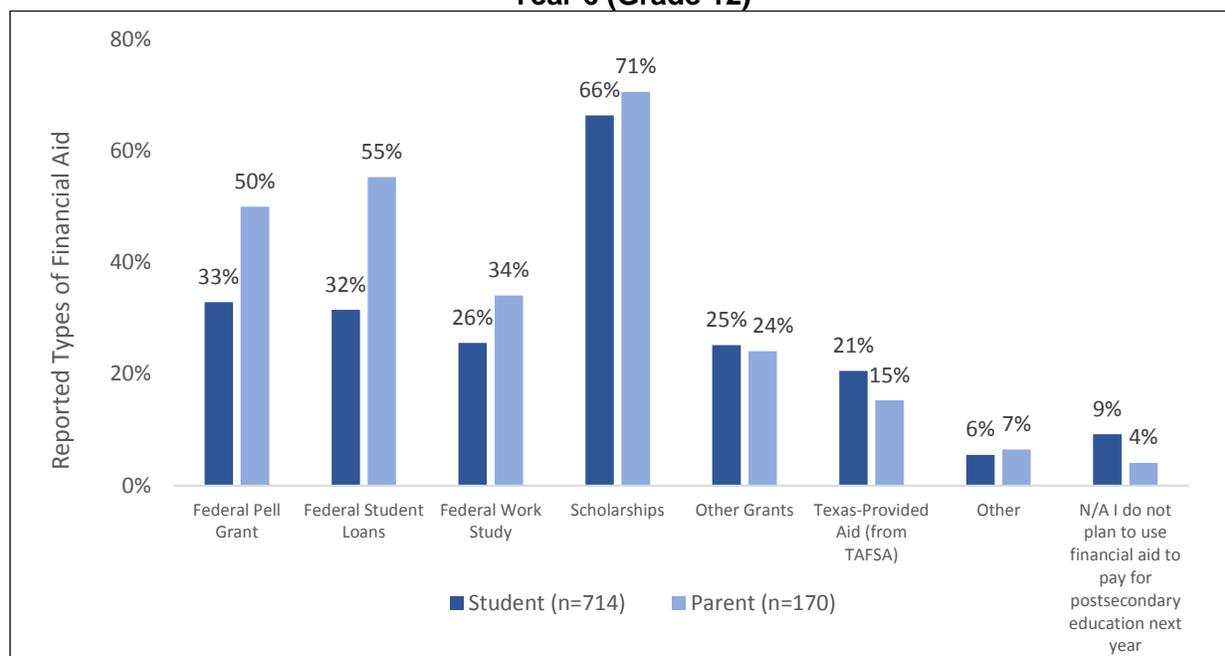
Figure 4.11. Student-Reported Level of Progress Made in Completing the FAFSA By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Student and parent survey respondents also reported on the types of financial aid that they were planning to use to finance postsecondary education (Figure 4.12 and Table F.46, Appendix F). Scholarships were the most frequently cited type of financial aid that would be used, according to both students (66%) and parents (71%). The next most frequently cited types of aid were federal student loans and federal Pell grants.

Figure 4.12. Student- and Parent-Reported Types of Projected Financial Aid, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

As shown in Table 4.2, nearly two-thirds (65%) of parents indicated that they had not experienced any challenges in obtaining financial aid, which suggests that the support they received for completing the FAFSA and other financial aid tasks was largely successful. For those parents who did cite challenges, the most frequently selected challenges (aside from “other”) included their child not being eligible for or did not receive a scholarship (9%), their job prevented them from spending adequate time applying (7%), and they did not fully understand the instructions that were included (6%). When respondents selected *Other* as it pertained to challenges in obtaining financial aid, they reported that their family did not qualify for financial aid, that they weren’t knowledgeable enough, or they did not receive guidance on how to fully complete the application.

Table 4.2. Parent-Reported Challenges Experienced in Obtaining Financial Aid, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Challenges (Select all that apply)	(n=170)
N/A, I have not experienced any challenges	64.8%
N/A My child does not plan to use financial aid	2.7%
I did not receive financial aid information in a timely manner	4.4%
My job prevented me from spending adequate time applying	7.1%
Time with my family has prevented me from applying in a timely manner	4.9%
I do not fully understand the instructions that were included	6.0%
I do not have internet access at home	4.4%
My child is not eligible or did not receive a scholarship	9.4%
Other	10.4%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

During site visits, Texas GEAR UP SG staff provided estimates of the amount of scholarship aid awarded to students in their districts. As shown in Table 4.3, the total amount of aid, as reported by Texas GEAR UP SG staff, ranged from \$1 million to \$12.5 million—amounts that were all described as increases over previous years.

Table 4.3. Estimated Scholarship Aid to Students, Year 6 (Grade 12)

District 1	District 2	District 3 ¹	District 4 ²
\$1 million	\$1 million	\$8.5 million	\$12.5 million

Source: Texas GEAR UP spring 2018 site visits.

¹This amount is an increase from approximately \$1.9 million in scholarship aid the previous school year.

² School H reported approximately \$5.5 million, an increase from \$2.5 million scholarship aid the previous year; School I reported approximately \$7 million, an increase from approximately \$2.5 million scholarship aid the previous year.

4.4.3. Enrollment in Postsecondary Education

Seventy percent of student respondents who applied to college indicated that they had been accepted as of the spring 2018 survey administration (Table F.47, Appendix F). Most students reported having been accepted to a four-year college (65%), followed by a two-year college (63%) and technical school (5%) (Table F.48, Appendix F).

Of those student respondents who reported that they were accepted to a postsecondary education institution, almost three-quarters (72%) had decided which school to enroll in during the 2018–19 school year (Table F.49, Appendix F). Most students reported planning to enroll in a four-year school (52%), following by a two-year school (45%) and a technical school (2%) (Table F.50, Appendix F). In addition, 73% of parent respondents reported that they were expecting their child to enroll in postsecondary education (Table F.51, Appendix F).

Project Objective 5.5 states that more than 50% of cohort students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation. While this objective will not be able to be reported on definitively until the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report, student responses to the spring 2018 survey provide an estimate regarding progress toward this objective. As shown in Table 4.4, as of the spring 2018 survey administration, 39% of all survey respondents (including those who reported they were or were not accepted to a postsecondary education institution) had decided where to enroll in postsecondary education in fall 2018, which is the closest proxy available for measuring progress toward this project objective. Overall, while the cohort has not yet met this objective, the cohort was approximately twelve percentage points from doing so; it is possible that the cohort will meet this objective once complete data for Year 6 are included in the analysis.

Table 4.4. Students Who Reported a Decision on Where to Enroll in Postsecondary Education in Fall 2018, Year 6 (Grade 12)

High School	<i>n</i>	Percentage of All Student Respondents Reporting Plans to Enroll in a Specific Institution in Fall 2018
High School H	173	37%
High School I	120	39%
High School J	101	55%
High School K	158	30%
High School L	54	31%
High School M	141	45%
Overall	747	39%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: The only students who were presented with the question of whether they had decided where to enroll in postsecondary education for fall 2018 were those respondents who had indicated earlier in the survey that they had been accepted to a postsecondary education institution.

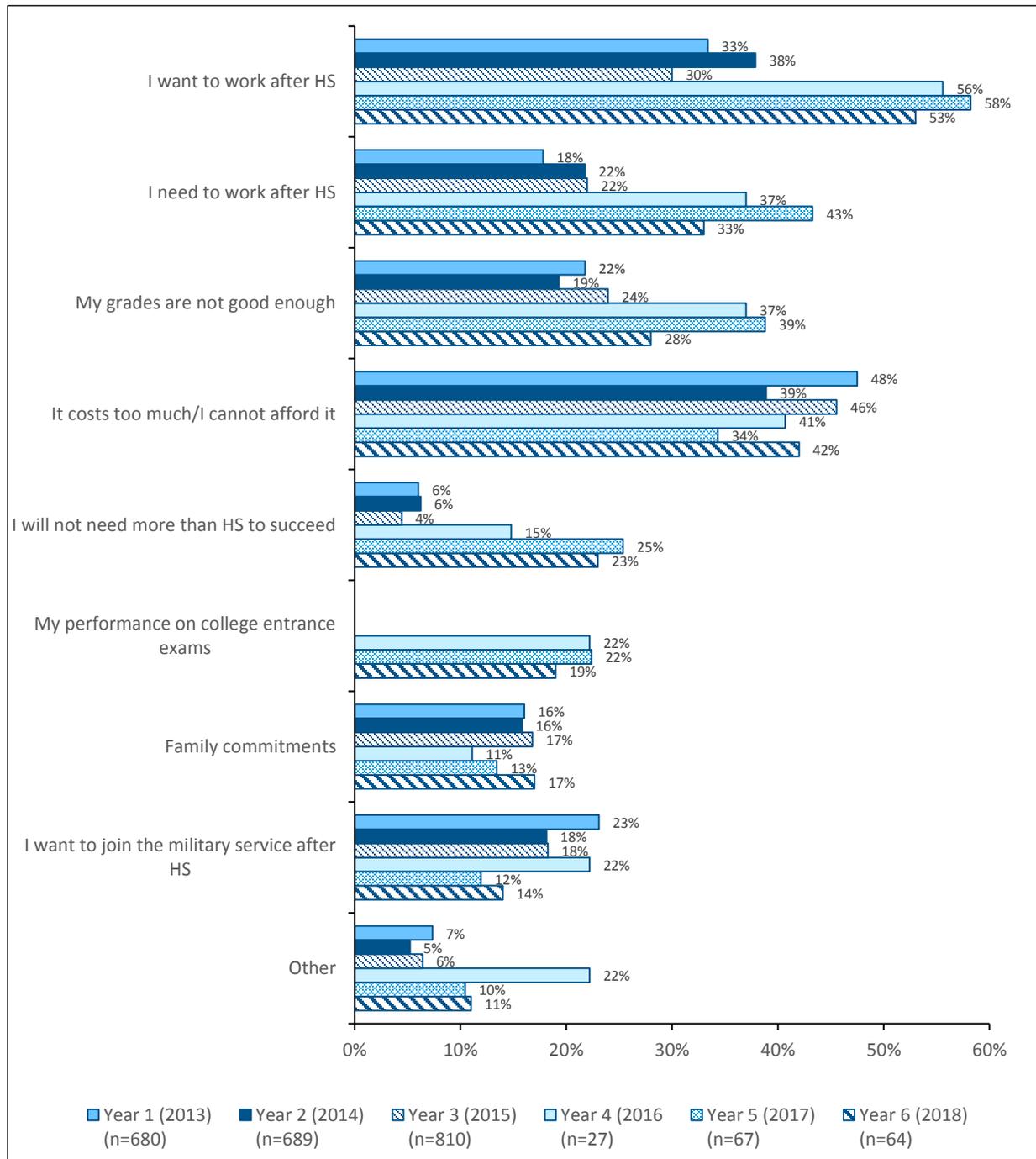
The highest rated factors that influenced which college students planned to attend were *The college offers the type of degree I plan to pursue*, (82%); *The school has a good reputation for the subject I want to major in*, (81%); and *The college has a high graduation/completion rate for students like me*, (74%) (Table F.52, Appendix F).

Overall, nearly half of the student respondents (46%) indicated that they were *Mostly prepared* or *Very prepared* for postsecondary education (Table F.53, Appendix F).

4.4.4. Not Continuing Postsecondary Education

Approximately one-tenth (9%) of student respondents reported not planning to continue their postsecondary education and provided a range of reasons to explain that decision, as shown in Figure 4.13 (see Table F.54 and F.56, Appendix F). Across all six implementation years, the most reported reasons that students cited for not planning to continue their education were *I wanted to work after high school*, *I need to work after high school*, and *It costs too much/I can't afford it*. Just over half (52%) of the student respondents not planning to continue said that they used to think that they would attend postsecondary education but now no longer plan to and just under half (48%) said that they never expected to continue their education after high school (Table F.55, Appendix F).

Figure 4.13. Percentages of Texas GEAR UP SG Students by Reason for Not Continuing Education: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)*



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

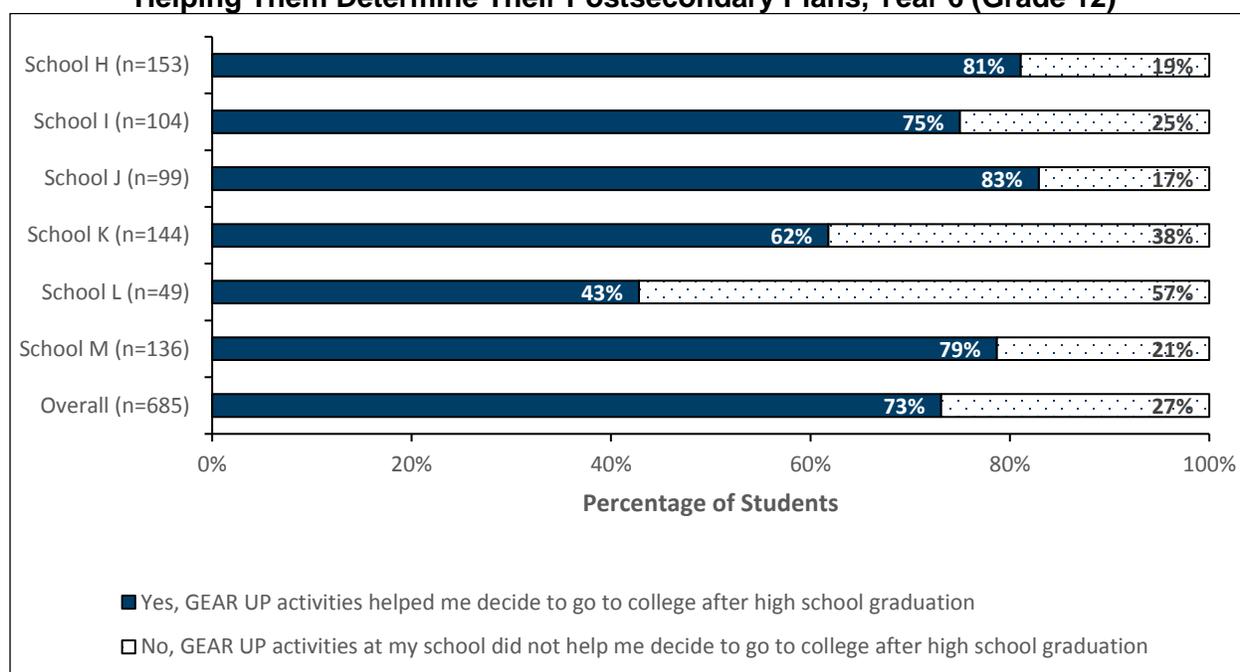
Note: “My performance on college entrance exams” was a new response option added in Year 4 (Table F.54, Appendix F).

*Student responses differed significantly across time for the following reasons: I need to work after high school: $\chi^2(5) = 210.4, p < .001$, I want to work after high school: $\chi^2(5) = 8962.8, p < .001$; I will not need more than high school to succeed: $\chi^2(5) = 88.8, p < .001$; I want to join the military service after high school: $\chi^2(5) = 15.7, p < .01$; It costs too much/ I can’t afford it: $\chi^2(5) = 42.7, p < .001$; and My grades aren’t good enough: $\chi^2(5) = 15.7, p < .01$.

4.5. Perceived Impact of Texas GEAR UP SG on Educational Plans

Of the students who indicated that GEAR UP activities did or did not help them to decide to go to college, almost three-quarters (73%) reported that it did help them decide (Figure 4.14;). About half of respondents reported plans to enroll in college in fall 2018 (51%) while almost one-fifth (16%) indicated they will be going to college after fall 2018. About one-fifth of respondents (18%) indicated that they were already planning to go to college regardless of Texas GEAR UP SG activities (Table F.56, Appendix F). Additionally, 6% of students across schools noted that Texas GEAR UP SG did not have an impact in determining postsecondary plans and they do not plan to go to college.

Figure 4.14. Percentages of Students Who Do and Do Not Credit Texas GEAR UP SG in Helping Them Determine Their Postsecondary Plans, Year 6 (Grade 12)*



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Figure 4.14 reflects respondents who answered the following response options: “Yes, I will be going in Fall 2018,” “Yes, but sometime after Fall 2018,” “No, I was already planning on going to college,” or “No, I still don’t plan to go to college.” Percentages in Figure 4.14 displays responses after removing respondents that selected the following response options: “Does not apply, I am not aware I have participated in GEAR UP at my school but I do plan to go to college,” or “Does not apply, I am not aware I have participated in GEAR UP at my school and I do not plan to go to college.” However, when including the “Does not apply” options, the following percentages of total responses for these two options are as follows: School H: 12% ($n=173$), School I: 13% ($n=120$), School J: 2% ($n=101$), School L: 9% ($n=54$), School M: 4% ($n=141$), and Overall: 8% ($n=746$).

* Student responses differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(15) = 72.5$, $p < .001$.

4.6. Summary

Chapter 4 described the progress students have made in finalizing their postsecondary plans and the activities that have been involved in that process. Progress towards Project Objective 5.5, which states that more than 50% of the cohort will enroll in postsecondary education in the

fall after high school graduation, was measured here; however, it will not be reported on definitively until the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report. For Year 6, progress was measured using student survey responses in spring 2018 regarding students' decision on where to enroll in postsecondary education in fall 2018. Over one-third of all survey respondents (39%) reported they had decided. While the cohort has not met the objective, they may do once complete data for Year 6 are analyzed.

5. Summary of Findings, Recommendations, and Next Steps

5.1. Findings

In Year 6, there was a notable shift in implementation activities from earlier years where the focus was on providing the cohort with opportunities to build awareness and readiness for college to working with students and parents to take concrete steps to apply for and enroll in college in the semester following high school graduation. College Preparation Advisors reported that their primary advising tasks were related to planning for students' postsecondary education, such as FAFSA and application completion, enrollment decisions, and financial aid package reviews. Many of these advising activities were conducted in a one-on-one setting so that College Preparation Advisors could tailor conversations and information to meet students' specific needs. As a result of this shift, there was a recalibration regarding participation in activities; participation in many college awareness and readiness activities that were offered in previous years tended to decrease while participation in activities to support college and financial aid applications and decisions tended to increase.

Specifically, participation in the following awareness and readiness activities decreased from Year 5 to Year 6: mentoring, educational field trips, college visits, job site visits, summer programs, and workshops. Additionally, the percentage of students who participated in at least four Texas GEAR UP SG activities decreased from nearly half in Year 4 and Year 5 to under one-third in Year 6. However, participation increased between Year 5 and Year 6 for counseling/advising and financial aid and support services—for both participation rates and average number of hours spent. Participation also increased for tutoring in Year 6 (Table E.36, Appendix E).

As a result of this shift in offered activities, as of spring 2018, approximately two-thirds (68%) of student survey respondents reported having submitted their FAFSA—twenty-four percentage points higher than the Texas state average of 44% (Helhoski, 2018). In addition, a majority (89%) of the student survey respondents reported having applied to college, and of those, almost three-quarters (70%) reported having already been accepted to college. Overall, over one-third (39%) of respondents had already made the decision on where to enroll, regardless of acceptance, in postsecondary education in fall 2018 as reported in spring 2018.

Despite positive rates of college acceptance as reported on the student survey, the cohort fell below academic targets on measures of academic preparation for college. Specifically, only High School L had more than 70% of students meet Project Objective 4.4, which requires 70% of GEAR UP students to have knowledge of, and demonstrate necessary academic preparation for, college; nevertheless, the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort as a whole was close to meeting the objective at 60%. In addition, no school was on track to meet Project Objective 5.3 regarding graduating college ready; only 17% of Texas GEAR UP SG students met the criteria as of February 28, 2018, compared to 47% in the state (Table E.34, Appendix E). However, approximately three-quarters of students had completed Algebra II and were pursuing an endorsement as of February 28, 2018—suggesting that by the end of Year 6 that group will

have fulfilled at least one of the requirements for graduating at the distinguished level of achievement.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on an analysis of implementation in Year 6, the evaluation team has identified the following set of potential best practices:

- **Disseminate information and resources in multiple modes and formats.** Students at School K noted preferences for receiving information regarding scholarships. Some students commented that they prefer to look for the information on the school's website because they found it convenient and easy to use while another student preferred to pick up hard copy applications because his/her phone did not always allow access to the online resources. Because the information was made available by Texas GEAR UP SG staff in a variety of formats, more students accessed and took advantage of the information.
- **Provide opportunities for students to have one-on-one conversations regarding postsecondary education with staff.** College Preparation Advisors in Year 6 commented that, while they held larger events to support students and families with college applications and financial aid forms such as the FAFSA, many preferred to speak with Texas GEAR UP SG or other college access staff on a one-on-one basis. The one-on-one conversations provided students and families with privacy, confidentiality, and the opportunity to have conversations that were more specific to their needs and questions.
- **Allocate a shared space for postsecondary education information.** Five of the six schools housed their Texas GEAR UP SG staff with other staff from college access programs at the school, which created a central space in the school for information on postsecondary education. Most students reported that they would go to the space if they had questions and acknowledged that they would find someone to help or answer their questions; this was convenient and a reliable location to always find support. Texas GEAR UP SG staff and community alliances reported on site visits that the shared space was also a reliable way to ensure students had a "one stop shop" to receive help. Additionally, the shared space helped facilitate collaboration and sharing of information about students' progress among college access staff at the school.
- **Provide opportunities to visit colleges each year for all students.** In Year 6, students shared the role that college visits played in their postsecondary education enrollment decisions. Opportunities to visit campuses with Texas GEAR UP SG helped them to determine schools that were not the right fit for them, which streamlined their college application process and eased their college enrollment decision making. Hopefully, by finding colleges that are the right fit, students will have higher postsecondary education persistence and retention outcomes. Site visit participants also noted that visits to colleges away from their local communities encouraged many students to consider otherwise unknown schools and programs.
- **Offer multiple opportunities for students to participate in college entrance examinations.** Most Texas GEAR UP SG schools offered at least two opportunities for students to participate in an SAT School Day as well as an opportunity to participate in the PSAT (Preliminary SAT). Schools provided support to participate independently in other

administrations of the assessment as well. Almost two-thirds of students (61%) reported in Year 6 on the survey that they tried to increase their score by taking the SAT multiple times; further, three-quarters of those students reported that they were able to increase their score by taking the SAT multiple times. Similarly, Texas GEAR UP SG staff offered multiple opportunities for students to participate in the TSIA; almost three-quarters (74%) of students reported in the spring 2018 student survey that they were able to increase their score by retaking a section on the TSIA multiple times. Students continued to report on site visits that multiple opportunities made them more comfortable and confident to succeed on these assessments.

In addition, the evaluation team has identified the following recommendations for grant implementation—both in terms of continued activities to sustain the grant and support the cohort in Year 7 and in terms of how to implement similar programming in contexts outside of the Texas GEAR UP SG:

- **Establish regular check-ins among administrators, counselors, and staff leading postsecondary education awareness initiatives.** In general, when Texas GEAR UP SG staff reported high levels of implementation, administrator engagement and leadership was reported to be a key component of the success. However, administrative turnover throughout the Texas GEAR UP SG grant was reported to be a barrier in implementation most years by Texas GEAR UP SG staff. Coordinators commented that it was sometimes overwhelming to introduce the grant to new administrators, explain the purpose and role of the grant at their school, and cultivate enough buy-in among the administrators for them to become a champion of the grant and its objectives. To facilitate engagement and buy-in for college access among school leadership, schools may want to consider establishing regular check-ins among principals, counselors, and any other school or district staff that lead, oversee, or track college and career readiness initiatives. It may be helpful for this group to develop internal benchmarks related to college and career readiness that are appropriate for their students and then use their regular check-in meetings to check progress towards the benchmarks. Counselors may provide updates, successes, and challenges related to student academic readiness and other members may provide updates on activities, participation in the activities, and feedback from participants. When benchmarks or goals are not met, the check-ins will provide an opportunity for the group to determine what changes should be made to improve efforts as well as identify interventions to put in place for students who need services or support. Further, the updates and feedback from the counselors and other staff may provide the principal and other administrators with information about how to promote college and career readiness among the rest of the school staff, students, families, and community partners.
- **Provide training for all school staff on college entrance requirements and financial aid.** Providing all school staff with training on college entrance requirements and financial aid may increase the awareness of postsecondary education among students and their families, continue to facilitate the college going culture at the school, and sustain the dissemination of college information after the Texas GEAR UP SG—and the grant-funded positions—come to an end. Training may include recent information on college entrance requirements and financial aid, how to incorporate relevant information into meetings and

conversations with students, other staff, or families to increase awareness, as well as where they may be able to find information (e.g., college websites, counseling offices, federal or state websites). Incorporating these elements regularly into discussions may help support early awareness and encourage higher levels of readiness.

- **Designate school staff across all grades to take ownership of college advising tasks to expand opportunities for one-on-one conversations.** Because counselors are often overwhelmed with existing workloads, schools may want to consider designating school staff to lead college advising tasks. While it is likely that it will be beneficial for all staff to be well-informed of college entrance requirements and financial aid information, designating and promoting staff as a reliable and accessible source for information about postsecondary education may be an important resource for students. School staff often have multiple roles on their campus, so it may be helpful to designate multiple staff as college advisors or mentors, based on grade level or college topic (e.g., FAFSA, college applications, SAT/ACT). Researchers from the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) found a positive correlation between students who met with a counselor on a one-on-one basis to discuss college admissions or financial aid during Grade 12 and student attendance at a postsecondary education institution during the following fall semester as well as student enrollment in a bachelor's degree program during the following fall semester (Dunlop Velez, 2016). These findings suggest that opportunities for students to have these discussions have an impact on student outcomes related to postsecondary education.
- **Provide trainings to help teachers incorporate SAT, ACT, and TSIA preparation into coursework.** Students were not on track to meet many of the academic preparedness and readiness targets of the Texas GEAR UP SG primarily because of low scores on the college entrance examinations. Test preparation sessions coordinated by Texas GEAR UP SG for the SAT, ACT, and TSIA were offered for students, but Texas GEAR UP SG staff often commented on the low attendance for the sessions. School districts may want to consider training for teachers on how to incorporate test preparation for these assessments into students' coursework. The test preparation strategies may include an assessment of students' knowledge of the content as well as help for students develop strong test-taking skills. By integrating test preparation strategies into regular coursework, more students will receive test preparation, which may lead to increased scores for these important college entrance assessments.
- **Encourage all families to submit a FAFSA and to seek financial aid.** As school and college access staff continue to engage with families to provide information and support related to postsecondary education, they should encourage families and students to seek out financial aid and submit a FAFSA despite their perceptions of eligibility for financial aid or a student's plans to enroll in a postsecondary institution. College Preparation Advisors said they encouraged every student to submit a FAFSA, even if the student did not plan to enroll in postsecondary education, because students' plans may change if work or other postsecondary plans fall through; lack of financial assistance will not become a barrier if this is the case. Additionally, the FAFSA can play an important role in not only determining eligibility for need-based aid, but also non-need-based aid offered by states and institutions.

5.3. Next Steps

The evaluation team will continue the evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP SG for the seventh and final year of the grant during the 2018–19 school year, when the Texas GEAR UP SG primary cohort will be in postsecondary education. The Year 7 annual implementation report will continue to focus on implementation (district and statewide), a mix of implementation strategies, and the perceptions of various stakeholders regarding the program. Student surveys will focus on enrollment in postsecondary education and support received from Texas GEAR UP SG. Site visits and phone interviews will focus on student support and sustainability during the school year.

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APPENDIX A: Evaluation Questions and Project Goals

A.1 Texas GEAR UP SG Evaluation Questions

Table A.1 provides an overview of the evaluation questions addressed in this Year 6 implementation report. Additional research questions will be addressed in the future. The list of evaluation questions will be expanded as appropriate to each report. In addition, several of the research questions described below focus on understanding when and how implementation changes. For this report, the focus is on Year 6 of implementation only.

Table A.1. Texas GEAR UP SG Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Questions
1. Implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG Strategies and Identification of Potential Best Practices
1.1 To evaluate implementation of GEAR UP strategies intended for teacher professional development (PD) to improve academic rigor (AR) and data-driven instruction (DDI)
1.1.1 When and to what extent did grantees implement PD strategies?
1.1.2 When and how did grantees provide PD regarding vertical team preparation and implementation to MS and HS teachers? Were appropriate teachers from all schools on the vertical team able to attend the PD?
1.1.3 What are perceptions of teachers who attend given PD regarding: training itself, impact on teacher practice, and impact on vertical alignment, as appropriate to training?
1.1.4 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to implementing PD opportunities? If barriers to implementing were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
1.1.5 In what ways do GEAR UP trained teachers report implementing data driven strategies? Differentiated instruction? PBL?
1.1.6 How do training opportunities remain consistent / change over time in order to be appropriate for a) teachers who have not yet had the opportunity to attend training? b) Teachers who attended trainings in prior year?
1.2 To evaluate implementation of student support services GEAR UP strategies
1.2.1 What types of information were utilized to identify students for participation in student support services implementation activities?
1.2.2 When and to what extent did grantees implement student support services strategies with students? What percentages of students are identified for student support services based on first six weeks of school as compared to at other times in school year?
1.2.3 What are perceptions of students, parents, and staff of student support services implementation strategies?
1.2.4 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to implementing student support services strategies? If barriers to implementing were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
1.2.5 Each year of the grant, what types of information are grantees making available to students? How do grantees inform students about opportunities to learn about college attendance and career success? How many activities are held for students to attend? How and to what extent do grantees provide information to students regarding what information is available through the state office?
1.2.6 By the end of each year, how many students (%) participate in each type of college readiness activity conducted by the grantees? How many activities does each student attend? What patterns of participation can be identified?
1.2.7 What are students' levels of understanding regarding a range of topics linked to understanding college and career readiness (e.g., college aspirations/expectations, college options, being college ready at each grade level, financing college)? Do students report having gained knowledge over the year based on information and activities provided by the grantee? Change over years of the evaluation?
1.3 To identify potential best practices
1.3.1 What practices implemented by the grantees might be identified as potential best practices based on short-term outcomes? What outcomes, if any, exist that support any long term impact of early implementation of potential best practices?
1.3.2 What practices implemented by grantees (students, parents, staff) are perceived by grantees to be effective, and therefore a potential best practice?

Evaluation Questions
1.3.3 What individual strategies and/or mix of strategies are related to achieving desired GEAR UP outcomes? Are perceptions of potential best practices aligned with analysis based on outcomes? If not, what might explain such gaps?
2. Family, School and Community Impact
2.1 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on families (parents)
2.1.1 Each year of the grant, what types of information are grantees making available to students' families? How do grantees inform families about opportunities to learn about college attendance and career success? How many activities are held for parents to attend? How and to what extent do grantees provide information to parents regarding what is available through the state office?
2.1.2 By the end of each year, how many parents (%) attend each type of activity conducted by the grantees? How many activities does each parent attend?
2.1.3 Each year it is measured, what are parents' levels of understanding regarding a range of topics linked to understanding college and career readiness (e.g., college options, being college ready at each grade level, financing college)? Do parents report having gained knowledge over the year based on information and activities provided by the grantee? To what extent does parent knowledge change over the course of the grant?
2.1.4 What information or opportunities do parents' perceive to have been most relevant in informing them regarding college and career readiness?
2.1.5 What barriers and facilitators do schools and parents report regarding participation in college readiness activities? If barriers were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
2.2 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on school curriculum (academic rigor)
2.2.1 At the end of each year of the grant, how many hours of college credit are students in each school able to earn (i.e., through AP, dual credit or concurrent enrollment)?
2.2.2 How many grantees (%) have made available at least 18 hours of college credit that students can earn while in high school?
2.2.3 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to making college credit available to students and to student participation in college credit earning courses? If barriers to implementing were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
2.3 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on community alliances
2.3.1 At the end of each grant year, how many partnerships have schools formed with business alliances? In what ways and how often have business partners offered opportunities for career exploration to students?
2.3.2 At the end of each grant year, how many partnerships have schools formed with government entities? Community groups? In what ways and how often have partners offered opportunities for career exploration to students? Opportunities to provide information regarding scholarships, financial aid, college awareness and readiness?
2.3.3 What are the perceptions of the school and of the community partners regarding the partnership as it relates to meeting GEAR UP goals? What facilitators and barriers to partnerships are reported? If barriers were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
3. Statewide Impact
3.1 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on statewide availability of information and professional learning opportunities
3.1.1 By the end of year 1, what types of information regarding college readiness have been made available through the state? Are there any topics relevant to college readiness not yet available?
3.1.2 What steps if any has the state office taken to communicate to schools and families about information available?
3.1.3 Each year, how many GEAR UP professional learning opportunities are made available to educators (e.g., Project Share, face-to-face)? How many educators, including those not at current GEAR UP campuses, are participating in such opportunities?
3.1.4 At the end of year 6, how many school districts (%) have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource (i.e., materials, professional development)?
4. Cost and Sustainability Outcomes
4.1 To evaluate use of GEAR UP funding
4.1.1 At the end of each year and over the course of the grant, how do grantees report using grant funds? Matching funds? What changes over time occur in how funding is used?

Evaluation Questions
4.2 To evaluate sustainability of GEAR UP implementation
4.2.1 To what extent are grantees able to sustain activities initiated with the GEAR UP cohort with following cohorts of students? Are some types of activities easier to sustain than others? How does cost factor into sustainability? To what extent do grantees prioritize sustaining activities perceived to be best practices?
4.2.2 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to sustaining GEAR UP activities? Do perceptions of these change over the course of the grant funding?

A.2 Texas GEAR UP State Grant Project Goals and Objectives

Project objectives that were addressed in even a preliminary manner were presented within the report. The following is a list of all project objectives outlined by Texas Education Agency (TEA) in the federal grant proposal.

Table A.2. Texas GEAR UP SG Project Goals and Objectives

Project Objectives
Project Goal 1 – Improve instruction and expand academic opportunities in mathematics and science
Project Objective 1.1: By the end of the project's second year, 30% of cohort students will have completed Algebra I in the 8 th grade. By the end of the project's third year, 85% of students will have completed Algebra I.
Project Objective 1.2 - By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Program plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average. ²⁴
Project Goal 2 – Increase access to and success in quality advanced academic programs.
Project Objective 2.1: By the end of the project's fourth year, all participating high schools will make opportunities available for each student to complete 18 hours of college credit (through AP, dual credit, or concurrent enrollment) by the time he or she graduates from high school.
Project Objective 2.2: By the end of the project's fifth year, 60% of the cohort, including limited English proficient (LEP) students, will complete a pre-Advanced Placement (AP) or AP course.
Project Objective 2.3: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.
Project Goal 3 – Provide PD for strong data-driven instruction.
Project Objective 3.1: All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL.
Project Objective 3.2: Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.
Project Goal 4 – Provide a network of strong student support services to promote on-time promotion and academic preparation for college.
Project Objective 4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8 th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.
Project Objective 4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.
Project Objective 4.3: By the end of the project's third year, the on-time promotion rate of cohort students will exceed the state average.
Project Objective 4.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.
Project Goal 5 – Promote high school completion and college attendance.
Project Objective 5.1: By the end of the project's fourth year, all cohort students will complete the ACT Aspire or the PSAT. By the end of the project's fifth year, all cohort students will complete the SAT or ACT.
Project Objective 5.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 5.3: The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.

²⁴ For additional information on the Foundation High School Program and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see <http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx>.

Project Objectives
Project Objective 5.4: The cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 5.5: More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.
Project Goal 6 – Support first-year college retention.
Project Objective 6.1: The student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 6.2: At the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.
Project Goal 7 – Provide postsecondary information and opportunities.
Project Objective 7.1: By the end of the first year, the state office will make information regarding college options, preparation, and financing will be made available to students, parents, and educators throughout the state.
Project Objective 7.2: By the end of the first year, information and workshops aimed at linking college attendance to career success will be available to 100% of cohort students and their parents.
Project Objective 7.3: Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.
Project Objective 7.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.
Project Goal 8 – Build and expand community partnerships.
Project Objective 8.1: All participating districts will form business alliances that support higher student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.
Project Objective 8.2: Participating campuses will form alliances with governmental entities and community groups to enhance the information available to students regarding scholarships, financial aid, and college awareness.
Project Goal 9 – Promote college readiness statewide.
Project Objective 9.1: Annually increase the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Texas Gateway and face-to-face trainings.
Project Objective 9.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD.

APPENDIX B: Evaluation Design, Methods, and Analytics

This report is focused on implementation of Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant (SG) in Year 6. Sections B.1, B.2 and B.3 detail the overall evaluation design. Section B.4 details the data sources and data collection for the Year 6 report.

B.1. Longitudinal Design

The Texas GEAR UP SG longitudinal evaluation is based on a cohort model design. Texas GEAR UP SG services were provided to Grade 7 students, referred to as the primary cohort, in participating districts beginning in the 2012–13 school year and continued through the first year of enrollment at a postsecondary institution (the 2018–19 school year).

There are three additional cohort groups that are included in the evaluation design. The retrospective comparison group consists of students who are one-grade level ahead of the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort—the students at the Texas GEAR UP SG schools who were in Grade 8 in the 2012–13 school year. The other two comparison groups, the two follow-on cohorts, consist of students who began Grade 7 at the GEAR UP schools in 2013–14 (the year after the primary cohort) and 2014–15 (two years after the primary cohort). Examining trends in outcomes in the retrospective and follow-on cohorts compared to the primary cohort allows Texas Education Agency (TEA) to better understand how the program has potentially created change at the school level. For example, the third year of implementation includes data on completion of Algebra I in Grade 8 for three cohorts of students (i.e., Grade 8 in the 2012–13 school year [comparison retrospective cohort], Grade 8 in the 2013–14 school year [primary cohort], and Grade 8 in the 2014–15 school year [comparison follow-on cohort]). The potential cohorts of interest are presented in Table B.1.

Table B.1. Texas GEAR UP SG Cohorts of Data Collected During the Seven-Year Grant

	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Retrospective Cohort	← Baseline: Prior to GEAR UP	Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4 →	Grant Year 5
Primary Cohort	← Baseline: Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5 →	Grant Year 6
Follow-on Cohort 1	← Baseline: Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5	Grant Year 6 →	Grant Year 7
Follow-on Cohort 2	← Baseline: Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5	Grant Year 6	Grant Year 7 →	
Total number of cohorts for data in each grade	4	4	4	4	4	3

B.2. Quasi-Experimental Design

In addition to comparisons that will be made based on longitudinal aspects of the design, the ICF team is utilizing a quasi-experimental design (QED). The Texas GEAR UP SG schools were not selected randomly to participate, ruling out a true experimental design. Still, it is important to understand outcomes within the Texas GEAR UP SG schools in comparison to outcomes elsewhere. Specifically, outcomes at the Texas GEAR UP SG schools are being compared to: a) statewide averages (where possible); and b) outcomes in comparison schools selected based on propensity-score matching (PSM) to be as similar as possible to Texas GEAR UP SG participating schools. A student-level PSM is not necessary given that the Texas GEAR UP SG is a school-wide approach (i.e., all students in Grade 7 in the 2012–13 school year had opportunities to participate).

B.2.1 Propensity Score Matching

PSM is the optimal method for establishing an equivalent comparison group in non-experimental studies. PSM refers to a class of multivariate methods for constructing comparison groups based on pairing study subjects, in this case schools, based on what is known about those subjects. Propensity scores represent the estimated probability that a program participant is assigned to an intervention based on observable variables. The evaluation team and Texas GEAR UP SG program staff determined the criteria for matching Texas GEAR UP SG and non-Texas GEAR UP SG comparison schools with various characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, grade level, academic achievement in reading and mathematics at baseline, special education/limited English proficiency [LEP] status, completion rates, parent education level). By using PSM to identify a very close non-Texas GEAR UP SG match (or multiple matches) for each Texas GEAR UP SG school, it is possible to estimate the value-added effect of the Texas GEAR UP program. That is, if two schools are found to be similar on a range of characteristics, but students at only one school receive the GEAR UP “treatment,” then any potential differences in outcomes may be attributable to GEAR UP participation. Seven middle schools (one per Texas GEAR UP SG school) were selected for the comparison group based on PSM.

Specific details regarding the PSM are in the comprehensive reports.

B.3. Mixed-Methods Approach

The Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation is using a mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach to best address the range of evaluation questions with the data available at a given point in time during the evaluation. The use of multiple methods to collect, analyze, and synthesize information allow for the triangulation of results, producing an in-depth assessment of Texas GEAR UP SG’s effectiveness and providing greater confidence in evaluation findings. Much of the data that were collected, as described in the data sources section that follows, are quantitative in nature. Evaluators collected additional qualitative data through open-ended survey items and site visit interviews and focus groups, allowing the story of Texas GEAR UP SG implementation and impact at each school/district to be told. Findings based on data

collected through the range of perspectives are compared against one another throughout reporting of findings.

B.4. Data Sources and Data Collection

Evaluators used several data sources for this report, including data reported through the GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System (GUIDES), extant data provided by TEA, student and parent survey data, and site visit data. The following sections provide an overview of each data source, including the process of collecting data that were included in this report.

B.4.1. GUIDES Data

In Years 1 and 2, annual performance data were collected using a variety of tools. In Year 3, TEA worked with Community TechKnowledge (CTK) to create GUIDES, a customized data collection tool to collect data for the Texas GEAR UP SG. TEA continued to use GUIDES during the 2017–18 school year.

Annual performance data are aligned with requirements for the U.S. Department of Education (ED) APR, submitted by TEA each year in April. Districts are asked to report on implementation and participation at the student level in Texas GEAR UP SG activities from the time of the prior report through the end of March of the current implementation year. Appendix C has a description of all data that Texas GEAR UP SG grantees were requested to submit in GUIDES.

B.4.2. Extant Data

Extant data refers to data that TEA already collects. TEA provides these data to the evaluation team as appropriate. The following extant data were used in writing this report:

Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR). TAPR contains campus-level performance information about every public school and district in Texas. TAPR also provides extensive profile information about staff, finances, and programs.

B.4.3. Student and Parent Surveys

Texas GEAR UP SG students and parents were first surveyed in spring 2013.²⁵ In fall 2013 and fall 2014, students were surveyed, primarily with respect to participation in and perceptions of summer 2014 implementation activities. Both students and parents were surveyed in spring 2014 and spring 2015. Due to the low parent response rates in spring 2015, parents were surveyed again in fall 2015, as described in the Year 3 Annual Implementation Report (Briggs et al., 2016). Students were also surveyed in fall 2015 and again in spring 2016. Similar to Year 5, in Year 6 all surveys used during the 2017–18 school year are provided in Appendix D. Surveys undergo several layers of review and required approval by both ICF's Institutional Review Board

²⁵ Federal GEAR UP requirements are for biannual collection of survey data. Survey collection was not required in Year 1. Year 1 surveys were conducted because the evaluation team believes they provide an important baseline to better understand Texas GEAR UP SG outcomes. Surveys will undergo minor revisions as needed to reflect appropriate Texas GEAR UP SG implementation and goals prior to each submission.

(IRB) and TEA's Data Governance Board (DGB).²⁶ Although student surveys were available only online, parent surveys were available online and in paper format upon request. Schools collected the data independently following instructions provided by the evaluation team as required by IRB. Students and parents could choose to take the survey in either English or in Spanish. Survey data were collected anonymously.

In order to address the evaluation of project objectives and continue longitudinal analyses in Year 6, the Texas GEAR UP SG program created new questions while also using previously asked questions from various sources. Items were selected for inclusion in the Texas GEAR UP SG surveys from surveys developed by members of the ICF evaluation team with prior experience evaluating GEAR UP programs and based on sample surveys (i.e., CoBro Consulting, 2010). Content areas on the survey were finalized with TEA and included information regarding such items as: a) student/parent satisfaction with the program and program activities; b) student/parent questions on educational expectations and aspirations; and (c) student and parent knowledge regarding postsecondary education, including financial knowledge.

Of the student 1,489 surveys administered, the overall response rate was 50%. The overall parent response rate was 17%. Tables B.2 and B.3 provide the student parent response rates by school. Tables B.4 and B.5 highlight respondent demographics compared to the overall sample.

Table B.2. Student Survey Response Rates by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of Students	Number of Valid Student Surveys Received	Student Survey Response Rate
High School H	321	173	53.9%
High School I	259	120	46.3%
High School J	143	101	70.6%
High School K	413	158	38.3%
High School L	98	54	55.1%
High School M	225	141	62.7%
Total	1,489	747	50.2%

Source: Cohort Enrollments Reported by Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators during Survey Administration (Spring, 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table B.3. Parent Survey Response Rates by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of Parents	Number of Valid Parent Surveys Received	Parent Survey Response Rate
High School H	321	48	15.0%
High School I	259	19	7.3%
High School J	143	29	11.7%
High School K	413	56	20.3%

²⁶ IRB approval was received to use passive consent from parents for student participation in the surveys. Parents were notified that the survey was planned and asked to inform the school if they did not want their child to participate. Students also provided their own assent for participation in the surveys.

School	Number of Parents	Number of Valid Parent Surveys Received	Parent Survey Response Rate
High School L	98	21	21.4%
High School M	225	76	33.8%
Total	1,489	249	16.7%

Source: Cohort Enrollments Reported by Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators during Survey Administration (Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: The parent survey response rate is calculated based on one parent per student.

Table B.4. Overall Student Survey Demographics Compared to School Demographics, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Categories	Survey		Overall School Sample	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	286	43.9%	--	--
Female	355	56.1%	--	--
Total	651	100%	--	--
Ethnicity/Race				
Asian	9	1.4%	81	1.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	7	1.1%	6	0.1%
Black or African American	88	13.6%	893	13.7%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	491	75.9%	5,161	79.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4	0.6%	5	0.1%
White	38	5.9%	327	5.0%
Two or more races	7	1.1%	61	0.9%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	3	0.5%	--	--
Total	647	100%	6,534	100%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018); Texas Academic Performance Reports, Year 65.

Note: The data on the overall school sample includes data on the entire school population for each of the six Texas GEAR UP SG schools. For more information regarding demographic data by school, refer to Table F.41. Gender data for the student population is not available in the Texas Academic Performance Reports.

Table B.5 Overall Parent Survey Demographics Compared to School Demographics, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Categories	Survey		Overall School Sample	
	n	%	n	%
Ethnicity/Race				
Asian	2	1.0%	81	1.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.5%	6	0.1%
Black or African American	39	18.7%	893	13.7%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	144	68.9%	5,161	79.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	5	0.1%
White	23	11.0%	327	5.0%
Two or more races	0	0.0%	61	0.9%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	0	0.0%	--	--
Total	209	100%	6,534	100%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018); Texas Academic Performance Reports, Year 65.

Note: The data on the overall school sample includes data on the entire school population for each of the six Texas GEAR UP SG schools. In addition, the denominator for the parent demographic rate is determined based on one parent per student.

B.4.4. School Site Visits

Site visits are an important feature of the Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation. To ensure that relevant and useful information was gathered on these site visits, eight specific protocols aligned to Texas GEAR UP SG project objectives were developed to gather data from stakeholders (Texas GEAR UP SG District Coordinator interviews, College Preparation Advisor interviews, high school administrator interviews, middle school administrator interviews, teacher focus groups, student focus groups, parent focus groups, and community alliance interviews/focus groups). The protocols explored knowledge and understanding of the Texas GEAR UP SG, participation in and perceptions of implementation activities, barriers and facilitators to participation in Texas GEAR UP SG implementation activities, perceptions of stakeholders regarding promising practices, and awareness of issues related to postsecondary education. Focus groups were structured to provide ample time for participants to express their views about the program and specific activities within it. The student focus group protocol was designed using classroom discussion strategies (e.g., brainstorming) to encourage participation by all students.

Site visits were completed at each of the six Texas GEAR UP SG high schools in fall 2017 and spring 2018. The evaluation team made copies of interview and focus group protocols available to schools (see Appendix D) prior to participating in the visit. Telephone calls and emails were used to communicate with each site regarding the visit and to develop a site visit schedule. Schedules varied by school based on the availability of participants, but all schools were asked to schedule time for separate interviews with the Texas GEAR UP SG District Coordinator, College Preparation Advisor, and administrator at the school, as well as focus groups with students, parents, teachers, and community alliances. The team customized materials for specific sites based on information reported through GUIDES on activities and events for students, parents, and teachers.

School Administrator Interviews. The ICF team designed interview protocols for administrators (principals, assistant principals, vice principals, and school counselors), school-site College Preparation Advisors, and Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators. In most cases, interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis. At each school, an interview was requested with both an administrator as well as school-site GEAR UP SG staff. In a few cases, administrators participated in focus groups together. Overall, ICF conducted interviews with 15 school/district administrators and 40 Texas GEAR UP SG staff members (including tutors, data clerks, and parent liaisons).

Teacher Focus Groups. ICF conducted teacher focus groups at all of the high schools in the Texas GEAR UP SG. The size and duration of focus groups varied across schools due to teacher availability. The typical teacher focus group had an average of three teachers and lasted approximately 45 minutes. Many schools scheduled teachers for focus groups during their planning periods or open times so they did not have to find substitutes for teachers to attend. Teachers participated in interviews rather than focus groups if they were unavailable at the same time as other teachers. Teachers were asked about knowledge of Texas GEAR UP SG, perceptions of the program at their school, and current and planned Texas GEAR UP SG-sponsored PD and workshops. For those teachers with day-to-day involvement with the

program, ICF inquired about specific activities and their perceived effectiveness along with perceptions of program buy-in among teachers, parents, and students. Overall for fall 2017 and spring 2018, ICF conducted teacher focus groups with 43 participants.

Student Focus Groups. Focus groups with students were held at each school to examine student knowledge of the program and of higher education, their participation in program activities, and their perceptions of GEAR UP's effectiveness. Student focus groups averaged four to eight participants. Overall, 66 students participated in focus groups.

Parent Focus Groups. ICF conducted focus groups with parents at all sites. The purpose of these focus groups was to examine parent knowledge of the program and of higher education, their participation in program activities, and their perceptions of effectiveness. Although none of the six schools requested a translator, one parent focus group at one school needed to be translated by a member of the Texas GEAR UP SG staff team. Overall, 28 parents participated in focus groups. The typical parent focus group averaged three participants.

Community Alliance Interview/Focus Groups. All sites were asked about current relationships with community alliances to the Texas GEAR UP SG; during site visits, time was allotted in the schedule to interview community alliances if available. Overall, 20 representatives from community organizations participated in an interview or focus group.

Telephone Interview with Texas Education Agency and Collaborators. To understand the role of various collaborators and progress at the state level, the ICF team developed interview protocols and conducted interviews with the Texas GEAR UP SG state director at TEA and with appropriate personnel from each of the statewide TEA collaborators in spring 2018 (see Appendix D for interview protocols). The interview with the TEA Texas GEAR UP SG director provided information regarding the process of managing the Texas GEAR UP SG grants to districts, and coordinating with the state technical assistance office to ensure that grant activities are implemented and meeting suggested targets. In addition, questions were asked regarding any changes in the project objectives for the Texas GEAR UP SG, the level of school buy-in from districts, frequency of contact with districts and schools, the status of TEA's work with collaborators and statewide initiatives, and factors that have facilitated or hindered GEAR UP implementation this past year.

B.5. Data Analytics

B.6.1. Descriptive & Change Statistics: Implementation Analysis

As noted in Chapter 1, the data available reflect a somewhat shortened period of implementation of the program. The majority of the analyses included descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, averages, ranges). In some cases, the same data were examined in two different ways. For example, on the surveys, perceived effectiveness of strategies was provided as one of four categories. These data were presented as a percentage indicating a given category or as average effectiveness by numbering the categories from 1 (*Not effective*) to 4 (*Very effective*). Averages were then provided both by individual activity and summarized across activities, as appropriate.

STUDENT GROUP ANALYSES

Comparisons by student groups were descriptive. Where appropriate, crosstabs (chi-square analyses comparing frequency distribution by group) and analysis of variance (ANOVA)—comparing means by group—were conducted and significant differences between groups were noted. As noted, some analyses were conducted on both GUIDES and survey data. ANOVAs were utilized only to compare means across schools. These analyses were also used to explore change over time.

School/district was the key grouping variable used in this report. Information on providing implementation was also grouped by provision type (i.e., virtual vs. face-to-face). In the first comprehensive report, students were grouped in several ways including gender, race/ethnicity, limited English proficiency (LEP) status, and special education status. Students were grouped by participation or not in advanced coursework (e.g., are students in advanced courses more or less likely than those who are not to be tutored in that subject). Parent participation was also examined relative to the student characteristics (e.g., were students with special needs or in advanced courses more or less likely to have parents participating in GEAR UP events).

B.6.2. Analysis of Site Visit Qualitative Data

Findings from the qualitative analyses were cross-referenced with findings from quantitative analyses to more completely answer evaluation questions of interest. The evaluation team utilized qualitative analytic software (ATLAS.ti) to code 96 transcribed interviews with program-specific codes.²⁷

DATA REVIEW

Evaluators conducted detailed coding of qualitative data using keyword searches and, in some cases, reviewing entire transcripts to look for specific themes. The site visit team also conducted extensive content analysis to identify themes as well as similarities/differences across the sites. The coding team met periodically to establish interrater reliability among coders.

B.6. References

Diamond, A., & Sekhon, J. S. (2013) Genetic matching for estimating causal effects: A general multivariate matching method for achieving balance in observational studies. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 95(3), 932–945. Retrieved from <http://sekhon.berkeley.edu/papers/GenMatch.pdf>.

²⁷ ATLAS.ti is a qualitative analytic software. More information about the product can be found at <http://atlasti.com/>.

APPENDIX C: Texas GEAR UP State Grant GUIDES Data Requested from Grantees, 2017–18

Data element (as it appears in GUIDES) * = required	Definition
Student Profile	
First Name*	Enter student's full legal first name
Middle Name	Enter student's full legal middle name
Last Name*	Enter student's full legal last name
Date of Birth*	Enter DOB in following format: MM/DD/YYYY
Phone Number(s)*	Enter as: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Email Address:	Enter student's personal email address
Gender*	Male or Female
School Year*	Select current school year from 2013-2014, 2014-15, etc.
Address*	Street address, city, state, zip
Race*	Select or type from following list (dropdown in GUIDES): American Indian or Alaska Native – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliations or community recognition. Asian – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, and the Philippine Islands. Black or African American – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam. White – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East. Two or more races Race Unknown
Ethnicity*	Select or type from the following: Yes, Hispanic or Latino – A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. No Ethnicity Unknown
Unique ID*	10-digit number unique to all students in Texas
Local ID*	Variable-length-digit number at district level. May change if student moves across districts.
Limited English Proficiency Status*	Select the PEIMS LEP status indicator code from the drop down list as follows: 0 Not LEP 1 Identified As Limited English Proficient (LEP)

	F Student Exited from LEP Status – Monitored 1 (M1) – student has met criteria for bilingual/ESL program exit, is no longer classified as LEP in PEIMS, and is in his or her first year of monitoring as required by 19 TAC §89.1220(l) and is not eligible for funding due to the fact that they are not LEP S Student Exited from LEP Status – Monitored 2 (M2) – student has met criteria for bilingual/ESL program exit, is no longer classified as LEP in PEIMS, and is in his or her second year of monitoring as required by the 19 TAC §89.1220(l) and is not eligible for funding due to the fact that they are not LEP
Grade*	Enter current grade in school (7, 8, 9, 10, etc.)
School*	Select from: Kennedy HS Memorial HS Estacado HS Manor HS New Manor Tech HS Somerset HS
ECHS	Is the student part of Manor ECHS (Yes/No) or T-STEM Academy at Memorial HS?
District*	Select from: Edgewood ISD Manor ISD Lubbock ISD Somerset ISD
Eligible for F/R Lunch*	Select Yes or No
Special Education*	Select Yes or No to indicate if currently identified as special education
Education Plan/Program** (required only if SPED is YES)	Does the student have an IEP? Yes or No
Homeless	Is the student identified as homeless? Yes or No
Foster Care	Is the student in foster care? Yes or No
At-risk of dropout status*	Yes or No
Status of enrollment*	Select Active or Inactive
Academic Milestones	
Graduation Plan	Graduation Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not on Foundation High School Program • Foundation High School Program without Endorsement (Foundation Only) • Foundation High School Program with Endorsement • Foundation High School Program with a Distinguished Level of Achievement
Endorsement Choice	Endorsements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM • Business & Industry • Public Services • Arts & Humanities • Multidisciplinary Studies

Change “promoted to next grade” to “At the end of the school year, student is ELIGIBLE to be promoted to next grade”*	Yes/No
Early high school Graduate	Yes or No
Eligible to Graduate	Yes or No
Special Note	Open-ended text field to describe why a student is not enrolled in any course, or is missing course outcome, or is missing promotion.
Completed Algebra I in any previous year?	Yes or No
Completed Algebra II in any previous year?	Yes or No
Completed a Pre AP or AP course in any previous year?	Yes or No
Completed dual/college credit course in any previous year?	Yes or No
ACT Score (English, Math and Composite Scores)	Numeric Score (For each English, Math, and Composite) Not taken
CTE Enrollment	Indicate one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrolled in a CTE Course (Code 1 for Career and Technical ED-IND-CD - Participant in a coherent sequence of courses in CTE (Code 2) - Not enrolled in CTE course
SAT Score (Evidence Based Reading and Writing, Math, and Composite Scores)	Numeric Score (For each Evidence Based Reading and writing, Math, and Composite) Not taken
PSAT Score	Numeric Score Not taken
ACT Aspire Score	Numeric Score Not taken
TSI Test Date Exam Taken	Calendar Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
TSI Math Score	Numeric Score Not taken
TSI Reading Score	Numeric Score Not taken
TSI Writing Score	Numeric Score Not taken
TSI Essay Score	Numeric Score Not taken
Class Rank	Numeric Value XX out of XX
FAFSA ID	Did the student create a FAFSA ID? Yes or no
Apply Texas Profile	Did the student create a profile on ApplyTexas.org? Yes or no
Course Listing	
District*	District the student linked from student profile

School Year*	School Year linked from student profile
Grade Level*	Grade linked from student profile
Following fields are asked for each course	
Course Name*	Open-ended text field
Course/Section Number*	Open-ended text field Unique identifier for each course. Does not include section identifier.
Is the course an advanced* course?	Yes/No “Advanced Courses” are classes that are identified as above grade level by the student’s school. Most honors, pre-AP, and AP courses are considered Advanced.
Is the course a dual credit/college credit course?	Yes/No
Course Hours	Numeric; decimal in terms of hours (0.5); Advanced Courses only Calculated by the campus for each student in each advanced course section and entered as: [Maximum seat time in hours for the course for the reporting period] – [total excused and unexcused absences in hours by course section number] – [total time in hours a student was not enrolled during the reporting period] – [number of hours lost for that course due to school closure]
Course Completion*	Yes/No
If AP course completed and student completed AP exam, what was the exam score?	Numeric (1-5) AP Exam not taken
If dual credit course was completed, would the student be eligible to receive college credit for the course?	Yes/No
Exam/ State Assessment Tracking	
Grade Level*	Grade linked from student profile
Following fields are asked for all EOC’s	
Date/Month Exam is taken*	DD/MM/YYYY or MM/YYYY
EOC Version	Version for the EOC exam
Scale Score	Numeric
Met Standard at Level II Recommended Meets Grade Level Standard	Yes/No
EOC Subject *	U.S. History EOC English I EOC English II EOC English III Algebra I EOC Algebra II Biology EOC
For students that take the following exam only	
Month/Year taken - TELPAS	DD/MM/YYYY or MM/YYYY
Proficiency Level – TELPAS Reading	Beginning Intermediate Advanced Advanced High
TELPAS Reading Raw Score	Numeric
TELPAS Reading Scale Score	Numeric
Proficiency Level – TELPAS Writing	Beginning Intermediate

	Advanced Advanced High
Proficiency Level – TELPAS Speaking	Beginning Intermediate Advanced Advanced High
Proficiency Level – TELPAS Listening	Beginning Intermediate Advanced Advanced High
TELPAS Composite Scale Score	Numeric
TELPAS Composite Rating	Beginning Intermediate Advanced Advanced High
Absence Tracking	
School Year*	Linked from Student Profile
Total Unexcused Absences – Quarter 1*	Numeric
Total Excused Absences – Quarter 1*	Numeric
Total Unexcused Absences – Quarter 2*	Numeric
Total Excused Absences – Quarter 2*	Numeric
Total Unexcused Absences – Quarter 3*	Numeric
Total Excused Absences – Quarter 3*	Numeric
Total Unexcused Absences – Quarter 4*	Numeric
Total Excused Absences – Quarter 4*	Numeric
Total Unexcused Absences	Numeric
Total Excused Absence	Numeric
Total Absences	Numeric
School Enrollment/Withdrawal Tracking	
Date of Action*	MM/DD/YYYY; date when enrollment or withdrawal occurs
Type of Action*	Left School Enrolled mid-year Changed District Moved up a grade
If Left Campus, Reason?	Out of District Out of State Left School System Home Schooling Incarcerated Enrolled in Other TX School Transferred temporarily to DAEP Other [SPECIFY]
If changed district, specify	Edgewood ISD Lubbock ISD Manor ISD Somerset ISD

	Other [SPECIFY]
Notes	Open ended text field
Discipline Referrals	
Date of Incident	Date on which discipline infraction occurs – mm/dd/yyyy
Disciplinary Action Taken	Expulsion (01 – 05) Suspension (06) Partial Suspension (25-26) Placement (07, 13-14) Continuation (08-12)
Event Tracking for Students	
Name of Event	
Date of Event	Date when Event occurs
Attended*	Yes/No
Hours Spent at Event*	Numeric
Educator Profile	
First, Middle, and Last Name*	Full legal first, last, and middle name
School	School educator is primarily associated with
District*	District educator is associated with
Local ID*	District-level numeric identifier for each teacher.
Unique ID*	State-level numeric identifier for each teacher.
District Email	School email address of educator
Grade Level*	Indicate the grade level educator is teaching. When possible, indicate an individual grade level based on primary responsibilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade K-4 • Grade 5 • Grade 6 • Grade 7 • Grade 8 • Multiple Middle School grade levels • Grade 9 • Grade 10 • Grade 11 • Grade 12 • Multiple High School grade levels • Not Applicable (District/ School Administrator)
Content Area*	Select from the following which best describes the content taught by this teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • ELA • Science • Social Studies • Not a content area teacher (Middle/ High School) • Not applicable (Elementary)
If a content area teacher, does the teacher teach any courses that are eligible for college credit?	Yes/No
If Not a Content Area teacher, specify role	If Content Area is “Not a Content area teacher” is selected, open-ended text field to specify job title
Program Type	Select all that apply from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Education

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • Bilingual/ESL Education • Career and Technical Education • Gifted and Talented Education • Not Applicable (Administration)
Status	Active/Inactive
Event Tracking for Educators	
Name of Event*	
Date of Event*	Date when Event occurs
Attended*	Yes/No
Hours Spent at Event*	Numeric, please round to the nearest half hour, using decimal format (one and a half hours = 1.5)
Parent Profile	
Parent First, Middle, and Last Name*	Full legal name of the parent
Parent ID*	The Parent ID is a self-constructed value based on their child's Unique ID.
School*	School their child is currently enrolled in
District*	District their child is currently enrolled in
Student*	Student(s) the parent is associated with
Email	Email ID of the parent
Phone Number(s)	Enter phone number of parent as: XXX-XXX-XXXX
Event Tracking for Parents	
Name of Event*	
Date of Event*	Date when Event occurs
Attended*	Yes/No
Hours Spent at Event*	Numeric
Grant Events: Student Services	
Students*	Link to students
Date for Service*	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY
Did Parents participate in service? *	Yes/No
Parents	Link to parents
College Prep Advisors	Link only to College Prep Advisors from "Other Contacts" list
Tutor or Other Educator	Link to tutor or educator
Service Type*	Select one from the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tutoring/Homework Assistance 2. Mentoring 3. Counseling/Advising/Academic Planning/Career Counseling
If tutoring, what subject?	Select: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mathematics - Science - English and Lang. Arts - Social Studies

	- Other AP/Dual/College Credit Course Required only if Tutoring is selected above.
If counseling/ advising or mentoring, did it cover financial aid?	Select Yes or No Required only if Counseling or Mentoring is selected as Service Type so it is a sub-set of Counseling or Mentoring services.
If counseling/ advising or mentoring, did it cover financial aid checklist?	Select Yes or No Required only if Counseling or Mentoring is selected as Service Type so it is a sub-set of Counseling or Mentoring services.
If counseling/ advising or mentoring, did it cover Student Aid Report (SAR) Review?	Select Yes or No Required only if Counseling or Mentoring is selected as Service Type so it is a sub-set of Counseling or Mentoring services.
Delivery method for activity*	For the activity above, please indicate if it was delivered in-person or virtual.
Number of Hours (per day)*	Enter number of hours the activity occurred – round to the nearest whole hour (Enter 15 min increments as 0.25, enter ½ hour increments as “0.5”), so four and half hours would be entered as “4.5”and four hours and 45 min will be entered as “4.75”
Explain why number of hours per day for this service exceeds 4 hours	Open-text field
Reason for Service*	Planning/justification for services: Indicate how the decision was made to have student be involved in tutoring/homework assistance: Select ONE reason: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher/counselor input - Diagnostic data - Teacher/counselor input AND Diagnostic Data - Student Request/walk-in - Parent request/walk-in
Follow-up Required?	Yes/No
Events Planning	
Name of the Event*	Text field. Unique event identifier
Description of Event	Open text field
Date of the Event*	Event Date mm/dd/yyyy
Date Event Planning Started*	Date event record is created for planning purposes
District*	Linked to relevant cohort district(s)
School*	Linked to relevant cohort school(s)
GEAR UP Partner	Linked to relevant GU Partner(s)
Type of Event*	Select one from following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Tour • College Student Shadowing • Family Event • Student Workshop • Parent Workshop • Job/Site Visit • Job Shadowing • Math Educational Field Trip • ELA Educational Field Trip • Science Educational Field Trip • Other Educational Field Trip

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educator Professional Development • Other Educator Event • Virtual College Visit • Workshop of college prep/financial aid
Is the event a summer program?	Yes/No
If Summer Program, select one:	Choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Enrichment (This may include transition across grade levels, college going content – college enrollment, etc.) • Remedial Services (This may include study skills, organization skills, tutoring, etc.)
If Student or Parent Workshop is selected, please specify	Select one from the following if Student or Parent Workshop selected as Event Type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisor Introduction • Academic Program • Applications and Admissions College • Applications and Admissions Pre-College • Achievement Appreciation • Application Drive • Assembly • Cafeteria Visit • Career Exploration • College Knowledge • College Fair • Essays and Personal Statements • Financial Literacy • GEAR UP Evaluation • Leadership Skills/Development • Sporting Events • Test Preparation • Test Registration Drive • Skills focused • TX GEAR UP website
If Educator Professional Development Content	Mark all that apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated Instruction • Advanced Instructional Strategies • Project Based Learning • Vertical Teaming • Financial Literacy • GEAR UP Specific • GEAR UP Evaluation or Needs Assessment
Event Status*	Select from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Planned • Reviewed • Attendance Pending • Reported • Cancelled • Not Applicable
Event Length*	Total number of cumulative hours over all event dates.
Event Description*	Text field; description of the event including agenda attached.
Delivery Method*	Select from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person • Virtual
Scope*	Select from:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-wide • Cohort-only • Partial Cohort
Group*	Mark all that apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students • Parents • Educators • Other Contacts
Final Agenda upload (PDF)	File upload link
GPRA Goals Fulfilled*	Mark all that apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPRA Goal 1: Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students. • GPRA Goal 2: Increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education. • GPRA Goal 3: Increase the educational expectations and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing
Registered Students*	Link to students attending
Registered Educators*	Link to educators attending
Registered Parents*	Link to parents attending
Registered Other Contacts*	Link to GU Partner staff attending
Non-Cohort Attendance	Enter attendance for following grades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-4 - • Grade 5 - • Grade 6 - • Grade 7 - • Grade 8 - • Grade 9 - • Grade 10 - • Grade 11 - • Grade 12 -
Following fields were developed by the Project Manager during Advisor Training and are required for Advisor monitoring, district planning and audit, and general Event Planning purposes. Most fields are not mandatory. These were also added to in case districts requested specific fields that were useful to them for planning purposes	
Standards of Service*	Mark all that apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Contact • Family Contact • Parent Contact • Field Trip • Summer Programming • Classroom Observations • Before/After School Programs • College Clubs • Lunch Programs • Community Service • Professional Development
Food Provided	Yes/No
How is the food provided?	Text field
Transportation Type	Select one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Bus • Coach Bus • School Van • Private Van
Translator Required	Yes/No

Setup/Breakdown procedures	Text field
Visitor protocol distributed	Yes/No
Feedback received from parents	Yes/No
Reminder calls made	Yes/No
Thank-you letters distributed	Yes/No
Internal Meetings	
Name of the Meeting*	Name of the meeting according to the agenda.
Jurisdiction*	<p>Select from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEAR UP State Level • District Level • School Level <p>GEAR UP State Level meeting do not include any districts or schools and are strictly either internal IPSI meetings or meetings with/between GEAR UP Partners.</p> <p>District or School level is defined as per the scope of the meeting and the attendees involved.</p>
Type of Meeting*	<p>Select from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Review • Grant Assistance • Advisory Council • Public Inquiry • Advisor Professional Development • Districts Educator Professional Development • Statewide Educator Professional Development • IPSI Professional Development • Outreach Activities • State Office Assistance and Coordination • Program Administration <p>Planning and Review - defined as planning for the future or review/ monitoring discussions either within district or with IPSI.</p> <p>Grant Assistance - defined as questions from districts and guidance/guidelines provided by IPSI including data assistance.</p> <p>Advisory Council - defined as advisory council meetings organized by districts</p> <p>Public Inquiry - defined as responses to phone, email, and website inquiries from public or vendors/ partners/etc. (IPSI use only)</p> <p>Advisor Professional Development - defined as bi-annual training provided by IPSI to Advisors (IPSI use only).</p> <p>District Educator Professional Development - defined as any professional development training provided by IPSI staff to cohort districts.</p> <p>Statewide Educator Professional Development - defined as any professional development training organized/ provided by IPSI staff for statewide programs or non-cohort districts.</p> <p>IPSI Professional Development - professional development received by IPSI staff (IPSI use only)</p>

	<p>Outreach Activities - Meetings or any communication made to facilitate GEAR UP activities with potential partners.</p> <p>State Office Assistance and Coordination - includes meetings and assisting TEA, ICF, and AMS.</p> <p>Program Administration - Contractual oversight and initiation, business services, travel, purchasing, etc.</p>
Districts involved	Link to districts involved in this meeting
Schools involved	Link to schools involved in this meeting
GEAR UP Partner(s) involved?	Link to GEAR UP Partners attending this meeting.
Date of the Meeting*	Date – mm/dd/yyyy
Type of Contact*	Select from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • Phone Call • In-Person • Web Conference
Hours spent*	Hours in increments of 15 minutes and entered as 0.25 e.g. 30 minute meeting is 0.5 and 2 hour 45 minutes meeting is 2.75
Notes*	Text field for brief content and description of meeting
Attach Agenda or Meeting Minutes	Upload PDF/Word file
Educators participating	Link to Educator profiles that attend this meeting
Other Contacts participating	Link to Other Contact profiles that attend this meeting
Parents participating	Link to Parent profiles that attend this meeting
Students participating	Link to Student profiles that attend this meeting
GEAR UP Partners	
Partner Name*	Full Name of the organization or entity
Type*	Select from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Institution • Non-Profit Organization • Community Organization • Faith-based Organization • Professional Association • Business • Government • School/District • Volunteer Group • GEAR UP Program
Local Education Agency (LEA)?*	Is the organization a local education agency?
Institution of Higher Education (IHE)?*	Is the organization an Institution of Higher Education?
If IHE, what type?	Select from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four-year Public University/College • Four-year Private University/College • Two-year Private Community College • Two-year Public Community College • Historically Black College or University (HBCU) • Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) • Tribally Controlled Colleges & Universities (TCCU) • Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (NHSI) • Alaska Native Serving Institution (ANSI)

District partnering with?	Linked to District(s) partnering with
School partnering with?	Linked to School(s) partnering with
Address, City, State, and Zip	Full address of the main office of the organization
Email, Phone and Fax	Email, Phone and fax number of the partner
Website	Website of the partner
Summarize the partner's specific support and commitment to the project	Text field
Partner Identification and Cost Share Form Completed?	Yes/No
New Fields in GU Partner if Educational Institution (to be entered by IPSI)	
Tests required for Education Institutions	SAT/ Subject Tests/ ACT/ TSI/ Other
If yes for SAT/ACT, then ask does college Superscore?	Yes or No
If yes for SAT/ACT, then ask does college accept Score Choice?	Yes or No
Admission Deadline	Date
Financial Aid Deadline	Date
Senior Exit Form Information (approved by DGB in December 2016)	
Did student apply to any institution(s) of higher education?*	Yes/No
Was the student accepted at any institution(s) of higher education?*	Yes/No
Which institution(s) of higher education is the student planning on attending?	If yes to the question above, Select from GU Partners (list of PSIs)
PSI attendance plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attending full-time (12+ credits) 2. Attending part-time (11 or fewer credits) 3. Deferring 4. Not attending
Was the student awarded a Pell grant?	Yes/No
Did the student apply for financial aid or scholarship?	Yes/No
Did the student receive any financial aid or scholarship?	Yes/No
Other Contacts	
Name*	Full legal name of the person
Title*	Official job title or role at the GEAR UP Partner organization
GEAR UP Partner associated with*	Link to the GEAR UP Partner
Email	Email ID
Office Phone Number	Phone number xxx-xxx-xxxx
Status*	Select from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active • Inactive

Financial Aid Information (to be collected beginning Fall 2017)	
Parent FSA Created?	Yes/No
Parent has signed the FAFSA	Yes/No
Student has submitted their FAFSA?	Yes/No
Flagged for verification	Yes/No
FAFSA is Complete?	Yes/No
Colleges of Interest (to be collected beginning Fall 2017)	
Name of College	Linked to GU Partner Record
Colleges Applied To (to be collected beginning Fall 2017)	
Name of College	Yes/No
Student Username	Text
Decision Plan	Early Decision/Early Action/ Regular Decision/ Other
SAT/ACT Scores sent?	Yes/No
Fee or Fee Waiver Submitted?	Yes/No
Admission Status	Pending/Conditional/Accept/ Admitted/Rejected
College of Choice (to be collected beginning Fall 2017)	
Name of College	Linked to GU Partner Record
Enrollment Status	Full-time or Part Time
Student has notified college admission's office	Yes/No
Student has accepted financial aid package	Yes/No
Scholarships (to be collected beginning Fall 2017)	
Scholarship Name/ College Name	Linked to GU Partner Record
Awarded	Yes/no/Waitlist
Amount Received?	Currency

APPENDIX D: Evaluation Instruments

D.1. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Student Survey: Fall 2017

GEAR UP Student Survey, Fall 2017

Reminder: You may have completed a similar survey in fall 2016 for GEAR UP. We will be asking just a few questions this fall to learn about summer programs and your high school career. In spring 2018, we will ask you additional questions to learn about your thinking and understanding about GEAR UP.

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the impact of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) program at your school. Because you are enrolled in a GEAR UP school in 2017-18, we would like to include you in the study of the Texas Education Agency GEAR UP program. As part of this important research, you are being asked to complete a survey which should take approximately 20-30 minutes. Please answer the following questions about your school experiences, future education plans and opinions about GEAR UP.

Your parent or guardian has been informed that you will be asked to complete this survey and will let your school know if they would not like you to participate. Filling out this survey is voluntary and you may choose to skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. Your answers to these questions will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and all findings will be reported by summarizing data across students – individual responses will not be reported. Your name will not be on the survey and ICF will not share your individual responses with your teachers, administrators, other students or your parents/legal guardians. The study presents minimal risk to you. If you feel uncomfortable/upset during or after the survey and want to talk with someone, please let someone at your school know or see your guidance counselor. Study participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students to prepare for postsecondary education. Where appropriate, GEAR UP grantees can use the information learned to adjust GEAR UP programming.

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a study participant, you or your parent/legal guardian can call Thomas Horwood, ICF at (703) 934-3000.

Student Assent

By clicking on the button below, you are indicating that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to *participate* by completing the online survey. If you need to stop the online survey before completing it and return to it at a later time, you will be able to do so.

- I agree to take this survey.
- I do not agree to take this survey *(Skip to end of survey)*.

Previous School Attendance

1. Did you attend any of the following middle schools when you were in Grade 8 (2013-2014)?

<input type="radio"/> Brentwood	<input type="radio"/> Decker	<input type="radio"/> Dunbar College Prep Academy	<input type="radio"/> E.T. Wrenn
<input type="radio"/> Gus Garcia	<input type="radio"/> Manor	<input type="radio"/> Somerset	<input type="radio"/> Did not attend any of the schools listed when I was in Grade 8 (2013-2014)

2. Did you attend any of the following high schools last year (2016-2017, Grade 11)?

<input type="radio"/> Estacado High School	<input type="radio"/> John F. Kennedy High School	<input type="radio"/> Manor High School	<input type="radio"/> Manor New Tech High School
<input type="radio"/> Memorial High School	<input type="radio"/> Somerset High School	<input type="radio"/> Did not attend any of the schools listed last year when I was in Grade 11 (2016-2017)	

Summer Program(s) 2017

3. Did you participate in a summer 2017 program?

- Yes *(continue to question 4)*
- No *(skip items 4-10 and go to question 11 [NOTE to DGB: skip logic programmed into survey will automatically take students to correct question])*

4. How many summer 2017 programs did you attend?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

5. Where was/were the summer program(s) you attended offered? (Select ALL that apply)

- My local high school district (school I was attending in Grade 11 or 12)
- Another school district in Texas
- A community college or university in Texas
- A business or community organization in Texas
- In a state other than Texas

6. What type(s) of summer program(s) did you participate in? (Select ALL that apply)

- A college readiness program designed to help me learn more about what I would need to do to apply to college successfully
- A college readiness program designed to help me learn more about financial aid for college
- An academic enrichment program designed to help me be better prepared to take Pre-AP/AP or dual credit (courses that provide both high school and college credit) courses
- A tutoring program
- A credit recovery program
- A program to learn more about careers I might be interested in
- A job shadowing program or internship
- Other (please describe):

7. Please identify who sponsored or organized your summer program(s). (Select ALL that apply)

- Texas GEAR UP State Grant Summer Camp
- Other GEAR UP program
- Your high school (band, sports team, club)
- Local college or university
- A college or university more than 50 miles from where you live
- Community organizations (YMCA, recreational sports teams, etc.)
- GeoFORCE
- I'm not sure who sponsored or organized the summer program(s) I attended
- Other (Please name other organization(s)):

8. First, think about the summer 2017 program(s) you attended. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements about the summer 2017 program(s) you attended.

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
a. I attended the summer program(s) for the majority of days it was offered.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I enjoyed the activities offered during the summer program(s) I attended.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Regarding the summer 2017 program(s) you attended, consider the following statements. If the statement is about a topic that was not related to the summer program you attended, please indicate not applicable. If the topic is related, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements about the summer 2017 program(s) you attended.

	<i>Not Applicable</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
a. I have a better understanding of financial aid for college after attending the summer program(s).					
b. I have a better understanding of college entrance requirements after attending the summer program(s).					
c. I have a better understanding of the benefits of college after attending the summer program(s).					
d. I have a better understanding of careers I might be interested in after attending the summer program(s).					
e. I have a better understanding of a specific career/job after attending the summer program(s).					
f. The summer program(s) prepared me academically for taking one or more of my high school classes.					
g. I feel more prepared to take Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-AP or college credit					

courses after attending the summer program(s).					
h. The summer program(s) provided me with skills to help me in my high school classes (for example, time management skills, organization skills).					
i. I would recommend the summer program(s) I attended to other students at my school.					
j. Based on my experiences with the summer 2017 program(s) I attended, I am planning on attending one or more summer 2018 program(s) if possible.					

10. If your school or GEAR UP program was to plan a summer 2018 program, what might they plan that would be of interest to you to support the transition from high school to postsecondary education?

College Entrance Exams

11. For the following set of questions, we would first like to know if you participated in any test preparation (test prep) activities for any of the identified exams. This would be test prep that occurred anytime during summer 2017 to the present. After answering whether or not you participated in the test prep, please choose the answer that best matches how prepared you felt afterwards to take the upcoming entrance exams.

Did you participate in test prep for any of the following exams?

How prepared do you feel for the college entrance exam(s) now that you have taken this test prep?

	Yes	No	<i>Not Prepared</i>	<i>Somewhat Prepared</i>	<i>Well Prepared</i>	<i>Very Well Prepared</i>
a. SAT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. ACT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. TSIA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. What types of test prep activities did you participate in from summer 2017 to the present? (Select ALL that apply)

- Test prep sessions provided by GEAR UP
- Kahn Academy
- Tutoring
- SAT/ACT test prep book
- Other:
- N/A; I have not participated in test prep activities

13. Did you participate in the SAT School Day (a day when the SAT was offered during the school day, rather than on a weekend) at your school last spring or this fall?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- N/A; My school did not offer an SAT school day

14. Please answer the following set of questions regarding your attempts to take various college entrance exams.

	Have you taken any of the following exams?		Have you tried to increase your score on any of the following exams by taking the exam multiple times?			Were you able to increase your score by taking the exam multiple times?		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	<i>N/A; I did not take the exam a first time</i>	Yes	No	<i>N/A; I did not take the exam multiple times</i>
a. SAT								
b. ACT								
c. TSIA								

15. How confident are you that you will be accepted to the college you wish to attend next year with your highest SAT and/or ACT score?

- Very confident
- Mostly confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not at all confident
- N/A; I did not complete the SAT or ACT
- N/A; I do not plan on pursuing a college degree

Postsecondary Plans, College Applications, and Financial Aid

16. What types of postsecondary schools have you been applying to/do you plan to apply to this year? Please select all that apply.

- Four-year colleges *(continue to question 17)*
- Two-year colleges *(continue to question 17)*
- Technical schools *(continue to question 17)*
- Other: *(continue to question 17)*

- N/A; I do not plan to apply to postsecondary schools this year *(skip to question 30)*

17. For each question below, please indicate your college application plans. Please select one option for each question.

	<i>None</i>	<i>1–2</i>	<i>3–4</i>	<i>5 or more</i>
How many postsecondary schools have you <u>already applied to</u> ?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What is the total number that you plan to apply to <u>by the end of this school year (2017–2018)</u> ?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. Who has been helping you prepare for and submit your college application(s)? (Select ALL that apply)

- GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor(s)
- Other GEAR UP staff (for example, coordinator, tutors, etc.)
- School counselors
- Teachers
- Administration and/or faculty
- Program at your school other than GEAR UP (for example, AVID, Breakthrough, Advise Texas, etc.)
- Parents or other family members
- College admissions counselors
- College websites
- Texas GEAR UP website (texasgearup.com)
- I have not received support in completing and/or submitting college applications
- Other (Please describe other source(s):

19. Have you been accepted to any postsecondary schools yet?

- Yes (*Continue to question 20*)
- No (*Skip to question 21*)

20. Please list the names of any postsecondary schools to which you have already been accepted.

21. Will the factors below influence what college you are planning to attend?

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
a. The distance of the college to my home/family		
b. It is close to my current job		
c. My friends are going to this college		
d. The school has a good reputation for the subject I want to major in		
e. The size of the college is a good fit for me		
f. I was referred to the college by a GEAR UP staff member		
g. I was referred by a family member		
h. I will receive financial aid from the college if I attend		
i. I like the average class size at this college; it is a good fit for me		
j. The college offers the type of degree I plan to pursue (Certificate, Associate's, Bachelor's, etc.)		
k. The college has a high graduation/completion rate for students like me		
l. There will be other students who are like me		
m. The college will accept my dual credits and/or AP credits		
n. Other:		

22. Do you know where to find the following information about each of the colleges in which you are interested?

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
a. The college's reputation for the subject I want to major in		
b. The size of the college		
c. The financial aid options available from the college		
d. The average class size of the college		
e. The college offers the type of degree I plan to pursue (Certificate, Associate's, Bachelor's, etc.)		
f. The college's graduation/ completion rate for students like me		
g. Details about the student population—whether there will be other students who are like me		
h. Whether the college will accept my dual credits and/or AP credits		
i. Other:		

23. How has the GEAR UP staff at your school helped you understand which college is best for you?
24. How likely are your parents to support you in attending a local college (within 50 miles from your current residence)?
- Very likely
 - Likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Not likely
25. How likely are your parents to support you in attending a non-local college (more than more than 50 miles from your current residence)?
- Very likely
 - Likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Not likely
26. What types of financial aid are you anticipating using to pay for postsecondary education next year? (Select ALL that apply)
- Federal Pell Grant
 - Federal student loans
 - Federal work-study
 - Scholarships
 - Other Grants
 - Texas-provided aid (from TASFA)
 - Other (Please describe other source(s)):

 - N/A; I do not plan to use financial aid to pay for postsecondary education next year.
27. Please indicate the level of progress you have made in completing the FAFSA. (Select ALL that apply)
- I have not yet started my FAFSA but I plan to complete it. *(Skip to Question 29)*
 - I have started my FAFSA, but have not yet submitted it. *(Skip to Question 29)*
 - I have submitted my FAFSA. *(Skip to Question 29)*
 - N/A; I will not be submitting a FAFSA. *(Continue to Question 28)*
 - N/A; I do not know what FAFSA is. *(Skip to Question 29)*

28. If you do not plan to submit a FAFSA, please indicate why. (Select ALL that apply)

- I do not have enough time to apply to financial aid because of school work and/or extracurricular activities.
- I do not know who to talk to about applying for financial aid.
- I am not eligible for federal student aid (federal loans or a Pell Grant).
- My parents and/or I do not feel comfortable providing personal information on financial aid applications.
- Other (please describe other reason(s)):

- I do not plan on applying for financial aid.

29. Do you believe you will be able to have enough financial aid to pay for the education you plan to pursue next year?

- Yes; I believe will have adequate financial aid.
- I am not sure; I am still searching for additional financial aid to ensure I will be able to pay for my education next year.
- No; I do not believe I will have adequate financial aid to pay for my education next year.
- N/A; I will not need financial aid for my education.

30. How much has your level of knowledge regarding financial aid improved from last school year (2016–2017) to this school year (2017–2018)?

- Not at all improved
- Somewhat improved
- Improved a lot

High School Academics and Endorsements

31. For each of the following, first please indicate if you are currently enrolled in this type of course. Then if you are enrolled, please indicate how challenging academically each has been for you.

	Are you enrolled in this course?		I find this class to be...			
	Yes	No	<i>Not at all challenging</i>	<i>A little challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Extremely challenging</i>
a. Pre-AP courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. AP courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Dual credit courses (courses that provide both high school and college credit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

32. Do you plan on enrolling in at least one dual credit (courses that provide both high school and college credit) or AP class next semester?

- Yes, I plan to take both AP and dual credit (courses that provide both high school and college credit) classes *(continue to question 33)*
- Yes, I plan to take AP classes, but not dual credit classes *(skip to question 34)*
- Yes, I plan to take dual credit classes, but not AP classes *(continue to question 33, then skip ahead to question 36)*
- No *(skip to question 36)*

33. What motivated you to want to enroll in a dual credit class (courses that provide both high school and college credit)? (Select ALL that apply)

- The opportunity to earn college credit
- The opportunity to be challenged in school
- My friends enrolled in a dual credit class
- I was recommended by a teacher
- I was recommended by a counselor
- I was recommended by a GEAR UP coordinator or College Prep Advisor
- My parents encouraged me to enroll in a dual credit class
- The credits earned will be appropriate for my postsecondary path
- A dual credit class would look good on my college applications
- I am very interested in the topic of my dual credit class
- Taking this course will help my GPA
- Other

34. What motivated you to want to enroll in an AP class? (Select ALL that apply)

- The opportunity to earn college credit
- The opportunity to be challenged in school
- My friends enrolled in an AP class
- I was recommended by a teacher
- I was recommended by a counselor
- I was recommended by a GEAR UP coordinator or College Prep Advisor
- My parents encouraged me to enroll in an AP class
- The credits earned will be appropriate for my postsecondary path
- An AP class would look good on my college applications
- I am very interested in the topic of my AP class
- Taking this course will help my GPA
- Other

35. In what ways are you preparing, or planning to prepare, for your AP test(s) next semester? (Select ALL that apply)

- AP test prep books
- AP test prep classes that I heard about through GEAR UP staff
- AP test prep classes provided by my school
- AP test prep sessions offered by my AP teachers
- Tutoring
- Kahn Academy
- Online resource through the TX GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com)
- Online resource through a non-TX GEAR UP website
- Other (please describe other source(s)):

36. How many courses will you take before graduating high school that will offer you the opportunity to earn college credit (through dual credit courses or by earning the required score on an AP exam)?

- 1 – 2
- 3 – 4
- 5 – 6
- More than 6
- I'm not sure
- N/A; I do not anticipate earning any college credits

37. Have you changed your endorsement(s) (major/minor) this year (the 2017–18 school year)?

- Yes, I changed my endorsement.
- Yes, I dropped my endorsement.
- No, I still have the same endorsement as last year.
- N/A; I do not have an endorsement.

38. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: My endorsement(s) (major/minor) will help me prepare for college and a career.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Background

39. What is your current grade level?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Grade 9 | <input type="radio"/> Grade 10 | <input type="radio"/> Grade 11 | <input type="radio"/> Grade 12 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|

40. What is your gender?

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Female | <input type="radio"/> Male |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|

41. What is the language you use most often at home? (Please select only one)

- a. English
- b. Spanish
- c. Both English and Spanish
- d. Another language (please specify: _____)

42. What is the language you use most often with friends? (Please select only one)

- a. Only English
- b. Only Spanish
- c. Both English and Spanish
- d. Another language (please specify: _____)

43. Are you Hispanic/Latino? (Please select only one)

- a. No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- b. Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- c. Yes, Puerto Rican
- d. Yes, Cuban
- e. Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

44. What is your race? (Select ALL that apply)

- a. American Indian or Alaska Native (*A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. This area may include, for example, native Indians from the United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.*)
- b. Asian (*A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, and the Philippine Islands.*)
- c. Black or African American (*A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.*)
- d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (*A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam.*)
- e. White (*A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe (including Spain), North Africa, or the Middle East.*)
- f. I do not wish to share

Thank you. Your time and answers are greatly appreciated.

D.2. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Student Survey: Spring 2018

GEAR UP Student Survey, Spring 2018

Reminder: You may have completed a similar survey in fall 2017 for GEAR UP. We are asking just a few questions this spring to learn about your high school career. We will continue to send out surveys twice next year to learn how your thinking and understanding about GEAR UP changes over time.

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the impact of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant (SG) program at your school. Because you are enrolled in a GEAR UP school in 2017–18, we would like to include you in the study of the Texas Education Agency GEAR UP program. As part of this important research, you are being asked to complete a survey which should take approximately 20–30 minutes. Please answer the following questions about your school experiences, future education plans, and opinions about GEAR UP.

Your parent or guardian has been informed that you will be asked to complete this survey and will let your school know if they would not like you to participate. Filling out this survey is voluntary and you may choose to skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. Your answers to these questions will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and all findings will be reported by summarizing data across students—individual responses will not be reported. Your name will not be on the survey and ICF (third party evaluator) will not share your individual responses with your teachers, administrators, other students, or your parents/legal guardians. The study presents minimal risk to you. If you feel uncomfortable/upset during or after the survey and want to talk with someone, please let someone at your school know or see your guidance counselor. Study participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students to prepare for postsecondary education. Where appropriate, GEAR UP grantees can use the information learned to adjust GEAR UP programming.

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a study participant, you or your parent/legal guardian can call Thomas Horwood, ICF at (703) 934-3000.

By selecting “I agree to take this survey,” you agree that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to take the online survey. If you select “I do not agree to take this survey,” you will not be presented with the option to take the survey. If you need to stop the online survey before completing it and return to it at a later time, you will be able to do so.

- I agree to take this survey.
- I do not agree to take this survey (*Skip to end of survey*).

IMPORTANT: Have you already completed a spring 2018 Texas GEAR UP SG survey (within the last few days or weeks)?

- Yes, I have already completed the spring 2018 Texas GEAR UP SG survey. *(Skip to end of survey)*
- No, this is my first time taking the spring 2018 survey.

About Previous School Attendance

1. Did you attend any of the following middle schools when you were in Grade 7 and/or 8?

<input type="radio"/> Brentwood	<input type="radio"/> Decker	<input type="radio"/> Dunbar College Prep Academy	<input type="radio"/> E.T. Wrenn
<input type="radio"/> Gus Garcia	<input type="radio"/> Manor	<input type="radio"/> Somerset	<input type="radio"/> Did not attend any of the schools listed when I was in Grade 7 and/or 8

2. Did you attend any of the following high schools last year (2016–17)?

<input type="radio"/> Estacado High School	<input type="radio"/> John F. Kennedy High School	<input type="radio"/> Manor High School	<input type="radio"/> Manor New Tech High School
<input type="radio"/> Memorial High School	<input type="radio"/> Somerset High School	<input type="radio"/> Did not attend any of the schools listed last year	

Postsecondary Plans

3. What is the highest level of education that you want to complete? *(Please select only one)*

- Some high school
- High school
- Some college
- 2-year college degree (Associate degree)
- 4-year college degree (Bachelor’s degree)
- More than a 4-year college degree

4. What is the highest level of education that you expect to complete? *(Please select only one)*

- Some high school
- High school
- Some college
- 2-year college degree (Associate degree)
- 4-year college degree (Bachelor’s degree)
- More than a 4-year college degree

5. Has participating in GEAR UP activities at your school helped you to decide to go to college after high school graduation?

- Yes, I will be going in fall 2018. *(Skip to question 8)*
- Yes, but sometime after fall 2018. *(Skip to question 8)*
- No, I was already planning on going to college. *(Skip to question 8)*
- No, I still don’t plan to go to college. *(Continue to question 6)*
- Does not apply; I am not aware I have participated in GEAR UP at my school, but I do plan to go to college. *(Skip to question 8)*
- Does not apply; I am not aware I have participated in GEAR UP at my school, and I do not plan to go to college. *(Continue to question 6)*

6. You indicated that you currently do not plan to continue your education after high school. Has your thinking about this changed in the last year?

- In prior years, I expected to continue my education after high school, but I no longer expect to do so.
- I have never expected to continue my education after high school.

7. If you do not continue your education after high school, what would be the reason(s)? (Select all that apply)

- Family commitments
- I need to work after high school.
- I want to work after high school.
- I will not need more than high school to succeed.
- I want to join the military service after high school.
- It costs too much/I cannot afford it.
- My grades are not good enough to get into college.
- My performance on college entrance exams (for example, SAT, ACT) has not/will not be high enough to get into college.
- Other (Please write in other reason(s)): _____

8. Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about...

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
a. College entrance requirements?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Select the sources of information that have helped you to think about your future college education. (Select all that apply)

- Does not apply; I do not plan to attend college.
- Information from a class activity or assignment
- Doing research specifically at the Texas GEAR UP website: www.texasgearup.com
- Research that I have done on my own (other than on the Texas GEAR UP website)
- Information from or discussions with friends or other people my age
- Information from a college visit or shadowing opportunity
- Information from a job site visit or a job shadowing opportunity
- Information from a GEAR UP Summer Program
- Information from or discussions with GEAR UP staff or GEAR UP events (other than college visits or summer programs)
- Information from programs other than GEAR UP (for example, AVID, Breakthrough, Communities In Schools)
- Information from or discussions with parents/family members
- Information from or discussions with teachers/school counselors
- Information from a college fair
- Information from television
- Information from watching sports
- None; I have not yet begun to seek outside sources of information for my future college education.
- Other (Please describe other source(s)): _____

10. How much do you know about each of the following?

	<i>Not Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Slightly Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Extremely Knowledgeable</i>
a. FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. SAT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. ACT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Federal Pell Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Federal student loans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Federal work-study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Scholarships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Financial aid and the cost and benefits to you in pursuing postsecondary education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. General requirements for college acceptance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Importance/benefit of college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. For the following set of questions, we would first like to know if you have participated in the academic course or activity during this school year (2017–2018). If you participated in the course or activity during this school year, please answer “yes” and then choose the answer that best matches how effective the course or activity was in helping you to succeed in school/prepare to go to college. If you did not participate in the course or activity, please answer “no” and skip to the next item.

Have you participated in this course/activity during this school year (2017–2018)?

If yes you participated in the course/activity, how effective was this course/activity in helping you to succeed in school/prepare to go to college?

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
k. Taking pre-AP or AP mathematics course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. Taking an AP English/language arts course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Taking a pre-AP or AP science course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Taking an AP social studies course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Tutoring/homework assistance in English/language arts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Tutoring/homework assistance in science	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Tutoring/homework assistance in social studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. A 2017 GEAR UP Summer Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Academic or career counseling/advising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. Financial aid counseling/advising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. College visits/college student shadowing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. Job site visit/job shadowing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n. Educational field trips	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. Other school workshops about benefits/options of college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<i>Not Effective</i>	<i>Slightly Effective</i>	<i>Mostly Effective</i>	<i>Very Effective</i>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

p. Family/cultural events (<u>your</u> participation in the event[s])	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
q. Family/cultural events (your parent's/parents' participation in the event[s])	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. How prepared do you feel for postsecondary education?

- Not at all prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Mostly prepared
- Very prepared
- I do not plan on attending college *(Skip to question 30)*

13. Will the factors below influence what college you are planning to attend?

	Yes	No
a. The distance of the college to my home/family		
b. It is close to my current job		
c. My friends are going to this college		
d. The school has a good reputation for the subject I want to major in		
e. The size of the college is a good fit for me		
f. I was referred to the college by a GEAR UP staff member		
g. I was referred to the college by a school staff member or counselor		
h. I was referred to the college by a family member		
i. I will receive financial aid from the college if I attend		
j. I like the average class size at this college; it is a good fit for me		
k. The college offers the type of degree I plan to pursue (Certificate, Associate, Bachelor's, etc.)		
l. The college has a high graduation/completion rate for students like me		
m. There will be other students who are like me		
n. The college will accept my dual credits and/or AP credits		

14. Do you know where to find the following information about each of the colleges in which you are interested?

	Yes	No
a. The college's reputation for the subject I want to major in		
b. The size of the college		
c. The financial aid options available from the college		
d. The average class size of the college		
e. The college offers the type of degree I plan to pursue (Certificate, Associate, Bachelor's, etc.)		
f. The college's graduation/completion rate for students like me		
g. Details about the student population—whether there will be other students who are like me		

h. Whether the college will accept my dual credits and/or AP credits		
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Postsecondary Education Costs and Financial Aid

15. On average, how much do you think or would you guess it costs (tuition and fees only) for one year to attend...

	\$1 to \$1,000	\$1,001 to \$1,900	\$1,901 to \$3,000	\$3,001 to \$6,500	\$6,501 to \$9,400	\$9,401 to \$13,000	\$13,001 to \$18,000	More than \$18,000
a. Your local public 2-year community college? <i>(Please select only one)</i>	<input type="radio"/>							
b. A 4-year public college in Texas? <i>(Please select only one)</i>	<input type="radio"/>							

16. Do you think you will be able to afford to attend...

	Definitely not	Probably not	Not sure	Probably	Definitely
a. Your local <u>public community college</u> using financial aid, scholarships, and your family’s resources?	<input type="radio"/>				
b. A <u>public 4-year college</u> using financial aid, scholarships, and your family’s resources?	<input type="radio"/>				

17. What types of financial aid are you anticipating using to pay for postsecondary education next year? *(Select all that apply)*

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal student loans
- Federal work-study
- Scholarships
- Other grants
- Texas-provided aid (from TASFA)
- Other (Please describe other source(s)): _____
- N/A; I do not plan to use financial aid to pay for postsecondary education next year.

18. Please indicate the level of progress you have made in completing the FAFSA? *(Select all that apply)*

- I have not yet started my FAFSA but I plan to complete it. *(Skip to Question 20)*
- I have started my FAFSA, but have not yet submitted it. *(Skip to Question 20)*
- I have submitted my FAFSA. *(Skip to Question 20)*
- N/A; I will not be submitting a FAFSA. *(Continue to Question 19)*
- N/A; I do not know what FAFSA is. *(Skip to Question 20)*

19. If you do not plan to submit a FAFSA, please indicate why. *(Select all that apply)*

- I do not have enough time to apply to financial aid because of school work and/or extracurricular activities.

- I do not know who to talk to about applying for financial aid.
- I am not eligible for federal student aid (federal loans or a Pell Grant).
- My parents and/or I do not feel comfortable providing personal information on financial aid applications.
- Other (please describe other reason(s)): _____
- I do not plan on applying for financial aid.

20. Do you believe you will have enough financial aid to pay for the education you plan to pursue next year? (Select all that apply)

- Yes; I believe will have adequate financial aid.
- I am not sure; I am still searching for additional financial aid to ensure I will be able to pay for my education next year.
- No; I do not believe I will have adequate financial aid to pay for my education next year.
- N/A; I will not need financial aid for my education.

College Applications and College Credit

21. What types of postsecondary schools have you been applying to this year? (Select all that apply)

- 4-year colleges (continue to question 22)
- 2-year colleges (continue to question 22)
- Technical schools (continue to question 22)
- Other (Please describe): _____ (continue to question 22)
- N/A; I do not plan to apply to postsecondary schools this year (skip to question 30)

22. For each question below, please indicate your college application plans. Please select one option for each question.

	None	1–2	3–4	5 or more
a. How many postsecondary schools have you <u>already applied to</u> ?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. What is the total number that you plan to apply to <u>by the end of this school year (2017–18)</u> ?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. Who has been helping you prepare and submit your college application(s)? (Select all that apply)

- GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor(s)
- Other GEAR UP staff (for example, coordinator, tutors, etc.)
- School counselors
- Teachers
- Administration and/or faculty
- Program at your school other than GEAR UP (for example, AVID, Breakthrough, Advise Texas, etc.)
- Parents or other family members
- College admissions counselors
- College websites
- Texas GEAR UP website (texasgearup.com)
- I have not received support in completing and/or submitting college applications
- Other (Please describe other source(s)): _____

24. Have you been accepted to any postsecondary schools yet?

- Yes *(Skip to question 26)*
- No *(Continue to question 25)*

25. How confident are you that you will be accepted to the college you wish to attend next year?

- Very confident *(Skip to question 30)*
- Mostly confident *(Skip to question 30)*
- Somewhat confident *(Skip to question 30)*
- Not at all confident *(Skip to question 30)*
- N/A; I did not complete the SAT or ACT *(Skip to question 30)*
- N/A; I do not plan on pursuing a degree *(Skip to question 30)*

26. What type(s) of postsecondary school(s) have you been accepted to? (Select all that apply)

- 4-year college(s)
- 2-year college(s)
- Technical school(s)
- Other (Please describe): _____

27. Please list the names of any postsecondary schools to which you have already been accepted.**28. Have you decided which postsecondary school to enroll in next year?**

- Yes *(Skip to question 29)*
- No

29. What type of postsecondary school will you enroll in next year?

- 4-year college
- 2-year college
- Technical school
- Other (Please describe): _____

30. Do you anticipate graduating with college credit?

- Yes, from both dual credit courses and AP exams *(continue to question 29)*
- Yes, from dual credit courses only *(continue to question 29)*
- Yes, from AP exams only *(continue to question 29)*
- No *(Skip to question 32)*
- Not sure *(Skip to question 32)*

31. How many courses will you take before graduating high school that will offer you the opportunity to earn college credit (through dual credit courses or by earning the required score on an AP exam)?

- 1 – 2
- 3 – 4
- 5 – 6
- More than 6
- I'm not sure
- N/A; I do not anticipate earning any college credits

College Entrance Assessments and AP Exams

32. Have you taken the SAT or plan to take the SAT in the 2017–18 school year?

- Yes, I have taken (*continue to question 33*)
- No, but I plan on taking before this fall (*Skip to question 36*)
- No, I have not taken and I have no current plans to take it (*Skip to question 36*)

33. Have you tried to increase your score on the SAT by taking it multiple times?

- Yes (*continue to question 34*)
- No (*Skip to question 35*)

34. Were you able to increase your score by taking the SAT multiple times?

- Yes
- No

35. How satisfied are you with the best, or only, overall score you received on the SAT?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

36. Have you taken the ACT or plan to take the ACT in the 2017–18 school year?

- Yes, I have taken (*continue to question 37*)
- No, but I plan on taking before this fall (*Skip to question 40*)
- No, I have not taken and I have no current plans to take it (*Skip to question 40*)

37. Have you tried to increase your score on the ACT by taking it multiple times?

- Yes (*continue to question 38*)
- No (*Skip to question 39*)

38. Were you able to increase your score by taking the ACT multiple times?

- Yes
- No

39. How satisfied are you with the best, or only, overall score you received on the ACT?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

40. Did you take the entire TSIA?

- Yes (*continue to question 41*)
- I have taken some, but not all sections of the TSIA (*continue to question 41*)
- No, I have not taken any section of the TSIA (*skip to question 44*)

41. Have you ever retaken a section of the TSIA to increase your score?

- Yes (*continue to question 42*)
- No (*skip to question 43*)

42. Were you able to increase your score by retaking a section multiple times?

- Yes
- No

43. How satisfied are you with the best, or only, overall score you received on the TSIA?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

44. In what ways are you preparing, or planning to prepare, for your AP test(s) this semester? (Select all that apply)

- AP test prep books
- AP test prep classes that I heard about through GEAR UP staff
- AP test prep classes provided by my school
- AP test prep sessions offered by my AP teachers
- Tutoring
- Kahn Academy
- Online resource through the TX GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com)
- Online resource through a non-TX GEAR UP website
- Other (please describe other source(s)): _____
- N/A; I am not taking any AP test(s) this semester.

GEAR UP and School Staff**45. Have you met with the College Preparation Advisor at your school in the 2017–18 school year?**

- Yes (*continue to question 46*)
- No (*Skip to question 47*)
- I don't know; I did not know that my school has a College Preparation Advisor (*Skip to question 47*)

46. How satisfied are you with the relationship between you and your GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor?

- Strongly Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Strongly Dissatisfied

High School Academics and Endorsements

47. For each of the following, first please indicate if you are currently enrolled in this type of course. Then if you are enrolled, please indicate how challenging academically each has been for you.

So far, how challenging would you say these courses, on average, have been for you academically?

		<i>Not at all challenging</i>	<i>A little challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Extremely challenging</i>	<i>N/A; I have not enrolled in this type of course</i>
c. Pre-AP courses		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. AP courses		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Dual credit courses (courses that provide both high school and college credit)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

48. Based on the classes you have taken in high school between fall 2014 and spring 2018, are you expecting to graduate with a Foundation High School Diploma with a Distinguished Level of Achievement?

- Yes, I expect to graduate with a Distinguished Level of Achievement
- No, I do not expect to graduate with a Distinguished Level of Achievement
- I am not sure

49. Overall, how confident are you that you will be graduating in spring 2018?

- Not confident
- Somewhat confident
- Confident
- Very confident

50. Based on the classes you have taken in high school between fall 2014 and spring 2018, are you expecting to graduate with an endorsement?

- Yes, I am expecting to graduate with an endorsement. *(Skip to question 52)*
- No, I am not expecting to graduate with an endorsement. *(Continue to question 51)*
- I am not sure. *(Continue to question 51)*

51. Did you drop your endorsement at any point in high school?

- Yes, I dropped my endorsement
- No, I did not drop my endorsement
- I am not sure

Overall Perceptions of GEAR UP

52. Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience with the Texas GEAR UP SG? (If you have been in GEAR UP for more than one year, please think about your entire experience.)

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

53. What kind of information, support, or activities from your school or GEAR UP did you like the most? (Select ALL that apply)

I liked: _____



- AP class(es)
- Dual credit course(s) where I can earn both high school and college credit
- Information about participating in GEAR UP events
- Tutoring
- Opportunities to participate in college visits or shadowing
- Opportunities to participate in job shadowing or job site visits
- Opportunities to participate in job site visits
- Information about college entrance requirements
- Information about college financial aid/scholarships
- Information about college student clubs and sports
- Information and events presented in other languages like Spanish
- Information about taking college entrance exams (e.g., SAT, ACT, Texas Success Initiative Assessment [TSIA] exam)
- Information about endorsement options
- Other information, support or activities you would be interested in participating in or learning more about? (Please specify)

54. Please describe your overall experience with the Texas GEAR UP SG below. (If you have been in GEAR UP for more than one year, please think about your entire experience.)

55. Please describe any support that you would have liked to have received from GEAR UP but did not. (If you have been in GEAR UP for more than one year, please think about your entire experience.)

Background

56. What is your current grade level?

<input type="radio"/> Grade 9	<input type="radio"/> Grade 10	<input type="radio"/> Grade 11	<input type="radio"/> Grade 12
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57. What is your gender?

<input type="radio"/> Female	<input type="radio"/> Male
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58. What is the language you use most often at home? (Please select only one)

- English
- Spanish
- Both English and Spanish
- Another language (please specify: _____)

59. What is the language you use most often with friends? (Please select only one)

- Only English
- Only Spanish
- Both English and Spanish
- Another language (please specify: _____)

60. Are you Hispanic/Latino? (Please select only one)

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican

- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

61. What is your race? (Select all that apply)

- American Indian or Alaska Native (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. This area may include, for example, native Indians from the United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.)
- Asian (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, and the Philippine Islands.)
- Black or African American (A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam.)
- White (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe (including Spain), North Africa, or the Middle East.)
- I do not wish to share

Thank you. Your time and answers are greatly appreciated.

D.3. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Parent Survey: Spring 2018

What school does your child in GEAR UP attend? _____

Reminder: You may have completed a similar survey in prior years for the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). We have asked questions annually to understand how your thinking and understanding about GEAR UP changed over time. This is the last survey related to GEAR UP that you will be asked to complete.

GEAR UP schools throughout Texas, including the one your child attends, are participating in a statewide study to learn about preparing middle and high school students for college or other postsecondary education. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the impact of the GEAR UP program in which your child is participating. Because of your child's enrollment in a GEAR UP school in 2017–18, we would like to include you in the study of the Texas GEAR UP State Grant (SG), administered by TEA. As part of this important research, you are being asked to complete a survey which should take approximately 15–20 minutes. These questions are about your child's experiences in school and your expectations for his/her future. Please answer the following questions about your child who is in Grade 12, participating in GEAR UP. If you do not have a child in Grade 12, but have a child in different grade who is participating in GEAR UP please complete the survey for that child. **If you have more than one child in GEAR UP, please complete a survey for each child.**

Filling out this survey is voluntary and you may choose to skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. Your answers to these questions will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and all findings will be reported in a summary manner to protect your identity. Your name will not be on the survey and ICF will not share your responses with your children, their teachers, their administrators, other students, and other parents/legal guardians. Survey responses will be combined before they are presented in reports – individual responses will not be reported. The study presents minimal risk to you. If you feel uncomfortable/upset during or after the survey and want to talk with someone, please let someone at your child's school know. Study participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students to prepare for postsecondary education. Where appropriate, GEAR UP grantees can use the information learned to adjust GEAR UP programming. **TEA's goal is to have at least 50% of parents complete the survey and share their perspectives on the program – please consider participating as your answers are important for fully understanding the program.**

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a study participant, please call Thomas Horwood, ICF, at (703) 934-3000.

By selecting "I agree to take this survey," you agree that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to take the online survey. If you select "I do not agree to take this survey," you will not be presented with the option to take the survey. If you need to stop the online survey before completing it and return to it at a later time, you will be able to do so.

- I agree to take this survey.
- I do not agree to take this survey. *(If you selected this option, you have completed the survey. Thank you for your time.)*

1. **Please confirm that this is the only time you have taken the GEAR UP Parent/Guardian Survey in spring 2018.**
 - Yes, this is the only time I have taken this survey in spring 2018.
 - I completed the survey in spring 2018 for another student I have participating in GEAR UP. This is my first time taking the survey for this child who is also participating in GEAR UP.
 - No, I completed the survey online in spring 2018. *(If you selected this option, you have completed the survey. Thank you for your time.)*

2. **Do you currently have a child in Grade 12? Please complete the survey thinking about this child.**
 - Yes *(Skip to question 3)*
 - No *(Continue to question 2b)*

b. If no, in what grade do you have a child participating in GEAR UP for whom you would like to complete a survey? (NOTE: If you do not have a child in Grade 12 or participating in GEAR UP, please do not complete the remainder of the survey.)

 - Grade 9
 - Grade 10
 - Grade 11
 - I do not have a child who is participating in the GEAR UP program. *(If you selected this option, you have completed the survey. Thank you for your time.)*

POSTSECONDARY PLANS AND COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

3. **What is the highest level of education that you want your child to complete? (Please select only one)**
 - Less than high school
 - High school
 - Some college
 - 2-year college degree (Associates degree)
 - 4-year college degree (Bachelor’s degree)
 - More than a 4-year college degree

4. **What is the highest level of education that you expect your child to complete? (Please select only one)**
 - Less than high school
 - High school
 - Some college
 - 2-year college degree (Associates degree)
 - 4-year college degree (Bachelor’s degree)
 - More than a 4-year college degree

5. **Please answer each of the following:**

	Yes	No
a. Has anyone from your child’s school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about college entrance requirements?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Have you talked with your child about attending college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Has anyone from your child’s school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. How much do you know about each of the following?

	<i>Not Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Slightly Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Knowledgeable</i>	<i>Extremely Knowledgeable</i>
a. General requirements for college acceptance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Importance/benefit of college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. SAT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. ACT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Is your child planning to enroll in postsecondary education in the fall?

- Yes (continue to question 8)
- No *(skip to question 14)*
- Not sure *(skip to question 14)*

8. Has your child submitted one or more college applications in the 2017–18 school year?

- Yes (continue to question 9)
- No *(skip to question 11)*
- Not sure *(skip to question 11)*

9. How helpful were the following resources in completing and submitting your child’s college application(s)?

	<i>Not helpful</i>	<i>Slightly helpful</i>	<i>Helpful</i>	<i>Extremely helpful</i>	<i>N/A; I do not know</i>
f. Texas GEAR UP SG staff member(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. School counselors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Other college access staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. How challenging was it for you and/or your child to complete an application for Apply TX?

- Extremely challenging
- Challenging
- A little challenging
- Not at all challenging
- N/A; I have not used Apply TX/my child does not need to use Apply TX/ I am not aware of Apply TX

11. What challenges, if any, have you or your child experienced in obtaining financial aid for your child’s postsecondary education? *(Select all that apply)*

- N/A; I have not experienced any challenges obtaining financial aid for my child’s postsecondary education.
- N/A; My child does not plan to use financial aid to pay for postsecondary education next year. *(skip to question 17)*
- I did not receive financial aid information in a timely manner.
- My job prevented me from spending adequate time applying for financial aid for my child.
- Time with my family has prevented me from applying to financial aid in a timely manner.
- I did not fully understand the instructions that were included in the financial aid application.
- I do not have internet access at home.
- My child is not eligible or did not receive a scholarship.
- Other (Please describe): _____

12. What types of financial aid are you or your child anticipating using to pay for postsecondary education next year? (Select all that apply)

- N/A; My child does not plan to use financial aid to pay for postsecondary education next year. *(skip to question 17)*
- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal student loans (i.e., FAFSA)
- Federal work-study
- Scholarships
- Other grants
- Texas-provided aid (from TASFA)
- Other (Please describe other source(s)): _____

COST AND FINANCIAL AID

13. How much do you think or would you guess it costs (tuition and fees only) to attend for one year at...

	\$1 to \$1,000	\$1,001 to \$1,900	\$1,901 to \$3,000	\$3,001 to \$6,500	\$6,501 to \$9,400	\$9,401 to \$13,000	\$13,001 to \$18,000	More than \$18,000
a. Your <u>local public 2-year community college</u> ? <i>(Please select only one)</i>	<input type="radio"/>							
b. A <u>4-year public college in Texas</u> ? <i>(Please select only one)</i>	<input type="radio"/>							

14. Do you think that your child could afford to attend...

	Definitely not	Probably not	Probably	Definitely
a. A <u>local public community college</u> using financial aid, scholarships, and your family’s resources?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. A <u>public 4-year college</u> using financial aid, scholarships, and your family’s resources?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. How much do you know about each of the following?

	Not Knowledgeable	Slightly Knowledgeable	Knowledgeable	Extremely Knowledgeable
a. Financial aid and the cost and benefits of your child pursuing a postsecondary education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Federal Pell Grants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Federal student loans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Federal work-study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Scholarships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMICS AND ENDORSEMENTS

16. Overall, how challenging would you say high school has been for your child academically?

- Extremely challenging

- Challenging
- A little challenging
- Not at all challenging

17. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about high school graduation plans at your child’s school.

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
a. Someone from Texas GEAR UP or my child’s school has discussed graduation requirements with my child.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I have discussed graduation requirements with my child.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I understand how my child’s endorsement(s) will help my child to prepare for college and a career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. My child plans on dropping her/his endorsement(s) during her/his senior (Grade 12) year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I understand what my child needs to do to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. I plan for my child to graduate with the distinguished level of achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. Based on the classes your child has taken in high school between fall 2014 and spring 2018, are you expecting your child to graduate with an endorsement?

- Yes, I am expecting my child to graduate with an endorsement.
- No, I am not expecting my child to graduate with an endorsement.
- I am not sure.

19. Based on the classes your child has taken in high school between fall 2014 and spring 2018, are you expecting your child to graduate with a Foundation High School Diploma and at the distinguished level of achievement?

- Yes, I am expecting my child to graduate with a Foundation High School Diploma and at the distinguished level of achievement.
- No, I am not expecting my child to graduate with a Foundation High School Diploma and at the distinguished level of achievement.
- I am not sure.

20. For each of the following, first please indicate if your child is currently enrolled in this type of course. Then if he/she is enrolled, please indicate (to the best of your knowledge) how challenging academically each has been for your child.

	Is your child enrolled in this course?		<i>My child finds this/these class(es) to be...</i>				
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Not at all challenging</i>	<i>A little challenging</i>	<i>Challenging</i>	<i>Extremely challenging</i>	<i>Unsure</i>
a. A pre-AP, AP and/or dual credit course in mathematics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

b. An AP and/or dual credit course in English/language arts.	<input type="radio"/>							
c. A pre-AP, AP, and/or dual credit course in science.	<input type="radio"/>							
d. An AP and/or dual credit course in social studies.	<input type="radio"/>							

ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH GEAR UP

21. Please answer each of the following.

	Yes	No
a. I participated in at least one GEAR UP activity during the last school year (2016–17).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I participated in at least one GEAR UP activity during summer 2017.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I have participated in at least one GEAR UP activity so far this school year (2017–18).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. Have any of the following contributed to your being able or willing to attend school sponsored GEAR UP events in the 2017–18 school year? (Select ALL that apply)

- Encouragement from your child
- Incentives (food, door prizes, etc.)
- Interest/relevance of topics
- Outreach from school/GEAR UP staff
- Translated services/material available
- Other (please specify): _____

23. Have any of the following contributed to your not being able or willing to attend school sponsored GEAR UP events in the 2017–18 school year? (Select ALL that apply)

- Child care
- Work schedule
- Interest/relevance of topics
- Language barriers
- Time/schedule
- Transportation
- Other (please specify): _____

24. Have you participated in any GEAR UP sponsored college visits or college shadowing events with your child in the 2017–18 school year?

- Yes, only college visits
- Yes, only a college shadowing event
- Yes, both college visits and college shadowing events
- No
- I don't know

25. Have you met with the GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor at your child's school in the 2017–18 school year?

- Yes (Continue to question 27)
- No (Skip to question 29)
- I don't know; I did not know that my child's school has a College Preparation Advisor. (Skip to question 29)

26. Have you participated in any of the following types of interactions or activities with your school's College Preparation Advisor? (Select ALL that apply)

- Individual meetings at your child's school
- Phone meetings
- Email conversations
- Home site visits
- GEAR UP sponsored after school activities
- Other (please specify): _____
- N/A; I have not participated in any of these events

27. Overall, how satisfied are you with the relationship (e.g., communication, information) between you and the GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor at your child's school?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

28. Overall, how satisfied have you been with the GEAR UP program at your child's school this year (2017–18)?

- Does not apply; I did not participate in any GEAR UP events this school year.
- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

29. Overall, how satisfied have you been with the postsecondary education information (e.g., financial aid, college culture, etc.) your child received from GEAR UP between fall 2012 and spring 2018?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

30. Overall, how satisfied have you been with the accessibility and level of communication between you and the GEAR UP staff?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

31. Please share anything that you would like us to know about your overall experiences with the GEAR UP program between now and your child’s first year in the program. What have you liked/not liked? Is there anything you would like to see the GEAR UP program doing with you and/or your child?

BACKGROUND

32. Did your child attend any of the following middle schools when they were in Grade 7 and/or 8? (Select all that apply)

- Brentwood
- Gus Garcia
- E.T. Wrenn
- Dunbar College Prep Academy
- Decker
- Manor
- Somerset
- My child did not attend any of the schools listed in Grade 7 and/or 8

33. Did your child attend any of the following high schools last year? (Select all that apply)

- Memorial High School
- John F. Kennedy High School
- Estacado High School
- Manor High School
- Manor New Tech High School
- Somerset High School

34. Does your child participate in the free or reduced-cost lunch program at school?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

35. What is your child’s gender?

- Female
- Male

36. What is the language you use most often at home?

- English
- Spanish
- Both English and Spanish
- Another language (please specify): _____

37. Other than the child you focused on in completing this survey, in what other grades do you have children?**(Select ALL that apply.)**

- I do not have any children other than the one for whom I completed this survey.
- Younger than Kindergarten
- Kindergarten through Grade 5
- Grade 6
- Grade 7
- Grade 8
- Grade 9
- Grade 10
- Grade 11
- College student or college graduate
- Other (please specify): _____

38. Are you Hispanic/Latino? (Select One)

- No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

39. What is your race? (Select one or ALL that apply)

- American Indian or Alaska Native (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. This area may include, for example, native Indians from the United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.)
- Asian (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, and the Philippine Islands.)
- Black or African American (A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam.)
- White (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe (including Spain), North Africa, or the Middle East.)

40. What is your highest level of education?

- Less than high school
- High school
- Some college
- 2-year college degree (Associates degree)
- 4-year college degree (Bachelor's degree)
- More than a 4-year college degree
- I do not wish to share.

Thank you. Your time and answers are greatly appreciated!

D.4. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: Coordinator Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as the day-to-day coordinator/contact for GEAR UP at your school with a particular interest in this past summer and this school year so far. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 45 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. GUIDES data and prior interview data (in particular, reported plans for the 2017–18 school year) will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.

Note to interviewer: If our evaluation team has already met the person and had a chance to engage with them previously, review prior notes and identify any key issues that were not addressed. If basic items were all addressed and unlikely to change, skip the item. These items are indicated by “If not already addressed ask all/otherwise ask once a year for change”. Questions to focus on change within current year and over the year have been identified. Identify prior discussions about planned activities/services to inquire about progress on those plans. In addition, please ask the coordinator to reflect on sustaining with follow-on cohorts throughout as appropriate.

1. What have been your roles and responsibilities in GEAR UP this semester/since we last spoke?

- a. *If new, tell us about your roles and responsibilities. Experience/training? (NOTE: if new, revise questions in later sections to ask what roles/responsibilities they are aware of, how they are accomplishing their roles and responsibilities, and if they have been told that their actions, roles, or responsibilities have changed from those of prior years’ district coordinators.)*
- b. *Have your responsibilities changed since last school year? Over the past five years? If yes, how have they changed? Has your role increased or diminished at all this school year? If so, what factors have contributed to that? Are you satisfied with these changes?*
- c. *What GEAR UP activities are you involved with this semester (e.g., vertical teaming, before/after school services, parent engagement, teacher professional development, partner engagement, college visits, statewide GEAR UP activities)? What GEAR UP activities/programs do you deliver yourself? What activities do you oversee or delegate to others? (Probe for perceptions of this*

oversight/management structure). How do you make the decision of to whom to delegate certain tasks?

- d. *How do you interact with the college preparation advisor(s) at your school(s)? How has this changed over time? To what extent do you work as a team with other GEAR UP staff to address GEAR UP goals and the GUIDES data reporting requirements? How well would you say the various GEAR UP staff work together towards the goals? How do you work with other school staff on GEAR UP goals and projects? How do you collaborate with other partners on campus?*
- e. *How do you interact/collaborate with district administrators? How do you interact with campus administrators, counselors, teachers, or any other non-GEAR UP school staff? Do you think district and school staff understand the role and goals of GEAR UP? (Probe for different types of district and school staff – teachers, administrators, counselors.) Do they understand your role as the GEAR UP Coordinator? How satisfied are you with this interaction and the role they each play in GEAR UP? Any challenges or ways you would like their role to change, if at all?*
 - i. *Do you think GEAR UP and school staff are delivering a consistent message about college preparedness at this school(s)? If not, in what ways does it differ? Which staff members offer a different message?*
 - ii. *Do you think there is any duplication of work and effort between GEAR UP staff and school staff? What efforts have been taken to minimize duplication of work and effort between GEAR UP staff and school staff?*

2. Are there any changes in how GEAR UP is structured at this school(s) for this school year? Since last school year?

- a. *If known: Have any of the key players changed? How has this changed from prior years? Do you know why these changes took place?*
- b. *If not known: What is the structure of GEAR UP at this school/these schools? Who are the key players? Who are the key players on a day-to-day basis? How has this changed over the course of the semester? If changes have been made, how have they impacted the day-to-day implementation of the grant?*
- c. *In what ways did you collaborate with the IPSI Family Engagement Trainer and Educator Outreach Coach? Have you implemented any strategies that were suggested by either of them?*
- d. *Have your perceptions of the management structure of GEAR UP in your district changed since last school year? If so, please explain. If new: What are your perceptions of the management structure of GEAR UP in your district?*
- e. *What impact has the state implementation office had on GEAR UP operations in your district this semester? How often have you interacted with the implementation office this semester?*
- f. *What are your perceptions of the state implementation office's role in GEAR UP?*
- g. *How did the planning for this year's implementation go? How satisfied are you with the level of involvement you had? Who has been involved in the GEAR UP planning process (advisory councils, parents, school leaders, teachers, principal, other campus staff)? Who is involved now? Are these groups helping to inform GEAR UP programming decisions/activities/programs? If so, how? What are barriers/facilitators to involving these groups? What information and data are you using to help you plan? Who provides these data? Do you use GUIDES data at all in planning? Do you feel you have sufficient data to help you and the rest of the GEAR UP team plan successfully? In what ways have you had to change GEAR UP implementation plans so far this year to accommodate any student, campus, or district needs that arose throughout the year?*
- h. *Are there any goals that your district is prioritizing this year? Why are these goals your priority? What data, collected by GEAR UP or the school, did you use to inform how you plan to reach these goals this year?*

- i. *How did preparing for long-term success of GEAR UP fit into this year’s planning (meeting GEAR UP project objectives)? [Probe for graduating college ready (distinguished level of achievement/endorsements), college entrance requirements knowledge, financial aid knowledge and application, college application, 18 hours of college credit by graduation, on-time promotion and graduation, SAT/ACT and TSIA]. How is your campus/district working towards GEAR UP sustainability?*
 - j. *Did GEAR UP staff or the district/school work with Grade 12 teachers to familiarize them with GEAR UP?*
 - k. *If new administrators: How have the GEAR UP staff worked to familiarize new administrators with GEAR UP activities and goals? Are you satisfied with their level of buy-in and engagement so far?*
- 3. Effective transitions to high school and between grades while in high school is another important element in promoting student preparation for college. As students moved from Grade 11 to Grade 12, have there been any additional activities—including summer activities—to help them to transition in a way that prepares students for college level work? (If no, probe for details about why they did not offer summer activities. If yes, probe for details on each event and for focus on academic rigor using the following probes.)**
- a. *Who was responsible for planning and conducting the summer activities?*
 - b. *For each activity, approximately what percentage of students attended?*
 - c. *What are your perceptions about the success of these activities? What factors may have contributed to the success of these activities?*
 - d. *What challenges did you face? Were you able to overcome them or how might you overcome them in the future?*
 - e. *What summer transition activities, if any, did your site offer this past summer for students entering Grade 9 in the 2017–18 school year? In what ways, if any, were they similar to or different from those you provided to the GEAR UP cohort before they entered Grade 9 (summer 2014)? Did any of the summer activities or programming change to focus on college readiness and college enrollment?*
- 4. In what ways is GEAR UP promoting postsecondary education differently this school year to students? To parents?**
- a. *What are the different types of schools and programs (e.g., public, private, 4-year, 2-year, vocational) that GEAR UP has provided information about to students?*
 - b. *What factors do you think are important for students to consider when selecting where and how to further their education? [Probe for postsecondary school factors (e.g., class size, school location, community type, where peers plan to attend, graduation rate, how similar school population demographics match the student, program availability, degrees available) as well as program factors.] How do your thoughts differ from the thoughts of students and parents?*
 - c. *How does GEAR UP help students determine the schools that are the best fit for them?*
- 5. The primary goal of GEAR UP is to promote college readiness and a college going culture. In what ways has GEAR UP contributed to the college-going culture in the GEAR UP school(s) in this district? Has it changed from prior years? Is the change across a broad range of students? What features of GEAR UP do you think have contributed to this change? If any factors identified, do you think those factors will continue in the future? (Reminder to probe for sustainability.)**
- a. *Have you been involved in any planning to maintain or sustain any initiatives started or enhanced with GEAR UP once the grant is no longer in place at this site? What are those plans for maintaining or sustaining initiatives at the middle or high school level/district level? What plans would you like put in place?*

- b. *If not already addressed, ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Relative to being college ready and college going -- What are the characteristics of the GEAR UP school(s) in this district and its students (e.g., student and staff demographics, student needs)? How did you consider these characteristics/needs in designing a GEAR UP action plan at the GEAR UP school(s) in this district this year? (Probe for English Language Learners in particular, subgroups in general throughout.) Has this changed over prior years? In what ways? How will you use this information in future planning?*
- c. *How have students performed on the ACT/SAT? On the TSIA? Do you expect many cohort students will take the ACT/SAT again this fall? In what ways has the district or school prepared students to succeed on the ACT/SAT?*
- d. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: What challenges/successes has/have the GEAR UP school(s) in this district had with students being promoted on time? What plans does/do the GEAR UP school(s) in this district have to improve on-time promotion? (Probe specifically on Grade 11 to Grade 12 promotion rates and any change even if small, given it is relatively high.)*
- e. *How would you describe progress towards the goal of having 70% of students having knowledge of and being academically prepared for college? What indicators do you have for this?*
- f. *How many youth from the district have been going to college after graduating? In general, how would you say your district has been doing on these issues relative to other districts in the state? Are there any changes from prior years?*
- g. *What programs and student support services are available to students this semester? What is the level of student involvement in these services (percentage of participation) approximately? How has this changed since prior years? How helpful are these programs at preparing students to be college going? What, if any, programs/services have been sustained (continued implementation for this year's Grades 9, 10, and 11 students)? What programs do you hope to sustain in future years because they have been helpful? Are there any plans for new/additional programs/support services for this year? What programs or services related to college readiness are available to students other than GEAR UP?*
- h. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: What are the characteristics of households from which students come? (Family structure, employment status, education, attitudes toward postsecondary education.) Has this changed over prior years?*
- i. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: How involved are parents in their children's education? Has parent involvement changed from prior years? What efforts, if any, have been made to engage parents of new Grade 9 students?*
- j. *What programs and services are available to families [e.g., programs that inform about college; family nights; support services (e.g., counseling)]? What is the level of participation (note goal of 50% of parents attending 3 or more activities)? How has this changed over the years? What, if any, programs do you hope to sustain in future years because they have been helpful? What, if any, programs or services for families have been continued for parents of this year's Grades 9, 10, and 11 students? Are there any plans for new/additional programs/support services for this year? What programs or services related to college readiness for families are there other than GEAR UP?*
- k. *What was the level of participation [note goal of 50% of parents attending 3 or more activities]? How has this changed over the years of GEAR UP implementation? What IPSI or campus GEAR UP (IPSI Family Engagement Trainer, campus parent liaison) staff have you worked with to work towards this goal? What types of support have they provided?*
- l. *What strategies have the GEAR UP team used to identify parents/households who have not attended a GEAR UP family event? What are your plans for engaging with these parents? What supports would you like in identifying and engaging with these parents from the school, district, IPSI, and/or TEA?*
- m. *How has the quality of GEAR UP events and services, for students and parents, evolved since your time in GEAR UP? What areas would identify for potential increase in quality, if any?*

- 6. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to financial aid. How have these programs been going so far this year? What other financial aid programs and services are you planning to offer this year?**
- How has student and family knowledge of financial aid changed this year from last year? What role, if any, has TG played this year in providing financial aid information?*
 - How many students have a FAFSA submitted already? How many are still working on it for this year? How many students have submitted a TASFA? How many are still working on it for this year? Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in submitting FAFSAs or TASFAs? Have any families been reluctant to submit FAFSAs or TASFAs? How have you worked to address that reluctance?*
 - What other types of financial aid has GEAR UP helped students and families apply for this year?*
 - Are there any students or families that have changed their perception about the affordability of postsecondary education since applying for financial aid?*
 - What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about financial aid and financial literacy? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- 7. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to college applications. Tell me how those programs have been going so far this year? What other related programs and services are you planning to offer this year?**
- How many students would you estimate have already submitted applications?*
 - Who has provided support to students and families in submitting applications (e.g., GEAR UP, school counselors, or other college access programs, mentors, teachers)?*
 - What challenges has GEAR UP helped students overcome in submitting applications (e.g., gathering all necessary personal information, drafting essays, adhering to submission timelines)?*
 - Have application fees deterred any students or families from submitting applications?*
 - What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about college admissions? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
 - Have any students already been accepted to postsecondary education?*
- 8. Increasing the number of advanced/honors and college credit courses offered as well as the number of students involved in these is also a GEAR UP goal. To what extent has/have your school(s) increased the number of advanced courses offered so far? Has the number of Grade 12 students enrolled in these courses increased from previous years? Does your school(s) have a specific plan to continue to increase the number of advanced courses offered in high school grades and/or to increase enrollment in these courses after the GEAR UP cohort graduates? (Probe for dual credit and AP as part of advanced and for sustainability.)**
- If yes, please tell us about what you have been doing/planning to increase the number of advanced courses and/or enrollment in these courses, including who (district staff, school staff, GEAR UP staff) is involved. If no, why not?*
 - Does your school/district use the AP Potential tool to identify students for AP courses? (The AP Potential tool is a tool that administrators have access to that looks at students' PSAT scores and identifies students that would be suited for AP courses.) What other ways does your school/district identify students who may be suited for AP or dual credit courses?*
 - If not already addressed, ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Tell us about how your offerings of advanced courses have changed over time. Any new advanced courses or any advanced courses no longer offered? (Cite list of advanced/honors math, English, science courses based on latest GUIDES data and/or prior site visit knowledge.) Has the definition of advanced.*

- c. *courses offered changed over time? What criteria are used to meet the current definition?*
 - d. *To what extent, if any, have you seen any change in the interest of GEAR UP students in advanced courses in comparison to prior years' students? To what extent was the school prepared to enroll a greater number of Grade 12 students in advanced courses? How does the enrollment of this year's Grades 9, 10, and 11 students in advanced courses compare to previous years? Have you noticed if they are more or less likely to take these rigorous courses as seniors? Do they see/understand the benefit of these courses?*
 - e. *Is there a wide range of students enrolling in these courses (e.g., English Language Learners, did well vs. did poorly in Pre-AP courses, did well vs poorly on the SAT/ACT)? Which students are more likely to be enrolled? What barriers keep the other students from enrolling or being interested?*
 - f. *Are you aware of any changes in course rigor since the increase in enrollment? Are students appropriately prepared for the advanced courses? What challenges have existed in successfully offering these courses?*
 - g. *What supports does GEAR UP offer for students enrolled in these courses? What about when students are struggling with coursework? What successes have these supports facilitated?*
 - h. *How would you describe the progress in students passing advanced courses?*
- 9. A goal of GEAR UP is to provide students with opportunities to receive 18 hours of college credit by graduation. How will the students at your school(s) be able to meet this goal (what opportunities will they have to earn credit)? How has the progress on this goal been going so far? Since we last talked, what steps/progress has the school taken to ensure that this goal can be met?**
- a. *What are your perceptions about how prepared students in your school/district are to take these (advanced and college credit) courses? At this point, have this year's GEAR UP students seemed better prepared than students in the past, about the same, or less prepared? Since the GEAR UP cohort has started Grade 12, have you noticed any changes in the level of preparedness for these types of courses for students in Grades 9, 10, and 11?*
 - b. *In what ways are students currently earning college credit? Are the enrollments in AP and dual credit courses what your team anticipated this year?*
 - c. *For students who have begun to apply to higher education, are any finding that their credits will not transfer? How do you/GEAR UP staff help students manage this?*
 - d. *If school includes an Early College High School: How does the college readiness of the GEAR UP students in the Early College High School compare to the GEAR UP students not in the Early College High School? How does their opportunity for dual credit compare to those not in the Early College High School? Has the existence of the Early College High School influenced or impacted the availability of dual credit courses in any way?*
 - e. *Discuss any facilitators and barriers to long term planning for increasing the number of, and student enrollment in, advanced courses and college credit courses.*
- 10. We understand students may be participating in the SAT/ACT (i.e., fall test administration), TSIA, as well as AP testing this year. Do you have a role in student participation in and preparation for these activities?**
- a. *If yes, tell us about your role. Are you or will you be working with the Khan Academy to prepare students? Other programs or strategies for helping students with preparing for these assessments? What is your vision of success regarding participating in these preparation programs?*
 - b. *How did students' experience with previous test administrations influence the way these preparation activities are administered by GEAR UP?*
 - c. *Any anticipated challenges regarding participation in these preparation programs? If yes, how might you overcome those challenges? What percentage of GEAR UP students would you estimate have not yet participated in the SAT or ACT? Do they plan to do so by the end of this semester?*

- d. *Specifically, to what extent is/are the school(s) working to help students succeed on these types of assessments? Is the help provided across a wide range of students (e.g., English Language Learners, did well vs. did poorly on previous assessments)?*
- e. *Did you notice an increase in performance from the PSAT to the SAT?*
- f. *How many students would you estimate will take the SAT and/or ACT for their second time this semester? Are the preparation supports different for those who will take it for the first time and those who will take it for the second time?*
- g. *Did you offer any special summer programs for SAT or ACT test preparation? If yes, were they well attended? Have you observed an increase in SAT or ACT scores following the test preparation?*
- f. *How many GEAR UP students would you estimate have taken at least one section of the TSIA so far? How many additional students will need to complete the TSIA by the end of the year? How often are they able to take the TSIA? Are you aware if these students are ready to take/retake the assessment and pass?*
- g. *What TSIA preparation activities are available this year for students? How do these activities differ from those offered last school year? Did your experience with test preparation activities and last school year's TSIA results influence how these activities are offered or administered this year?*
 - i. *Are there any additional ways students are qualifying for dual credit course enrollment this year besides performance on the TSIA?*
- h. *What preparation has GEAR UP provided for students planning to take an AP test this year? What other preparation is available to students?*
- i. *Did you have a role in helping the teachers prepare the students for the assessments?*
- j. *Was there any variation in the type or amount of preparation students received? How did you address students unsatisfied with their performance on these assessments? What supports were offered, if any, for future assessments?*

11. How, if at all, has the role of GEAR UP in supporting teacher professional development (PD) changed since last spring?

- a. *What specific GEAR UP PD training sessions have been provided over the past summer or so far this semester?*
- b. *If none provided, what has prevented site(s) from conducting teacher/administrator PD? What is the plan to begin conducting PD for Grade 12 teachers? How might any barriers to conducting be overcome?*
- c. *How pleased are you with the number and type of PD activities related to GEAR UP you have been able to provide so far this semester?*
- d. *Did attendance at provided PD meet expectations? Probe for any needed clarity regarding who was offered the training (e.g., grade levels, content areas, administrators and teachers) and how the PD was delivered (i.e., online/face-to-face).*
- e. *To what extent did any PD align with GEAR UP goals (e.g., improved academic rigor, student success, college admissions training, financial literacy)? What GEAR UP goals have not yet been met through PD (including PD provided within and outside of GEAR UP)?*
- f. *To what extent were Grade 12 teachers already familiar with GEAR UP because of prior participation in PD that was vertically aligned? How has this semester's PD training focused on vertical alignment with regard to meeting GEAR UP goals? In what ways is the school/district meeting the goal of 5 days of vertical team preparation? (Probe for continued vertical alignment efforts with middle school as well as across high school grades or content areas.)*
- g. *What are your perceptions on the success of GEAR UP's teacher PD strategies deployed to improve academic rigor and promote student achievement this semester (e.g., AP/dual credit courses and training, data-driven instruction, project-based learning, differentiated instruction, etc.)? To what extent were they successful? What factors contributed to their success?*

- h. What barriers do you face in implementing GEAR UP PD programs this semester? How did you overcome them/might you overcome them in the future?*
- i. In what ways, if any, has GEAR UP PD continued for other teachers (i.e., those currently teaching Grades 9, 10, and 11)? How can PD being delivered to Grade 12 teachers be sustained for other teachers in the school? How might the skills taught be enhanced in teachers who have already participated?*
- j. What non-GEAR UP PD are Grade 12 teachers receiving this semester? How might this PD support GEAR UP goals?*
- k. Has the Texas Gateway been promoted to teachers? How successful was this promotion? What feedback did you receive on the usefulness from teachers? Do you know of any other school staff who have used this resource?*
- k. In what other ways has GEAR UP supported teachers or plan to support teachers this year?*

12. Outside of PD, how are teachers/school staff involved with GEAR UP (e.g., field trips, college visits, afterschool programs, tutoring, etc.)? Did this change over the course of the school year?

- a. How are teachers/staff involved in college visits and awareness activities? Do teachers integrate GEAR UP/college themes into their lessons? If so, how? If not, why not?*
- b. In what other ways do you interact with teachers and build relationships with them? How do you distribute GEAR UP information to teachers? Are they responsive and receptive to the information? In what ways have you prepared Grade 12 teachers for GEAR UP students, goals, resources, and activities this year?*
- c. Have teachers delivered any financial literacy curricula to students this semester? If so, what are your perceptions of this activity? If not, why not? Was TG involved in developing or delivering this curricula?*
- d. Has GEAR UP been able to provide teachers with resources/materials for their classroom? If so, please describe. What are your perceptions of extent/how teachers utilize the resources?*

13. What business, government, education, and community alliances, if any, are involved with GEAR UP? Any changes since last spring? Is this collaboration occurring at the district or school level?

- a. If no, what challenges have you faced in engaging organizations to participate in GEAR UP?*
- b. If yes, how have community organizations supported GEAR UP at the school this year? What services/support has each alliance provided?*
- c. Tell us about the organizations' roles in providing matched funding to the GEAR UP program. If any alliance provided matching funds, please describe.*
- d. What programs or services on this school campus that have goals similar to GEAR UP have you worked with this year (such as Advise TX or LEARN)? How do the goals of these programs and/or services align with GEAR UP's goals? Do you think there is any overlap or duplication in work? If yes to overlap/duplication, how are you working to maximize resources and minimize duplication? What opportunities have you identified for potential collaboration with these programs or services?*
- e. What factors help facilitate organizations' involvement? How might you build on this in the future?*
- f. What barriers did you encounter in working with organizations? How did you address them/how might you address them in the future?*
- g. Do you anticipate that the district/school will be able to sustain the alliance in future years? Why/why not? To what extent have organizations continued to deliver supports to students other than the current Grade 12 cohort of GEAR UP students?*
- h. Do you plan on recruiting new organizations this year? If so, how many and/or what types of additional alliances would you like to recruit?*
- i. Have you recruited and convened a GEAR UP Advisory Board for the district? If so, what does it do and how often does it meet? If not, why not? Who makes up your advisory board? What role would*

you like the advisory board to play in the implementation of GEAR UP? How is that role different to their current role?

- j. Do you have any gaps in the alliances and community partnerships that you are seeking to fill? What challenges are you facing in filling those gaps? How are you overcoming them?*

14. How involved/knowledgeable are you about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events? [Probe for GEAR UP Website (www.texasgearup.com) and GEAR UP (state and national) conferences.] (Note the change aspect of this question is not relevant if new to role, can probe for involvement and for perception of change from prior year based on feedback received to date.)

- a. Did you/your school/students/parents participate in any statewide activities/events this semester? What was the purpose of the event? Who/how many attended?*
- b. Did you/your school utilize statewide resources this semester? If yes, which resources and how did you use them? If not, why not? Probe for use of TEA Graduation Tool Kit or district tools (while not a GEAR UP specific tool may be of use to support GEAR UP). How helpful were the tools/resources you used?*
- c. Discuss facilitators and barriers to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events. How do these facilitators and barriers vary between GEAR UP staff, school staff, parents, and students?*
- d. Did the district work with any of the Texas GEAR UP state collaborators (TG, AMS Pictures, GeoFORCE, Signal Vine, FOCUS, etc.)? If yes: In what ways did this work promote college readiness and/or awareness? If no: Why not? Are you interested in working with them in the future? What barriers exist that prevent you working with these collaborators?*
- e. Thinking specifically about AMS Pictures, what services or resources are you aware of that they offer? Did you use these resources or services? Why or why not? If you did use them, what did you use? What made you want to utilize them? If you did not use them, what would have made you more likely to use them?*
- f. Did you/your school/students/parents utilize any additional tools to promote college awareness and readiness? In what ways were they helpful?*
- g. Are there any other resources that would be helpful to have delivered or offered at the state-level?*

15. Is there anything else we should know about GEAR UP at your school/district and how you/the school/the district is working to meet project goals?

Thank you for your time.

D.5. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Coordinator Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as the day-to-day coordinator/contact for GEAR UP at your school with a particular interest in this school year since we last spoke to you in fall 2017. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 45 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. GUIDES data and prior interview data (in particular, reported plans for the 2017–18 school year) will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.

Note to interviewer: If our evaluation team has already met the person and had a chance to engage with them previously, review prior notes and identify any key issues that were not addressed. If basic items were all addressed and unlikely to change, skip the item. These items are indicated by “If not already addressed ask all/otherwise ask once a year for change”. Questions to focus on change over the year have been identified. Identify prior discussions about planned activities/services to inquire about progress on those plans. In addition, please ask the coordinator to reflect on sustaining with follow-on cohorts throughout as appropriate.

1. What have been your roles and responsibilities in GEAR UP since we last spoke in the fall?

- a. *If new, tell us about your roles and responsibilities. Experience/training? (NOTE: if new, revise questions in later sections to ask what roles/responsibilities they are aware of, how they are accomplishing their roles and responsibilities, and if they have been told that their actions, roles, or responsibilities have changed from those of prior years’ district coordinators.)*
- b. *Have your responsibilities changed over this school year? Over the past six years? If yes, how have they changed? Has your role increased or diminished at all this school year? If so, what factors have contributed to that? Are you satisfied with these changes?*
- c. *What GEAR UP activities are you involved with this semester (e.g., vertical teaming, before/after school services, parent engagement, teacher professional development, partner engagement, college visits, statewide GEAR UP activities)? What GEAR UP activities/programs do you deliver yourself? What activities do you oversee or delegate to others? (Probe for perceptions of this*

oversight/management structure). How do you make the decision of to whom to delegate certain tasks?

- d. *How do you interact with the college preparation advisor(s) at your school(s)? How has this changed over time? To what extent do you work as a team with other GEAR UP staff to address GEAR UP goals and the GUIDES data reporting requirements? How well would you say the various GEAR UP staff work together towards the goals?*
- e. *How do you interact/work with other school staff on GEAR UP goals and projects? How do you collaborate with other partners on campus?*
- f. *How do you interact/collaborate with district administrators? How do you interact with campus administrators, counselors, teachers, or any other non-GEAR UP school staff? Do you think district and school staff understand the role and goals of GEAR UP? (Probe for different types of district and school staff – teachers, administrators, counselors.) Do they understand your role as the GEAR UP Coordinator? How satisfied are you with this interaction and the role they each play in GEAR UP? Any challenges or ways you would like their role to change, if at all?*
 - i. *Do you think GEAR UP and school staff are delivering a consistent message about college preparedness at this school(s)? If not, in what ways does it differ? Which staff members offer a different message?*
 - ii. *Do you think there is any duplication of work and effort between GEAR UP staff and school staff or other programs on campus? What efforts have been taken to minimize duplication of work and effort between GEAR UP staff and school staff?*
 - iii. *What has facilitated successful interactions with school and district staff? What challenges have you faced?*

2. Are there any changes in how GEAR UP is structured at this school(s) for this semester? Over the course of this school year?

- a. *If known: Have any of the key players changed? Do you know why these changes took place?*
- b. *If not known: What is the structure of GEAR UP at this school/these schools? Who are the key players? Who are the key players on a day-to-day basis? How has this changed over the course of the year? If changes have been made, how have they impacted the day-to-day implementation of the grant?*
- c. *In what ways did you collaborate with the IPSI Family Engagement Trainer and Educator Outreach Coach? Have you implemented any strategies that were suggested by either of them?*
- d. *Have your perceptions of the management structure of GEAR UP in your district changed since fall? If so, please explain. If new: What are your perceptions of the management structure of GEAR UP in your district?*
- e. *What impact has the state implementation office had on GEAR UP operations in your district this semester? TEA? How often have you interacted with the implementation office this year?*
- f. *Which district and campus staff are currently involved in the planning for this year? Are these groups helping to inform GEAR UP programming decisions/activities/programs? If so, how? What are barriers/facilitators to involving these groups? In what ways have you had to change GEAR UP implementation plans throughout the year to accommodate any student, campus, or district needs that arose throughout the year? What information and data are you using to help you plan? Who provides these data? Do you use GUIDES data at all in planning? Do you feel you have sufficient data to help you and the rest of the GEAR UP team plan successfully?*
- g. *How did preparing for long-term success of GEAR UP (meeting GEAR UP Project Objectives) fit into your planning for going forward into summer? (Probe for graduating college ready (distinguished level of achievement/endorsements), college entrance requirements knowledge, financial aid knowledge, 18 hours of college credit by graduation, on-time promotion and graduation, TSIA, ACT, and SAT). How is your campus/district working towards GEAR UP sustainability?*

h. If new administrators: How have the GEAR UP staff continued to familiarize new administrators with GEAR UP activities and goals? Are you satisfied with their level of buy-in and engagement so far?

3. The primary goal of GEAR UP is to promote college readiness and a college going culture. In what ways has GEAR UP contributed to the college-going culture in the GEAR UP school(s) in this district during this semester? Has it changed over the course of the year? Is the change across a broad range of students? What features of GEAR UP do you think have contributed to this change? If any factors identified, do you think those factors will continue in the future? (Reminder to probe for sustainability.)

- a. Have you been involved in any planning to maintain or sustain any initiatives started or enhanced with GEAR UP once the grant is no longer in place at this site? Are there any plans for maintaining or sustaining initiatives at the middle or high school level/district level? What plans would you like put in place?*
- b. Do GEAR UP school(s) in your district have plans to continue to implement any strategies initiated by GEAR UP to increase on-time promotion?*
- c. How would you describe progress towards the goal of having 70% of GEAR UP students having knowledge of and being academically prepared for college? What indicators do you have for this?*
- d. What programs and student support services are available to students this semester? What is the level of student involvement in these services (percentage of participation) approximately? How has this changed since prior years? How helpful are these programs at preparing students to be college going? What, if any, programs/services have been sustained (continued implementation for this year's Grades 9, 10, and 11students)? What programs or services related to college readiness are available to students other than GEAR UP?*
- e. What programs and services were available to families this year [e.g., programs that inform about college; family nights; financial aid information sessions, support services (e.g., counseling)]? What was the level of participation (note goal of 50% of parents attending 3 or more activities)? How has this changed over the course of the year and over the years? What, if any, programs or services for families have been continued for parents of this year's Grades 9, 10, and 11students? What programs or services related to college readiness for families are there other than GEAR UP? What IPSI or campus GEAR UP (IPSI Family Engagement Trainer, campus parent liaison) staff have you worked with to work towards this goal? What types of support have they provided?*
- f. What strategies have the GEAR UP team used to identify parents/households who have not attended a GEAR UP family event? What are your plans for engaging with these parents? What supports would you like in identifying and engaging with these parents from the school, district, IPSI, and/or TEA?*
- g. How has the quality of GEAR UP events and services, for students and parents, evolved since your time in GEAR UP? What areas would identify for potential increase in quality, if any?*
- h. Can you estimate the number of students you or GEAR UP staff are concerned about not graduating on time, dropping out, or needing to continue next year? What services are in place to help these students meet on-time promotion GEAR UP goals? Are there any services planned for next year? Are you aware if the school has formed an Individual Graduation Committee for any GEAR UP students at risk for not graduating on time? Is GEAR UP providing any additional supports to these students or the committee?*

4. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to financial aid. How have these programs been going so far this year? What other financial aid programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. How has student and family knowledge of financial aid changed throughout this year? What role, if any, has TG played this year in providing financial aid information?*

- b. *Have you targeted any students for help with completing financial aid forms and documentation? How, if at all, is your targeting strategy different this semester from last semester? What was the impetus for this strategy? Do you think it has worked well? Do you think all cohort students will have been serviced in this area sufficiently by the end of the school year?*
 - c. *How many students have submitted a FAFSA already? How many are still working on it for this year? How many eligible students have submitted a TASFA? How many are still working on it for this year? Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in submitting FAFSAs or TASFAs? Have any families been reluctant to submit FAFSAs or TASFAs? How have you worked to address that reluctance? How many students/families do you expect to not submit either? Why will they not submit these applications? How have you worked to help students try to overcome these reasons for not submitting these applications?*
 - d. *What strategies has GEAR UP implemented, or worked with other organizations to implement, to encourage completion of financial aid applications since we last spoke?*
 - e. *What strategies has GEAR UP implemented, or worked with other organizations to implement, to encourage FAFSA completion since we last spoke?*
 - f. *Do you feel knowledgeable enough to support families who may have a FAFSA selected for verification?*
 - g. *How, if at all, has the financial aid application process and notification of amount of aid expected to receive affected students' and families' perceptions of the affordability of postsecondary education? Has the amount of anticipated financial aid changed any students' postsecondary plans?*
 - h. *What other types of financial aid has GEAR UP helped students and families apply for this year?*
 - i. *What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about financial aid and financial literacy? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- 5. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered since we last spoke in the fall for students and families related to college applications. Tell me how those programs have been going? What other related programs and services are you planning to offer this year?**
- a. *How many students would you estimate have already submitted applications? How many applications on average are students submitting?*
 - b. *Who has provided support to students and families in submitting applications (e.g., GEAR UP, school counselors, or other college access programs, mentors, teachers)?*
 - c. *What are the different types of schools and programs (e.g., public, private, 4-year, 2-year, vocational) that GEAR UP has provided information about to students? Which of these programs are students applying to? Are there any trends or patterns among students and the types of schools and programs they are applying for?*
 - d. *What strategies has GEAR UP implemented, or worked with other organizations to implement, to encourage college application completion since we last spoke?*
 - e. *Have you targeted any students for help with completing college applications? How, if at all, is your targeting strategy different this semester from last semester? What was the impetus for this strategy? Do you think it has worked well? Do you think all cohort students will have been serviced in this area sufficiently by the end of the school year?*
 - f. *How many students do you expect to not submit an application for postsecondary education? Why will they not submit an application? How have you worked to help students try to overcome these reasons for not submitting an application?*
 - g. *What challenges has GEAR UP helped students overcome in submitting applications (e.g., gathering all necessary personal information, drafting essays, adhering to submission timelines)?*
 - h. *Have application fees deterred any students or families from submitting applications?*

- i. *What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about college admissions? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
 - j. *Have any students already been accepted to postsecondary education?*
- 6. Increasing the number of advanced/honors and college credit courses offered as well as the number of students involved in these is a GEAR UP goal. Do you know if your school(s) has a specific plan to continue to increase the number of advanced courses offered in high school and/or to increase enrollment in these courses after the GEAR UP cohort graduates? (Probe for dual credit and AP as part of advanced and for sustainability.)**
- a. *If yes, please tell us how/if you have been supporting school and/or district staff to continue to increase the number of advanced courses and/or enrollment in these courses. If no, why not?*
 - b. *If not already addressed, ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Tell us about how your offerings of advanced courses have changed over time. Any new advanced courses or any advanced courses no longer offered? (Cite list of advanced/honors math, English, science courses based on latest GUIDES data and/or prior site visit knowledge.) Has the definition of advanced courses offered changed over time? What criteria are used to meet the current definition?*
 - c. *To what extent, if any, have you seen any change in the interest of GEAR UP students in advanced courses in comparison to prior years' students? To what extent was the school able to sustain last year's efforts and enroll a greater number of Grades 9, 10, and 11 students in advanced courses than in previous years? Have you noticed if they were more or less likely to take these rigorous courses as seniors? Do they see/understand the benefit of these courses?*
 - d. *If not asked in the fall: Is there a wide range of students enrolling in these courses (e.g., English Language Learners, did well vs. did poorly in Pre-AP courses, did well vs. poorly on the SAT/ACT)? Which students are more likely to be enrolled? What barriers keep the other students from enrolling or being interested?*
 - e. *Are you aware of any changes in course rigor since the increase in enrollment? What challenges have existed in successfully offering these courses?*
 - f. *What supports does GEAR UP offer for students enrolled in these courses? What about when students are struggling with coursework? What successes have these supports facilitated?*
- 7. A goal of GEAR UP is to provide students with opportunities to receive 18 hours of college credit by graduation. How will the students at your school(s) be able to meet this goal (what opportunities will they have to earn credit)? How has the progress on this goal been going so far? Since we last talked, what steps/progress has the school taken to ensure that this goal can be met?**
- a. *What are your perceptions about how prepared students in your school/district are to take these (advanced and college credit) courses? At this point, have this year's GEAR UP students seemed better prepared than students in the past, about the same, or less prepared? Since the GEAR UP cohort has started Grade 12, have you noticed any changes in the level of preparedness for these types of courses for students in Grades 9, 10, and 11?*
 - b. *In what ways are students currently earning college credit? Are the enrollments in AP and dual credit courses what your team anticipated this year?*
 - i. *Are there any additional ways students are qualifying for dual credit course enrollment this year besides performance on the TSIA?*
 - c. *For students who have begun to apply to higher education, are any finding that their credits will not transfer? How do you/GEAR UP staff help students manage this?*
 - d. *If school includes an Early College High School: How does the college readiness of the GEAR UP students in the Early College High School compare to the GEAR UP students not in the Early College High School? How does their opportunity for dual credit compare to those not in the Early College*

High School? Has the existence of the Early College High School influenced or impacted the availability of dual credit courses in any way?

- e. *Discuss any facilitators and barriers to long term planning for increasing the number of, and student enrollment in, advanced courses and college credit courses.*

8. We understand students may have participated or may participate in the SAT/ACT (i.e., spring test administration) TSIA as well as AP testing this semester. Do you have a role in student participation in and preparation for these activities?

- a. *If yes, tell us about your role. Did you/the students work at all with the Khan Academy? Other programs or strategies for helping students with participating in these programs? What is your vision of success regarding participating in these preparation programs?*
- b. *How did students' experience with previous test administrations influence the way that test preparation activities have been administered by GEAR UP?*
- c. *What percentage of GEAR UP students would you estimate have not yet participated in the SAT or ACT? Do they plan to do so before fall 2018? To what extent is/are the school(s) working to help students succeed on these types of assessments? Is the help provided across a wide range of students (e.g., English Language Learners, did well vs. did poorly on previous assessments)?*
- d. *How many GEAR UP students would you estimate have passed at least one section of the TSIA so far? How many additional students will need to pass the TSIA by the end of the year? Are you aware if these students are ready to take/retake the assessment and pass? How often are they able to take the TSIA?*
- e. *What TSIA preparation activities are available this semester for students? How do these activities differ from those offered last school year? Did your experience with test preparation activities and students' previous TSIA results influence how these activities are offered or administered this semester?*
- f. *What preparation has GEAR UP provided for students planning to take an AP test this year? What other preparation is available to students?*
- g. *Did GEAR UP have a role in helping the teachers prepare the students for the assessments?*
- h. *Was there any variation in the type or amount of preparation students received? How did you address students unsatisfied with their performance on these assessments? What supports were offered, if any, for future assessments?*

9. One of the GEAR UP goals is to have at least 30% of the students involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level (AP classes; dual credit classes), ease transitions, and increase college awareness/enrollment each summer. Tell us about your experiences with engaging students in these types of summer programs.

- a. *Tell us about the upcoming summer. Have you been involved in identifying potential summer programs for students to attend? What types of programs? Where are the programs located (e.g., locally, elsewhere in Texas, in another state)? Who will provide the programs (e.g., university or community college, business)? What are the topic/focus areas of the summer programs students plan to participate in? How are they different from previous years?*
- b. *Are you planning for summer programs any differently this year?*
- c. *How successful would you describe student enrollment in upcoming summer programs as being?*
- d. *What challenges have there been to engaging students in enrolling in summer programs? Ideas on how to overcome those challenges going forward?*
- e. *What strategies is GEAR UP planning to implement this summer to address "summer melt" (when students commit to a college, but do not enroll over the summer)? Who all is involved in implementing these strategies? How, if at all, will Signal Vine services be used?*

10. How, if at all, has the role of GEAR UP in supporting teacher professional development (PD) changed over the course of the year?

- a. *What specific GEAR UP PD has been provided over the course of the year?*
- b. *If none provided, what has prevented site(s) from conducting teacher/administrator PD?*
- c. *How pleased are you with the number and type of PD activities related to GEAR UP you have been able to provide this year?*
- d. *Did attendance at provided PD meet expectations? Probe for any needed clarity regarding who was offered the training (e.g., grade levels, content areas, administrators and teachers) and how the PD was delivered (i.e., online/face-to-face).*
- e. *To what extent did any PD align with GEAR UP goals (e.g., improved academic rigor, student success, college admissions training, financial literacy)? What GEAR UP goals have not yet been met through PD (including PD provided within and outside of GEAR UP)?*
- f. *To what extent were Grade 12 teachers already familiar with GEAR UP because of prior participation in PD that was vertically aligned? How has this year's PD training focused on vertical alignment with regard to meeting GEAR UP goals? In what ways is the school/district meeting the goal of 5 days of vertical team preparation? (Probe for continued vertical alignment efforts with middle school as well as across high school grades or content areas.)*
- g. *What are your perceptions on the success of GEAR UP's teacher PD strategies deployed to improve academic rigor and promote student achievement this year (e.g., AP/dual credit courses and training, data-driven instruction, project-based learning, differentiated instruction, etc.)? To what extent were they successful? What factors contributed to their success?*
- h. *What barriers did you face in implementing GEAR UP PD programs this year? How did you overcome them/might you overcome them in the future?*
- i. *In what ways, if any, has GEAR UP PD continued for other teachers (i.e., those currently teaching Grades 9, 10, and 11)? How can PD being delivered to Grade 12 teachers be sustained for other teachers in the school or to Grade 12 teachers next year? How might the skills taught be enhanced in teachers who have already participated?*
- j. *What non-GEAR UP PD are Grade 12 teachers receiving this year? How might this PD support GEAR UP goals?*
- k. *Has the Texas Gateway been promoted to teachers? How successful was this promotion? What feedback did you receive on the usefulness from teachers? Do you know of any other school staff who have used this resource?*

11. Outside of PD, how are teachers/school staff involved with GEAR UP (e.g., field trips, college visits, afterschool programs, tutoring, etc.)? Did this change over the course of the school year?

- a. *How are teachers/staff involved in college visits and awareness activities? Do teachers integrate GEAR UP/college themes into their lessons? If so, how? If not, why not?*
- b. *In what other ways do you interact with teachers and build relationships with them? How do you distribute GEAR UP information to teachers? Are they responsive and receptive to the information? In what ways have you prepared Grade 12 teachers for GEAR UP students, goals, resources, and activities this year?*
- c. *Has GEAR UP been able to provide teachers with resources/materials for their classroom? If so, please describe. What are your perceptions of extent/how teachers utilize the resources?*

12. What business, government, education, and community alliances, if any, are involved with GEAR UP? Any changes since last semester? Is this collaboration occurring at the district or school level?

- a. *If no, what challenges have you faced in engaging organizations to participate in GEAR UP?*
- b. *If yes, how have community organizations supported GEAR UP at the school this semester? What services/support has each alliance provided?*

- c. *Tell us about the organizations' roles in providing matched funding to the GEAR UP program. If any alliance provided matching funds, please describe.*
- d. *What programs or services on this school campus that have goals similar to GEAR UP have you worked with this year (such as Advise TX or LEARN)? How do the goals of these programs and/or services align with GEAR UP's goals? Do you think there is any overlap or duplication in work? If yes to overlap/duplication, how are you working to maximize resources and minimize duplication? What opportunities have you identified for potential collaboration with these programs or services?*
- e. *What factors help facilitate organizations' involvement?*
- f. *What barriers did you encounter in working with organizations? How did you address them/how might you address them in the future?*
- g. *Do you anticipate that the district/school will be able to sustain the alliance in future years? Why/why not? To what extent have organizations continued to deliver supports to students other than the current Grade 12 cohort of GEAR UP students?*
- h. *Do you know if the school(s) or district plan to maintain any alliances established of GEAR UP? Have you helped any administrators secure any alliances for next year?*
- i. *Have you recruited and convened a GEAR UP Advisory Board for the district? If so, what does it do and how often does it meet? If not, why not? Who makes up your advisory board? What role would you like the advisory board to play in the implementation of GEAR UP? How is that role different to their current role?*
- j. *Do you have any gaps in the alliances and community partnerships that you are seeking to fill? What challenges are you facing in filling those gaps? How are you overcoming them?*

13. What plans and/or activities have already been put in place for GEAR UP implementation in Year 7? Are you involved in planning for these plans and activities? If yes, what planning is left to do for Year 7?

- a. *Do you know what your role in implementation will be next year? If yes, how will you be involved? Who will you be working with to conduct the activities for next year?*
- b. *What challenges have you experienced in planning for implementation next year?*
- c. *Have you been able to coordinate with everyone you wish to do so with to plan for next year? Who haven't you coordinated with, yet, that you would like to?*
- d. *Have you worked with any school or district staff to plan for any implementation efforts to take place at the schools or districts next school year? What challenges regarding sustainability have you helped staff address? Do you anticipate providing any support for sustainability between now and the beginning of the next school year?*

14. How involved/knowledgeable are you about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events? [Probe for GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com) and GEAR UP (state and national) conferences.] (Note the change aspect of this question is not relevant if new to role, can probe for involvement and for perception of change from prior year based on feedback received to date.)

- a. *Did you/your school/students/parents participate in any statewide activities/events this semester? What was the purpose of the event? Who/how many attended?*
- b. *Did you/your school utilize statewide resources this semester? If yes, which resources and how did you use them? If not, why not? Probe for use of TEA Graduation Tool Kit or district tools (while not a GEAR UP specific tool may be of use to support GEAR UP). How helpful were the tools/resources you used?*
- c. *Discuss facilitators and barriers to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events. How do these facilitators and barriers vary between GEAR UP staff, school staff, parents, and students?*

- d. *Did the district work with any of the Texas GEAR UP state collaborators (TG, AMS Pictures, GeoFORCE, Signal Vine, FOCUS, etc.)? If yes: In what ways did this work promote college readiness and/or awareness? If no: Why not? What barriers exist that prevent you working with these collaborators?*
- e. *Thinking specifically about AMS Pictures, what services or resources are you aware of that they offer? Did you use these resources or services? Why or why not? If you did use them, what did you use? What made you want to utilize them? If you did not use them, what would have made you more likely to use them?*
- f. *Did you/your school/students/parents utilize any additional tools to promote college awareness and readiness? In what ways were they helpful?*
- g. *Are there any other resources that would be helpful to have delivered or offered at the state-level?*

15. What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you feel it has been in the district?

- a. *Do you feel that GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not? What barriers and facilitators were in place affect this outcome?*
- b. *Do you think GEAR UP has made an impact on the school and district administration's approach or thoughts towards postsecondary education readiness and awareness?*
- c. *What impact do you think GEAR UP has made on the families of students in this district? Do you think the implementation has had any effects on the community and their involvement in postsecondary education-related initiatives?*

16. Is there anything else we should know about GEAR UP at your school/district and how you/the school/the district is working to meet project goals?

Thank you for your time.

D.6. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: College Preparation Advisor Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP state grant initiative to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as the College Preparation Advisor for GEAR UP at your school with a particular interest in this past summer and this school year so far. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 45 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. The most recent GUIDES reporting data (i.e., student and parent event, demographic, and participation data), and prior interview data (in particular, reported plans for the 2017–18 school year) will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.

INTERVIEWER QUESTIONS

1. What have been your roles and responsibilities in GEAR UP this semester?

- a. *If returning: How have your responsibilities changed since last school year? Has your role increased or diminished at all this school year? If so, what factors have contributed to that?*
- b. *If new: What responsibilities have you had so far this school year?*
- c. *What GEAR UP activities are you involved with (e.g., college visits, before/after school services, tutoring/mentoring, financial aid counseling, college application support)?*
- d. *How have you interacted with students so far this year? Are there any additional ways you anticipate interacting with them later in the year? (Probe for one-to-one, group contact, workshop. Probe for frequency/duration of interaction.) Have you noticed any changes during student interactions from previous years? What kind of changes?*
- e. *What factors at the school help facilitate your interaction with students? What barriers do you face in interacting with students? If barriers, how have you/will you address them? To what extent are data systems in place to identify students in need of services? What kind of information/data do you use to guide your interaction with students? From where do you get such information? (Probe for GEAR UP records [including FAFSA and college application status], teachers, counselors.) Does this information work well for you? Is there any additional information or data that would be helpful in*

guiding your interactions with students? Tell me about any one-on-one interactions you have had with students.

- f. Are you involved with sustainability of GEAR UP programming with the middle schools or Grades 9, 10, and/or 11? Tell me about how you see GEAR UP goals being sustained or not and your role in that. How do you see the sustainability of the grant working next year with the cohort behind GEAR UP? Has the campus set up any systems or strategies? Have you helped with these?*
- g. We know you are hired and supervised by IPSI, but work on the school campus. Has the GEAR UP structure within the school evolved since your time working on GEAR UP? In what ways, if any, does this structure affect your role? How has it affected your ability to meet project goals? Generally, what is your perspective on the current model/structure?*
- h. What is your role in spreading GEAR UP across the campus, specifically to the teachers? To what extent do you go in to the classrooms? Meet with teachers? How would you describe those interactions?*

2. How has your interaction with the GEAR UP coordinator for this school changed since last school year? With other GEAR UP school or district staff such as the data clerk or parent liaison? With guidance counselors/teachers/parents/administrators?

- a. Who do you report to while at the school and at IPSI? Has that changed since last school year? (Probe for level/frequency of interaction with coordinator and supervisor as well as teachers/parents.)*
- b. Describe the different roles that make up the GEAR UP team. In what ways do you collaborate with other GEAR UP staff? (Probe for Coordinator, parent liaison, data clerk, IPSI Educator Outreach Coach, IPSI Family Engagement Trainer, and other staff.) To what extent do you work as a team to address GEAR UP goals and the APR requirements? How well would you say the various GEAR UP staff are working together as a team towards the goals?*
- c. Do you feel that your role on the GEAR UP team is clearly defined? Do you feel that you clearly understand your responsibilities? Do you understand the roles and responsibilities of other members of the team? Do you feel that each team member adheres to their roles and responsibilities appropriately?*
- d. What new training have you received this school year? How useful has this training been so far? From who? (Probe for IPSI role.)*

3. Tell me about the planning for GEAR UP implementation for this year that you were involved in.

- a. How much has been planned out so far for this year?*
- b. Who has been involved in the planning? Which GEAR UP staff? Which school staff? Any district staff? Have parents, teachers, or other school leaders been involved? Are you satisfied with the type and level of input everyone has provided? Has GEAR UP helped the campus/district in college outreach planning?*
- c. What data were/will be used for planning this year's activities and strategies for engagement? GUIDES? Any additional GEAR UP data? (Probe for previous participation levels, previous feedback, goal attainment in previous years.) School data? (Probe for grades, course enrollment, attendance, etc.)*
- d. To what extent were you involved in executing the GEAR UP planning process for this school year? If involved, how? If not, why not? [?] How has your role in planning changed from the prior year?*

4. Tell me about the main GEAR UP goals/objectives for this year and strategies to achieve progress. This can include progress over the past summer.

- a. What are the primary goals for this year from your perspective? (Probe for: promoting student success in Algebra II, advanced courses, AP courses, dual enrollment courses generally; Foundation High School Plan with endorsement or Distinguished Level of Achievement; on track for four years of*

credit in core subjects; on-time promotion exceeding state average; ensuring students had an effective transition between grade levels while in high school; familiarizing students/families with college entrance requirements, ACT, SAT, TSIA, financial literacy, overall college preparedness. Check against project goals in general.) How well informed of the goals were you through the year? Do you think others in your school and district (GEAR UP coordinator, principal, teachers, parents) were well-informed and understood the goals?

- b. How does preparing for **long-term success** of GEAR UP students fit into executing this year's plan? (Probe for graduating college ready [distinguished level of achievement/endorsements], college entrance requirement knowledge, financial aid knowledge, 18 hours of college credit by graduation, ACT/SAT/TSIA, increasing number of and enrollment in AP/ Pre-AP/dual credit courses, other advanced courses, and overall college preparedness.) What role did you have in encouraging students to stay with their plan to graduate with an endorsement? Encouraging students to complete Algebra II?*
- c. What progress has been made towards accomplishing these goals so far this semester? What strategies have been used?*

5. What activities/events has your school offered to students/parents, particularly students rising to Grade 12 and their parents, this past summer and so far this school year? (Probe for details on each event; probe specifically for information about any financial aid information events.)

- a. Tell me about your role in helping to meet the goal of having at least 50% of parents attend 3 events. Is this a continued challenge or have you made more progress in this area? If progress, what strategies have worked to increase attendance? Please describe how you have been able to implement your parent engagement plan. [Probe whether or not the topics of some events were more successful than others.]*
- b. To what extent do you work with/collaborate with the IPSI Family Engagement Trainer? What kind of support did the specialist provide to date? How, if at all, did she change your plan for parent engagement this year? Has this led to any new implementation activities? To improved success in engaging families?*
- c. How did you encourage student/parent attendance at events? For each event, were participation/attendance levels consistent with program targets? If not, why not?*
- d. What are your perceptions about the success of these events? What factors may have contributed to the success of these events?*
- e. Are there any activities/events that support student academic achievement and postsecondary readiness (such as tutoring, financial aid events, college visits, etc.)? If so, what is your perception of these activities? Are there any activities/events offered to parents about the role they can play to support student academic achievement (such as parent nights or information sessions about advanced course offerings)? If so, what is your perception of these activities?*
- f. How often do students miss class/instruction time for GEAR UP events? What guidance do you provide for making up this time (for example, ask teacher for missed work, attend tutoring, complete work ahead of time)? Have you received any negative feedback from school staff and/or parents regarding students' time missed in the classroom? What changes have you made as a result of this feedback?*
- g. What strategies have the GEAR UP team used to identify parents/households who have not attended a GEAR UP family event? What are your plans for engaging with these parents? What supports would you like in identifying and engaging with these parents from the school, district, IPSI, and/or TEA?*
- h. What challenges did you face (with students and/or parents)? Were you able to overcome them or how might you overcome them in the future?*
- i. What was your role in these events? What role, if any, did other GEAR UP/school staff or collaborators play? Was this a change in roles as compared to last year?*
- j. Any changes since last school year (i.e., from spring to fall semester)?*

6. What postsecondary readiness services have you provided directly to GEAR UP students this past summer and so far this school year to support the cohort in Year 6 of the program? (Probe for changing endorsements; developing educational plans; mentoring; developing career plans; assessing education interests, college entrance requirements and financial literacy.)

- a. *What are your perceptions of these services so far this school year? (Probe for perceptions of understandings of graduation plans and endorsements and how this links to college readiness. Have perceptions changed since last year)? Have you had any conversations with students about how changing their schedule could affect college readiness?*
- b. *How well were these services received by the students? For each service, were participation/attendance levels consistent with targets? If not, why not?*
- c. *Have you worked with or discussed with any students about their college and career plans? How can they use their plan to pursue postsecondary education?*
- d. *How would you describe the extent of providing student support services (tutoring, mentoring, counseling)?*
- e. *How might the school sustain these services with future students if perceived as helpful? What challenges might they face in sustaining them? If the school does not perceive these services as helpful, what might they change to make them more effective?*
- f. *What services regarding financial literacy have you offered this school year to GEAR UP students? What gaps in financial literacy knowledge do you think students still have in regards to financial literacy? What is the GEAR UP staff's plan to fill that gap?*

7. What business, government, education, and community alliances, if any, are involved with GEAR UP? Any changes since last spring? [If no partners are identified, probe for any involvement in identifying/recruiting alliances.]

- a. *What is your role in identifying community alliances? What type of alliances (e.g., college readiness, career readiness, financial literacy, etc.) do you consider top priority?*
- b. *Which GEAR UP state collaborators have you worked with so far this year (i.e., TG, GeoForce, Focus Training, Signal Vine, Raise Achievement,)? In what ways have they supported GEAR UP at this school this year? How have career readiness goals been supported through these organizations? What collaborators do you plan to work with later this year?*
- c. *Thinking specifically about AMS Pictures, what services or resources are you aware of that they offer? Did you use these resources or services? Why or why not? If you did use them, what did you use? What made you want to utilize them? If you did not use them, what would have made you more likely to use them?*
- d. *Have these organizations supported college preparation and awareness activities this semester (e.g., through providing services, hosting college visits)?*
- e. *If no, what challenges have you faced in engaging these organizations?*
- f. *If yes, how have community alliances supported GEAR UP, college preparation, and college awareness this school year? What services/support has the alliance provided?*
- g. *What programs or services on this school campus that have goals similar to GEAR UP have you worked with this year (such as Advise TX or LEARN)? What programs or services do you anticipate working with later this year? How do the goals of these programs and/or services align with GEAR UP's goals? Do you think there is any overlap or duplication in work? What opportunities have you identified for potential collaboration with these programs or services?*

8. Do you have a role in preparing students for the SAT/ACT/TSIA?

- a. *If yes, tell me about that. Has the Khan Academy been/continued playing a role? How often are students using Khan Academy? Are they using it effectively? Other programs or strategies for helping students with this?*

- b. *Did you offer any special summer programs for SAT or ACT test preparation? If yes, were they well attended? Have you seen students increase their scores?*
 - c. *Did you notice increased scores from the PSAT to the SAT? Have any students taken the SAT a second or third time and had increased scores? If so, is there anything they attribute it to?*
 - d. *Specifically, to what extent is the school and/or GEAR UP working to help students succeed on these types of exams? Is the help provided across a wide range of students (e.g., English language learners, did well vs. did poorly on PSAT 10) or do some students receive different or more/less help than others? Do you have a role in determining the type and level of help students receive? If so, describe your role. What is your vision of success for students participating in these test preparation programs?*
 - e. *Do you feel that students are/will be prepared to do well on the SAT/ACT/TSIA this year? Why or why not? If you feel they will do well, what has/will facilitate the success? If you feel they are not prepared to do well, what are the barriers preventing them from succeeding?*
 - f. *For those who took the TSIA before the school year began, do you know, or can you estimate, the approximate percentage of students who were able to pass the assessment? About how many students are still planning to take or retake it this year? Do you think these students are prepared to take and/or retake and pass the assessment? What TSIA preparation opportunities are available to them this year?*
 - g. *What other ways, besides the TSIA, have students become eligible to enroll in dual credit classes?*
 - h. *What is your vision of success for students participating in these test preparation programs?*
 - i. *Any anticipated challenges regarding student participation in the SAT, ACT, and/or the TSIA? If yes, how might you overcome those challenges? What challenges have you or the GEAR UP team experienced in offering preparation for these tests? How have you overcome these challenges?*
- 9. How has the transition into more advanced and/or college level coursework, including AP or dual credit courses, gone for students so far this school year? Have you noticed if they are more or less likely to take these rigorous courses as seniors? Do they see/understand the benefit of these courses?**
- a. *Is there a wide range of students enrolling in these courses (e.g., English language learners, did well vs. did poorly in Pre-AP courses) or are some students more/less likely to be enrolled than others? If it varies, why do you think this is?*
 - b. *What supports are available to help students succeed in these courses? What about for students who are struggling with coursework? Do you think they all take advantage of these supports? What may keep students from pursuing these supports? How do you manage these challenges?*
 - c. *What AP or dual credit courses are GEAR UP students enrolled in this semester, if any? How have those been going? What feedback from students have you received?*
 - d. *Have many students transferred out of advanced courses this year? Are there some courses that more students have been transferring out of in comparison to others (e.g., AP History, AP Chemistry, dual credit English)? What reasons did students provide for transferring out of these courses? Did students receive supports prior to transferring?*
 - e. *Are any GEAR UP students taking both AP and dual credit courses? What factors influence students' choices to take one type of course over the other? What factors do you encourage them to consider? If known, what factors do school counselors encourage students to consider? Do parents consider any other factors?*
 - f. *How do students' long-term goals and plans influence the decision to take AP AND/OR dual credit courses?*
 - g. *If school includes an Early College High School: How does the college readiness of the GEAR UP students in the Early College High School compare to the GEAR UP students not in the Early College High School? How does their opportunity for dual credit compare to those not in the Early College High School? Has the existence of the Early College High School influenced or impacted the availability of dual credit courses in any way?*

- h. What role does GEAR UP have in identifying students who should be enrolled in advanced/AP courses? What tools and data, such as the AP Potential tool provided by College Board, are used to identify students to enroll in AP courses?*
- i. What types of skills might contribute to student success in advanced coursework? How prepared do you perceive students are on those skills? To what extent do students understand what they need to be doing to succeed in advanced coursework? How has this changed/stayed the same over the time you have been in this role and interacting with students?*
- j. Effective transitions to high school and between grades while in high school is another important element in promoting student preparation for college. As students moved from Grade 11 to Grade 12, have there been any additional activities to help them to transition between grade levels and be better prepared for college, including college level work? What activities in this area, if any, occurred over the summer or so far this school year? What activities are underway/planned for this school year?*

10. In what ways have students been talking about college differently now that they are in Grade 12? Do they know what postsecondary schools and programs they would like to pursue?

- a. What different types of postsecondary schools have students been able to explore through college visits or other research (e.g., public, private, 4-year, 2-year)? What role do you play in helping students and/or their parents determine the type of school that is the best fit for them?*
- b. If not previously asked: What factors do you think are important for students to consider when selecting where and how to further their education? (Probe for postsecondary school factors [e.g., class size, school location, community type, where peers plan to attend, graduation rate, how similar school population demographics match the student, program availability, degrees available] as well as program factors (e.g., types of degrees offered, choices in major, length of program.) How do your thoughts differ from students' and parents'?*
- c. Do students and parents have the resources and access to research about what each school offers? If yes, has GEAR UP helped with that outreach? If no, is GEAR UP trying to address this gap?*
- d. How has the number of students who do not plan to obtain post-secondary education immediately after high school fluctuated in the past year? What barriers do students perceive to prevent them from attending college?*
- e. What alternative paths do students plan to take after high school? What kind of guidance do you offer students to help them determine the most appropriate path after high school? What other resources do you offer students and parents to help make this decision?*

11. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to financial aid. How have these programs been going so far this year? What other financial aid programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. In what ways have you promoted financial aid to students and parents this year (e.g. one-on-one conversations, workshops, family events)? What information and options about financial aid have you discussed with students and parents? Do you feel that you have the knowledge and support to provide financial aid information to students with a variety of levels of need? What information or resources would be helpful for your efforts to inform students and parents about financial aid? What challenges have you experienced in informing parents and students about financial aid so far? How have you overcome them?*
- b. How has student and family knowledge of financial aid changed this year from last year? What role, if any, has TG played this year in providing financial aid information?*
- c. How many students have a FAFSA submitted already? How many are still working on it for this year? How many students have submitted a TASFA? How many are still working on it for this year? Have you provided any support regarding FAFSA and/or TASFA completion and submission? Have you*

experienced any unexpected challenges in submitting FAFSAs or TASFAs? Have any families been reluctant to submit FAFSAs or TASFAs? How have you worked to address that reluctance?

- d. What other types of financial aid has GEAR UP helped students and families apply for this year?*
- e. Are there any students or families that have changed their perception about the affordability of postsecondary education since applying for financial aid?*
- f. What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about financial aid and financial literacy? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*

12. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to college applications. Tell me how those programs have been going so far this year? What other related programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. How many students would you estimate have already submitted applications?*
- b. Who has provided support to students and families in submitting applications (e.g., GEAR UP, school counselors, or other college access programs, mentors, teachers)?*
- c. What challenges has GEAR UP helped students overcome in submitting applications (e.g., gathering all necessary personal information, drafting essays, adhering to submission timelines)?*
- d. Have application fees deterred any students or families from submitting applications?*
- e. What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about college admissions? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- f. Have any students already been accepted to postsecondary education?*

13. Earlier we asked about summer programs offered by the school or district. Now we'd like to know about student participation in summer programs not hosted or facilitated by the school or district this past summer. Were you involved in guiding students towards any programs? Type of programs students attended to your knowledge? Where they attended (e.g., locally, elsewhere in Texas, in another state)? Who provided the programs (e.g., university or community college, business)?

- a. Please share information about any district or school sponsored/organized college visits that occurred in summer 2017.*
- b. If aware of student participation, how successful would you describe that participation as being? About how many students were involved in summer programs (how close to goal of 30% enrolled)?*
- c. If not aware of student participation, what challenges have there been to engaging students in the summer? Ideas on how to overcome those challenges going forward?*

14. How has your involvement with and knowledge about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events changed since last school year? (Probe for statewide activity outside of GEAR UP, GEAR UP website, GEAR UP conferences) (Note the change aspect of this question is not relevant if new to role, can probe for any involvement and for perception of change from prior year based on feedback received to date.)

- a. Did you/your school/students/parents participate in any statewide activities/events? What was the purpose of the event? Who/how many attended?*
- b. Did you/your school utilize statewide resources this past summer or so far this school year? If yes, which resources and how did you use them? If not, why not?*
- c. Discuss facilitators and barriers to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events.*

15. Is there anything else you would like us to know about GEAR UP in your school and how you/the school is working to meet project goals?

D.7. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: College Preparation Advisor Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP state grant initiative to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as the College Preparation Advisor for GEAR UP at your school with a particular interest in this school year since we last talked. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 45 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. The most recent GUIDES reporting data (i.e., student and parent event, demographic, and participation data), and prior interview data (in particular, reported plans for the 2017–18 school year) will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.

INTERVIEWER QUESTIONS

1. What have been your roles and responsibilities in GEAR UP this semester?

- a. If returning: How have your responsibilities changed since we last spoke? Has your role increased or diminished at all this school year? If so, what factors have contributed to that?
- b. What GEAR UP activities are you involved with (e.g., college visits, before/after school services, tutoring/mentoring, financial aid counseling, college application support)?
- c. How did you interact with students this year? (Probe for one-to-one, group contact, workshop, **mentoring**. Probe for frequency/duration of interaction.) Have you noticed any changes during student interactions from previous years? What kind of changes?
- d. What factors at the school help facilitate your interaction with students? What barriers do you face in interacting with students? If barriers, how have you/will you address them? To what extent are data systems in place to identify students in need of services? What kind of information/data do you use to guide your interaction with students? From where do you get such information? (Probe for GEAR UP records [including FAFSA and college application status], teachers, counselors.) Does this information work well for you? Is there any additional information or data that would be helpful in guiding your interactions with students?

- e. *Have you been involved with preparing to sustain any of the GEAR UP initiatives for next year's Grade 12 students? Tell me about how you see GEAR UP goals being sustained or not and your role in that. How do you see the sustainability of the grant working next year with the cohort behind GEAR UP? Has the campus set up any systems or strategies? Have you helped with these?*
- f. *We know you are hired and supervised by IPSI, but work on the school campus. Has the GEAR UP structure within the school evolved since your time working on GEAR UP? In what ways, if any, does this structure affect your role? Has it helped or hindered your ability to meet project goals? Generally, what is your perspective on this model/structure?*
- g. *What is your role in spreading awareness of GEAR UP across the campus, specifically to the teachers? To what extent do you go in to the classrooms? Meet with teachers? How would you describe those interactions?*

2. How has your interaction with the GEAR UP coordinator for this school changed since last semester? With other GEAR UP school or district staff such as the data clerk or parent liaison? With guidance counselors/teachers/parents/administrators?

- a. *Who do you report to while at the school and at IPSI? Has that changed since last semester? (Probe for level/frequency of interaction with coordinator and supervisor as well as teachers/parents.)*
- b. *Describe the different roles that make up the GEAR UP team. In what ways do you collaborate with other GEAR UP staff? (Probe for Coordinator, parent liaison, data clerk, IPSI Educator Outreach Coach, IPSI Family Engagement Trainer, and other staff.) To what extent do you work as a team to address GEAR UP goals and the APR requirements? How well would you say the various GEAR UP staff are working together as a team towards the goals?*
- c. *Do you feel that your role on the GEAR UP team is clearly defined? Do you feel that you clearly understand your responsibilities? Do you understand the roles and responsibilities of other members of the team? Do you feel that each team member adheres to their roles and responsibilities appropriately?*
- d. *What new training have you received this school year? How useful has this training been so far? From who? (Probe for IPSI role.)*

3. Tell me about the main GEAR UP goals/objectives for this year and strategies to achieve progress.

- a. *What were the primary goals for this year from your perspective? (Probe for: promoting student success in Algebra II, advanced courses, AP courses, dual enrollment courses generally; Foundation High School Program with endorsement or distinguished level of achievement; on track for four years of credit in core subjects; on-time promotion exceeding state average; ensuring students had an effective transition between grade levels while in high school; familiarizing students/families with college entrance requirements, ACT, SAT, TSIA, financial literacy, overall college preparedness. Check against project goals in general.) How well informed of the goals were you through the year? Do you think others in your school and district (GEAR UP coordinator, principal, teachers, parents) were well-informed and understood the goals?*
- b. *What elements helped facilitate the goal completion? What barriers did GEAR UP face when trying to meet goals?*
- c. *How did preparing for **long-term success** of GEAR UP students fit into executing this year's plan? (Probe for graduating college ready [distinguished level of achievement/endorsements], college entrance requirement knowledge, financial aid knowledge, 18 hours of college credit by graduation, ACT/SAT/TSIA, increasing number of and enrollment in AP/ Pre-AP/dual credit courses, other advanced courses, and overall college preparedness.) What role did you have in encouraging students to stay with their plan to graduate with an endorsement? Encouraging students to complete Algebra II?*
- d. *What are the differences between the ways GEAR UP students and non-GEAR UP students who are at risk of not graduating this year are supported/served? Are there plans for providing any new*

supports later this year for GEAR UP students who are not on track to graduate this year? How is GEAR UP supporting these students? Are you aware if the school has set up an Individual Graduation Committee for any GEAR UP students at risk for not graduating on time? Is GEAR UP providing any additional supports to these students or the committee?

- 4. What activities/events has your school offered to students/parents, particularly Grade 12 students and their parents, since we last spoke? (Probe for details on each event; *probe specifically for information about any financial aid information events.*)**
- Tell me about your role in helping to meet the goal of having at least 50% of parents attend 3 events. Is this a continued challenge or have you made progress in this area? If progress, what strategies have worked to increase attendance? Please describe how you have been able to implement your parent engagement plan. [Probe whether or not the topics of some events were more successful than others.]*
 - To what extent do you work with/collaborate with the IPSI Family Engagement Trainer? What kind of support has the trainer provided to date? How, if at all, did she change your plan for parent engagement this year? Has this led to any new implementation activities? To improved success in engaging families?*
 - How did you encourage student/parent attendance at events? For each event, were participation/attendance levels consistent with program targets? If not, why not?*
 - What are your perceptions about the success of these events? What factors may have contributed to the success of these events?*
 - What about activities/events that support student academic achievement and postsecondary readiness (such as tutoring, financial aid events, college visits, etc.)? If so, what is your perception of these activities? Are there any activities/events offered to parents about the role they can play to support student academic achievement (such as parent nights or information sessions about advanced course offerings)? If so, what is your perception of these activities?*
 - What strategies have the GEAR UP team used to identify parents/households who have not attended a GEAR UP family event? What are your plans for engaging with these parents? What supports would you like in identifying and engaging with these parents from the school, district, IPSI, and/or TEA?*
 - What challenges did you face (with students and/or parents)? Were you able to overcome them or how might you overcome them in the future?*
 - What was your role in these events? What role, if any, did other GEAR UP/school staff or collaborators play? Was this a change in roles as compared to last year?*
- 5. What postsecondary readiness services have you provided directly to GEAR UP students since we last spoke? (Probe for changing and dropping endorsements; developing educational plans; mentoring; developing career plans; assessing education interests, college entrance requirements and financial literacy.)**
- What are your perceptions of these services so far this school year? (Probe for perceptions of understandings of graduation plans and endorsements and how this links to college readiness. Have perceptions changed since last year? Have you had any conversations with students about how changing their schedule (to accommodate changes in graduation plans and/or endorsements) could affect college readiness or on-time graduation?*
 - How well were these services received by the students? For each service, were participation/attendance levels consistent with targets? If not, why not?*
 - Any changes over the course of the year (i.e., from last school year to this school year or from the start of the school year to this spring)?*
 - How would you describe the extent of providing student support services (tutoring, mentoring, counseling)?*

- e. *How might the school sustain these services with future students if perceived as helpful? What challenges might they face in sustaining them? If the school does not perceive these services as helpful, what might they change to make them more effective?*
- f. *What services regarding financial literacy have you offered this school year to GEAR UP students? What gaps in financial literacy knowledge do you think students still have? What is the GEAR UP staff's plan to fill that gap?*

6. What business, government, education, and community alliances, if any, are involved with GEAR UP? Any changes since the fall semester? [If no *alliances* are identified, probe for any involvement in identifying/recruiting alliances.]

- a. *Has your role in identifying community alliances changed since we last spoke? What type of alliances (e.g., college readiness, career readiness, financial literacy, etc.) do you consider top priority?*
- b. *Which GEAR UP state collaborators have you worked with this year (i.e., TG, GeoForce, Focus Training, Signal Vine, Raise Achievement,)? In what ways have they supported GEAR UP at this school this year? How have career readiness goals been supported through these organizations?*
- c. *Thinking specifically about AMS Pictures, what services or resources are you aware of that they offer? Did you use these resources or services? Why or why not? If you did use them, what did you use? What made you want to utilize them? If you did not use them, what would have made you more likely to use them?*
- d. *Have these organizations supported college preparation and awareness activities this semester (e.g., through providing services, hosting college visits)?*
- e. *If no, what challenges have you faced in engaging these organizations?*
- f. *If yes, how have community alliances supported GEAR UP, college preparation, and college awareness this school year? What services/support has the alliance provided?*
- g. *What programs or services on this school campus that have goals similar to GEAR UP have you worked with this year (such as Advise TX or LEARN)? How do the goals of these programs and/or services align with GEAR UP's goals? Do you think there is any overlap or duplication in work?*
- h. *Are you aware if the school plans to sustain any of the community alliance partnerships initiated by GEAR UP?*

7. Do you have a role in preparing students for the SAT/ACT/TSIA?

- a. *If yes, tell me about that. Has the Khan Academy been/continued playing a role? How often are students using Khan Academy? Are they using it effectively? Other programs or strategies for helping students with this?*
- b. *Have any students taken the SAT a second or third time and had increased scores? If so, is there anything they attribute it to?*
- c. *Specifically, to what extent is the school and/or GEAR UP working to help students succeed on these types of assessments? Is the help provided across a wide range of students (e.g., English language learners, did well vs. did poorly on PSAT 10) or do some students receive different or more/less help than others? Do you have a role in determining the type and level of help students receive? If so, describe your role. What is your vision of success for students participating in these test preparation programs?*
- d. *Do you feel that students are/will be prepared to do well on the SAT/ACT/TSIA this semester? Why or why not? If you feel they will do well, what has/will facilitate the success? If you feel they are not prepared to do well, what are the barriers preventing them from succeeding?*
- e. *Can you estimate the number of students who have passed the math section of the TSIA? The reading section? Do you think these pass rates accurately reflect the academic readiness of the cohort? For those who took the TSIA before the school year began, do you know, or can you estimate, the approximate percentage of students who were able to pass the assessment? About how many students are still planning to take or retake it this year? Do you think these students are*

prepared to take and/or retake and pass the assessment? What TSIA preparation opportunities are available to them this year?

- f. What other ways, besides the TSIA, have students become eligible to enroll in dual credit classes?*
- g. What is your vision of success for students participating in these test preparation programs?*
- h. Any anticipated challenges regarding student participation in the SAT, ACT, and/or the TSIA? If yes, how might you overcome those challenges? What challenges have you or the GEAR UP team experienced in offering preparation for these tests? How have you overcome these challenges?*

8. How has the transition into more advanced and/or college level coursework, including AP or dual credit courses, gone for students this school year?

- a. What supports are available to help students succeed in these courses? What about for students who are struggling with coursework? Do you think they all take advantage of these supports? What may keep students from pursuing these supports? How do you manage these challenges?*
- b. What AP or dual credit courses are GEAR UP students enrolled in this semester, if any? How have those been going? What feedback from students have you received?*
- c. Have many students transferred out of advanced courses this year? Are there some courses that more students have been transferring out of in comparison to others (e.g., AP History, AP Chemistry, dual credit English)? What reasons did students provide for transferring out of these courses? Did students receive supports prior to transferring?*
- d. Are any GEAR UP students taking both AP and dual credit courses? What factors influence students' choices to take one type of course over the other? What factors do you encourage them to consider? If known, what factors do school counselors encourage students to consider? Do parents consider any other factors?*
- e. How do students' long-term goals and plans influence the decision to take AP AND/OR dual credit courses?*
- f. If school includes an Early College High School: How does the college readiness of the GEAR UP students in the Early College High School compare to the GEAR UP students not in the Early College High School? How does their opportunity for dual credit compare to those not in the Early College High School? Has the existence of the Early College High School influenced or impacted the availability of dual credit courses in any way?*
- g. What role does GEAR UP have in identifying students who should be enrolled in advanced/AP courses? What tools and data, such as the AP Potential tool provided by College Board, are used to identify students to enroll in AP courses?*
- h. What types of skills might contribute to student success in advanced coursework? How prepared do you perceive students who possess those skills? To what extent do students understand what they need to be doing to succeed in advanced coursework? How has this changed/stayed the same over the time you have been in this role and interacting with students?*

9. In what ways have students been talking about college differently now that they are in Grade 12? Do they know what postsecondary schools and programs they would like to pursue?

- a. What different types of postsecondary schools have students been able to explore through college visits or other research (e.g., public, private, 4-year, 2-year)? What role do you play in helping students and/or their parents determine the type of school that is the best fit for them?*
- b. If not previously asked: What factors do you think are important for students to consider when selecting where and how to further their education? (Probe for postsecondary school factors [e.g., class size, school location, community type, where peers plan to attend, graduation rate, how similar school population demographics match the student, program availability, degrees available] as well as program factors (e.g., types of degrees offered, choices in major, length of program.) How do your thoughts differ from students' and parents'?*

- c. *Do students and parents have the resources and access to research about what each school offers? If yes, has GEAR UP helped with that outreach? If no, is GEAR UP trying to address this gap?*
- d. *How has the number of students who do not plan to obtain post-secondary education immediately after high school fluctuated in the past year? What barriers do students perceive to prevent them from attending college?*
- e. *What alternative paths do students plan to take after high school? What kind of guidance do you offer students to help them determine the most appropriate path after high school? What other resources do you offer students and parents to help make this decision?*

10. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to financial aid. How have these programs been going so far this year? What other financial aid programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. *In what ways have you promoted financial aid to students and parents this year (e.g. one-on-one conversations, workshops, family events)? What information and options about financial aid have you discussed with students and parents? Do you feel that you have the knowledge and support to provide financial aid information to students with a variety of levels of need? What information or resources would be helpful for your efforts to inform students and parents about financial aid? What challenges have you experienced in informing parents and students about financial aid so far? How have you overcome them?*
- b. *How has student and family knowledge of financial aid changed this year from last year? What role, if any, has TG played this year in providing financial aid information?*
- c. *Have you targeted any students for help with completing financial aid forms and documentation? How, if at all, is your targeting strategy different this semester from last semester? What was the impetus for this strategy? Do you think it has worked well? Do you think all cohort students will have been serviced in this area sufficiently by the end of the school year?*
- d. *How many students have a FAFSA submitted already? How many are still working on it for this year? How many students have submitted a TASFA? How many are still working on it for this year? Have you provided any support regarding FAFSA and/or TASFA completion and submission? Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in submitting FAFSAs or TASFAs? Have any families been reluctant to submit FAFSAs or TASFAs? How have you worked to address that reluctance? How many students/families do you expect to not submit either? Why will they not submit these applications? How have you worked to help students try to overcome these reasons for not submitting these applications?*
- e. *What other types of financial aid has GEAR UP helped students and families apply for this year?*
- f. *What strategies has GEAR UP implemented, or worked with other organizations to implement, to encourage completion of financial aid applications since we last spoke?*
- g. *Do you feel knowledgeable enough to support families who may have a FAFSA selected for verification?*
- h. *How, if at all, has the financial aid application process and notification of amount of aid expected to receive affected students' and families' perceptions of the affordability of postsecondary education? Has the amount of anticipated financial aid changed any students' postsecondary plans?*
- i. *Are there any students or families that have changed their perception about the affordability of postsecondary education since applying for financial aid?*
- j. *What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about financial aid and financial literacy? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*

11. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to college applications. Tell me how those programs have been going so far this year? What other related programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- l. How many students would you estimate have already submitted applications? How many applications on average are students submitting?*
- m. Who has provided support to students and families in submitting applications (e.g., GEAR UP, school counselors, or other college access programs, mentors, teachers)?*
- n. What challenges has GEAR UP helped students overcome in submitting applications (e.g., gathering all necessary personal information, drafting essays, adhering to submission timelines)?*
- o. What strategies has GEAR UP implemented, or worked with other organizations to implement, to encourage college application completion since we last spoke?*
- p. Have you targeted any students for help with completing college applications? How, if at all, is your targeting strategy different this semester from last semester? What was the impetus for this strategy? Do you think it has worked well? Do you think all cohort students will have been serviced in this area sufficiently by the end of the school year?*
- q. How many students do you expect to not submit an application for postsecondary education? Why will they not submit an application? How have you worked to help students try to overcome these reasons for not submitting an application? Have application fees deterred any students or families from submitting applications?*
- r. What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about college admissions? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- s. Have any students already been accepted to postsecondary education?*

12. Earlier we asked about summer programs offered by the school or district. Now we'd like to know about student participation in summer programs not hosted or facilitated by the school or district this next summer. Are you involved in guiding students towards any programs? Type of programs students attended to your knowledge? Where they plan to attend (e.g., locally, elsewhere in Texas, in another state)? Who provided the programs (e.g., university or community college, business)?

- a. What is the focus on summer programs that students will be attending this summer? In what ways will the prepare students for postsecondary education?*
- b. Please share information about any district or school sponsored/organized college visits planned for summer 2018.*
- c. How successful would you describe student enrollment in summer programs as being so far? About how many students will be involved in summer 2018 programs (how close to goal of 30% enrolled)?*
- d. What challenges have there been to engaging students in enrolling in summer programs? What challenges were faced in implementing these programs (probe for scheduling conflicts, lack of district/ campus staff, funding issues)? Ideas on how to overcome those challenges going forward? What strategies is GEAR UP planning to implement this summer to address "summer melt" (when students commit to a college, but do not enroll over the summer)? Who all is involved in implementing these strategies? How, if at all, will Signal Vine services be used?*

13. How has your involvement with and knowledge about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events changed since last semester? [Probe for teacher PD, statewide activity outside of GEAR UP, GEAR UP website, GEAR UP conferences]

(Note this question is not relevant if new to role, can probe for any perception of change from prior based on feedback received to date.)

- a. Did you/your school/teachers/students/parents participate in any statewide activities/events? What was the purpose of the event? Who/how many attended?*

- b. *Did you/your school utilize statewide resources this school year? If yes, which resources and how did you use them? If not, why not?*
- c. *Discuss facilitators and barriers to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events.*

14. What plans and/or activities have already been put in place for GEAR UP implementation in Year 7? Are you involved in planning for these plans and activities? If yes, what planning is left to do for Year 7?

- a. *Do you know what your role in implementation will be next year? If yes, how will you be involved? Who will you be working with to conduct the activities for next year?*
- b. *What challenges have you experienced in planning for implementation next year? How much has been planned out so far for next year?*
- c. *Have you been able to coordinate with everyone you wish to do so with to plan for next year? Who haven't you coordinated with, yet, that you would like to? Are you satisfied with the type and level of input everyone has provided?*
- d. *What data were/will be used for planning next year's activities and strategies for engagement? GUIDES? Any additional GEAR UP data? (Probe for previous participation levels, previous feedback, goal attainment in previous years.)*
- e. *Have you been involved in any sustainability planning efforts across the entire school or district for next year? What is your impression of how sustainability will look next year?*

15. What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you feel it has been in the district?

- a. *Do you feel that GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not? What barriers and facilitators were in place affect this outcome?*
- b. *Do you think GEAR UP has made an impact on the school and district administration's approach or thoughts towards postsecondary education readiness and awareness?*
- c. *What impact do you think GEAR UP has made on the families of students in this district? Do you think the implementation has had any effects on the community and their involvement in postsecondary education-related initiatives?*
- d. *What recommendations would you make for implementation of GEAR UP or similar grants in the future?*

16. Is there anything else you would like us to know about GEAR UP in your school and how you/the school is working to meet project goals?

Thank you for your time.

D.8. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: Administrator Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Note to briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP state grant initiative to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals with a particular interest in this past summer and this school year so far. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role in GEAR UP as a school/district leader with a particular interest in this past summer and this school year so far. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 1 hour.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Try to find out ahead of time if administrator is new to district or continues from last year, in new or same role and use that to guide initial items in particular. If no, exclude items on interview that they would not be able to answer (e.g., comparison to prior years). Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. The most recent GUIDES data, prior interview data, and reported plans for the 2017–18 school year will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.

Interviewer notes: If you already met the person and had a chance to engage with them previously, review prior notes and identify any key issues that were not addressed. If basic items were all addressed and unlikely to change, skip the item. These items are indicated by “If not already addressed ask all/otherwise ask once a year for change”. Questions to focus on change within current year and over year have been identified. Identify prior discussions about planned activities/services to inquire about progress on those plans.

1. **Tell me a little about yourself. (Probe for how long at school, how long in role if not already known).**
If already met, reintroduce self and begin interview.
 - a. If new to school/district, what if anything do you know about GEAR UP? Have you heard anything so far about school/district participation in GEAR UP? Where (from whom) did you learn about the GEAR UP grant on your campus? (Interviewer note: Be prepared to briefly explain program and goals and let them know we are still interested in their thoughts.

2.

3. Are there any changes in how GEAR UP is structured at your school since last year?

- a. *If not known: What is the structure of GEAR UP at this school? Who leads GEAR UP planning and activities/events with students? With staff? With families? Who are the key players on a day-to-day basis? How has this changed from prior years? What are your thoughts on how it might change going forward?*
- b. *How and to what extent are you involved in GEAR UP since we last spoke? (Probe for when first learned about it/when began focusing on GEAR UP if not already known.) How if at all has the extent of your involvement changed from prior years? How satisfied are you with your role in the program? To the extent satisfied, what do you like about your role (what factors contribute to satisfaction); if unsatisfied, how would you like your role to differ (what factors contribute to dissatisfaction)? How has your satisfaction changed from prior years?*
- c. *What do you feel are the goals of GEAR UP this year at this school? Do you feel you understand the role each GEAR UP staff member has in achieving these goals and implementing the grant? Do you feel you have a clear understanding of the role the GEAR UP team wishes you to have in GEAR UP?*
- d. *Did you have a role in planning for GEAR UP implementation this year? Did you contribute any data collected by the school to help plan? If so, what data were included and from where were the data collected?*
- e. *At this point, in general how satisfied are you with the structure of the program? To the extent satisfied, what do you like about the structure (what factors contribute to satisfaction); if unsatisfied, how would you like the structure to differ (what factors contribute to dissatisfaction)? How has your satisfaction changed from prior years?*
- f. *Since we last spoke, who have you interacted with about GEAR UP? Have you interacted with the state GEAR UP implementation office (Note to interviewer: define if they are unsure who this is)? If so, how would you describe the relationship between the office and you/your GEAR UP site? How satisfied have you been? What would you like to see stay the same? What would you like to change? How has your satisfaction changed from prior years?*
- g. *What new business, government, education and community organizations are involved in GEAR UP at your site since we last spoke? To what extent has GEAR UP played a role in establishing these alliances? If organizations are active in the program, what are your perceptions about their roles? How do you interact with these organizations? Has there been any change in organizations or their involvement from prior years? If no organizations are involved, are there plans to involve some over the course of this year? What are the plans to get partners involved? (Probe for distinction between school- and district-level alliances.) Has collaboration with business, government, education and community organizations initiated through GEAR UP continued at your site? Have you participated in an advisory council meeting?*
- h. *How does GEAR UP leverage or coordinate with other programs/services within the school building? With other programs/services in the community? (Probe for links with specific programs.) How has this changed from prior years?*
- i. *Have you played a role in planning what type of college readiness and awareness information will be distributed to this year's GEAR UP students? Who at the school will be distributing this information? How do you think the counselors' college readiness tasks with Grade 12 students in the past compare to their tasks with this year's Grade 12 students? In what ways have counselors and GEAR UP staff collaborated? What is your level of satisfaction with this collaboration? In what areas could they collaborate more? Are there any tasks that you would prefer the counselors solely manage?*

4. What are your overall thoughts about the GEAR UP program?

- a. *What role or input, if any, did you have in the implementation of GEAR UP? Are you satisfied with this level of involvement? Would you have preferred to have been involved more or less? What role in the grant implementation would you like to have as the program progresses? In what ways can the GEAR UP program supplement the campus's goals and objectives?*

- b. *Generally, what are the key successes that you feel can be contributed to the GEAR UP program across years? What factors do you think contributed to the success of the program?*
 - c. *Generally, what barriers did you encounter in promoting goals of GEAR UP this semester? Were you able to overcome any barriers? Over prior years? Plans to overcome going forward?*
 - d. *How/to what extent was the school keeping in mind long-term GEAR UP goals in conducting events/activities and providing services this semester? (Probe for on-time promotion; ACT/SAT; college credit; college entrance requirements; and financial literacy.) Are there any changes from prior years? What are plans to change going forward?*
 - e. *Do you think GEAR UP is achieving the college readiness goal at your school?*
5. **The primary goal of GEAR UP is to promote college readiness and college going. In what ways has GEAR UP contributed to the college-going culture at this school? *Has it changed from prior years? Is the change across a broad range of students? What features of GEAR UP do you think have contributed to this change? If any factors identified, do you think those factors will continue in the future? What more do you think the GEAR UP program could be doing to improve college-going culture at this school?***
- a. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Relative to being college ready and college going -- What are the characteristics of this school and its students (e.g., student and staff demographics, student needs)? How did you consider these characteristics/needs in designing a GEAR UP action plan at the school this year? (Probe on English language learners in particular, subgroups in general throughout.) Has this changed from prior years?*
 - b. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: What are the characteristics of households from which students come? (Family structure, employment status, education, attitudes toward postsecondary education). Has this changed from prior years?*
 - c. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: How involved are parents in their children's education?*
 - d. *Has parent/family involvement/engagement changed from prior years?*
 - e. *How have students been doing on the ACT/SAT/TSIA? What steps do you see taking to improve in this area going forward? Outside of the SAT School Day, if your school held one, have students been registering for the SAT or ACT? Do students at your school usually take the ACT or SAT? Why or why not?*
 - f. *How many youth from this school have been going to college after graduating? Do you know what their persistence rates are? What are some of the reasons students from your school are leaving college? In general, how would you say your school/district has been doing on these issues relative to other schools/districts in the state? Are there any changes from prior years? In general, how would you say your school/district has been doing on the topics we have discussed so far (e.g., parent involvement, on-time promotion, ACT/SAT/TSIA performance, postsecondary education persistence) relative to other schools/districts in the state? Are there any changes from prior years?*
 - g. *What programs and student support services (other than GEAR UP) are available to students this semester? (Probe for other programs that encourage/support attending college; student support services that assist with on-time promotion and school success [such as mentoring, counseling, tutoring].) What is the level of student involvement in these services (percentage of participation) approximately? How has this changed from prior years? How helpful are these programs at preparing students to be college going? What programs do you hope to sustain in future years because they have been helpful? Are there any plans for new/additional programs/support services for next year?*
 - h. *What programs and services (other than GEAR UP) are available to families? For example, other programs that inform about college; family nights; support services (e.g., counseling). How has this changed from prior years? What programs do you hope to sustain in future years because they have been helpful? Are there any plans for new/additional programs/support services for next year?*

- 6. In what ways has the college going culture changed at your school since GEAR UP has been implemented?**
- What types of opportunities to explore different types of postsecondary schools (e.g., public, private, 4-year, 2-year) has your school been able to offer students? Has your school offered college visits to a variety of postsecondary schools? What role has GEAR UP played in offering those opportunities? How do the opportunities of students in the GEAR UP cohort compare to those not in the cohort?*
 - What resources are available to students to determine what type of postsecondary path and school is the best fit for them? Who provides these resources? What about resources for parents? Are there any additional resources you would like offer, but currently do not?*
 - What barriers to attending college do students at your school perceive?*
- 7. Let's discuss endorsements and the Foundation High School Program graduation plan. How has that been going at this school with the GEAR UP cohort? How has it been going with the classes below the GEAR UP cohort? What features of GEAR UP, if any, have been helpful in implementing the FHSP overall? Are there any challenges/barriers to implementing changes? How has this changed from prior years? Are there any planned changes?**
- Are there any planned changes regarding the implementation of endorsements and pathways for classes following the GEAR UP cohort? (Probe for endorsements that are offered at the school and decisions about selecting/changing endorsement offerings. Remind that this is related to HB 5 changes in graduation requirements to the Foundation High School Program if needed.) Any change from prior years/planned for next year in endorsement offerings?*
 - If not already addressed ask all: Who at your school has a key role in helping students succeed both in selecting/changing/adding an endorsement and graduating with an endorsement? What has the school done to help teachers/students with selecting endorsements and selecting courses in line with endorsements? (Probe for any use of the TEA Graduation Toolkit or other district resources.) How has this changed from prior years? What, if any, changes are planned for next year to help students with endorsement selection/changes? Any challenges in having the right courses and the right number of each course aligned with each endorsement? Tell us about any successes or challenges associated with being able to connect students with the endorsements and coursework they are interested in.*
 - Any challenges in offering endorsements? Any challenges in allowing students to change their endorsement? How many students have been changing or adding endorsements? Are students still interested in the endorsements, pathways, and coursework they initially selected? Are you aware if GEAR UP staff or programs played a role in the endorsement(s) students selected? If yes, how influential was GEAR UP? If no, do you think it would have been appropriate for GEAR UP to play a role?*
 - To your knowledge, are there any practices related to the implementation of endorsements and the Foundation High School Program initiated through GEAR UP that have continued for other students (current Grades 9, 10, and 11 students; middle school students, if known)?*
- 8. Are services/events encouraged or sponsored by GEAR UP helping to promote the goals of student success and college readiness in your school? If so, how? If not, why not? (NOTE: Focus on support services and activities/events related to GEAR UP goal of college readiness.)**
- For tutoring/mentoring/academic support services, how were decisions made to involve students in these activities? Has this changed from prior years? Who is involved in making those decisions?*
 - As each GEAR UP event was planned, how were decisions made about which students and parents to invite to participate in college readiness/awareness events, if any held so far this year? Were some events open to all parents/students while others were not? What are your perceptions about the success of college readiness/awareness efforts? What factors facilitate success of events? What barriers impede success? What GEAR UP initiated programs are being continued for other students (current Grades 9, 10, and 11 students, middle school students if known, etc.)?*

- c. *The goal is to have at least 50% of parents attend 3 events each year; to what extent do you see your school succeeding at meeting this goal? In what ways do you believe these parent events have or will contribute to students' college readiness? What might the school need to do to be more successful? How do you see the high school successfully meeting this goal? What factors facilitated the success of any given event/activity or service? What barriers impeded success of events? Any plans for increasing parent attendance for the upcoming year? How has this changed from prior years? What programs are being continued for other families (parents of Grades 9, 10 and 11 students)? What kind/populations of parents or families are you able to successfully engage with? Which do you struggle with more? What kind of support do you receive from GEAR UP and IPSI staff to facilitate successful parent engagement as an administrator?*
- d. *If not known: Is GEAR UP supporting any early warning system for students at your school? (Probe for details of the warning system). If not, why not? How are students who may be struggling identified? Are there data systems in place? Any plans to put a system in place? If already known to have a system: How has the early warning system been used at your school? How helpful has it been at identifying students with needs and providing services to those students? Any challenges with using the system? Any plans for changes to the system? How has this changed from prior years? What variables inform the early warning? Who is notified of the warning? Are GEAR UP staff notified about their students? To what extent are students who have been identified by the system able to be connected to appropriate supports? What successes/challenges have you had at connecting students to support services?*
- e. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Were you involved in any conversations about services/activities/events that occurred in the past and how you might build on their success/learn from their failures? Has your school been able to sustain any successful services/activities/events over time (from one semester to the next or one year to the next) (for example, mentors, TG financial literacy courses for parents)?*
- f. *How has the quality of GEAR UP events and services, for students and parents, evolved since your time in GEAR UP? What areas would identify for potential increase in quality, if any?*
9. **Improving the number of advanced and college credit courses, including dual credit and AP courses, as well as the number of students involved in these is also a GEAR UP goal. To what extent has your school increased the number of advanced courses so far? Does your school(s) have a specific plan to increase the number of advanced courses offered in high school grades and/or to increase enrollment in these courses? How would you describe the progress in students passing advanced courses? [NOTE: Clarify throughout advanced includes dual credit and AP courses]**
- a. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Tell us about how your offerings of advanced courses have changed over time. Are there any new advanced courses or any advanced courses no longer offered? (Cite list of advanced/honors math, English, science courses from Grade 12 based on GUIDES and/or prior site visit knowledge.) Does your school have a specific plan to increase the number of advanced courses or dual credit/enrollment courses offered and/or to increase enrollment in advanced courses/AP courses? If yes, please tell us about what you have been doing/planning, including who is involved. If no, why not? In what ways, if any, do other students (current Grades 9, 10, and 11 or middle school students if known) continue to have opportunities to take advanced courses? For example, did you have many students who started Grade 9 this year who had already completed Algebra I? Did you have many students who started Grade 10 this year who had already completed Algebra II?*
- b. *To what extent, if any, have you seen any change in the interest of GEAR UP students in advanced courses in comparison to prior years' students? To what extent was the school prepared to enroll a greater number of students in advanced courses? What tools and data, such as the AP Potential tool provided by College Board, are used to identify students to enroll in AP courses? Are you aware of any cases in the GEAR UP cohort of students identified by school or GEAR UP staff as students who*

should be enrolled in AP or advanced courses, but who were instead enrolled in standard-level courses? If students like these are identified, what actions, if any, are taken to transfer them into the AP or advanced courses? What about students who are in AP or advanced courses who ask to transfer into standard courses? What is the process you follow in handling these kinds of requests? Who should submit and approve of requests to transfer in or out of AP/advanced courses? How often are you able to accommodate these transfer requests?

- c. *A goal of GEAR UP is to provide students with opportunities to receive 18 hours of college credit by graduation. What progress has the school made on this goal to date? Since we last talked, what steps has the school taken to ensure that this goal can be met? What about student progress towards graduating with a distinguished level of achievement (including Algebra II, endorsement and 26 credits)? In what ways are students becoming eligible for dual credit courses at your school?*
- d. *What are your perceptions about how prepared students in your school/district are to take these (advanced and college credit) courses? At this point, have this year's GEAR UP students seemed better prepared than students in the past or about the same? What successes or challenges are there in students completing/passing advanced courses?*
- e. *If school includes an Early College High School: How does the college readiness of the GEAR UP students in the Early College High School compare to the GEAR UP students not in the Early College High School? How does their opportunity to earn dual credit compare to those not in the Early College High School? Has the existence of the Early College High School influenced or impacted the availability of dual credit courses in any way?*
- f. *What types of non-academic skills do you think it takes for a student to be successful in high school, and ultimately college aware and ready? How successful would you say the Grade 12 students have been at having these skills? What aspects of being a successful high school student have gone well/not so well for the GEAR UP students? In what ways, if at all, have you noticed students recognizing when they need supplemental help to succeed academically? Are students motivated to seek supplemental help out on their own? Do they know where to turn for the help? To what extent is the district able to guide them to supports or programs?*
- g. *How would you describe progress towards the goal of having 70% of students having knowledge of and being academically prepared for college?*
- h. *Discuss any facilitators and barriers to long term planning for increasing the number of, and student enrollment in, advanced courses and college credit courses.*

10. We understand students will be participating in the SAT, ACT, and/or TSIA this year. Do you have a role in that?

- a. *If yes, tell us about your role. Are you working at all with the Khan Academy? Other programs or strategies for helping students prepare for the tests? What is your vision of success regarding participating in these programs?*
- b. *What kind of preparations for taking these assessments did students receive? Which students had the opportunity to take advantage of this preparation?*
- c. *To what extent does your school encourage students to take the SAT and ACT? Have there been any activities to date with the Grade 11 students to promote taking these in the future.*
- d. *Did you notice an increase in performance from the PSAT to the SAT?*
- e. *How many students would you estimate took the SAT and/or ACT for their second time this semester? Are the preparation supports different for those who will take it for the first time and those will take it for the second time?*
- f. *To what extent is the school and GEAR UP working to help students succeed on these types of exams? Is the help provided across a wide range of students (e.g., English Language Learners, did well vs. did poorly on PSAT) or do some students receive different or more/less help than others?*
- g. *Any anticipated challenges regarding participation? If yes, how might you overcome those challenges?*

- h. *Did your school participate in an SAT School Day this year? Did GEAR UP play a role in the decision to participate this school year? If so describe the role. Do you know if this decision was part of a larger GEAR UP strategy? How has GEAR UP participated in the planning, implementation, and/or preparation for this day? Do you plan to continue this moving forward? If GEAR UP has been involved in this year's SAT School Day, do you believe the school and/or district will be able to implement SAT School Days in upcoming years without GEAR UP staff? How do you anticipate this year's SAT completion rate to compare to Grade 12 students from previous years?*
- i. *Any challenges regarding participation? If yes, how did you overcome those challenges? Were all students able to participate? If not, why? Were all students able to be provided with accommodations as needed? If not, what accommodations were unable to be provided?*
- j. *What kind of preparations for taking these assessments did students receive? Which students had the opportunity to take advantage of this preparation?*

11. Since we last talked: Have you/the teachers at your school engaged in any GEAR UP related professional development (PD)? (If new, ask since GEAR UP began in the district in 2012–13.) This includes any GEAR UP-related PD that occurred over the past summer. If so, what were your impressions of it and of teachers' ability to implement what was learned in the PD into their classrooms? If not, what barriers prevented conducting GEAR UP-related PD?

Also probe for any additional PD activities that we should be aware of that were not reported in GUIDES, which may have occurred after the latest GUIDES submission. Probe for impressions of professional development for advanced instructional strategies; improving academic rigor, differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and financial literacy.

- a. *If not already known: What are the school's/district's major goals for teacher and administrator professional development for the current school year?*
- b. *Has any PD occurred since we last spoke? (Probe whether PD was provided by GEAR UP including through Texas Gateway.) If none, why not?*
- c. *Did the planned number of PD events for this semester meet your expectations? Why/why not? What about participation in these events, did it meet expectations? Probe for any critical PD still needed at the school in the year in order for GEAR UP to be successful?*
- d. *Have you worked with the IPSI Education Outreach Coach? Has anyone else in your school? What are your thoughts on her work with the teachers in this school? What feedback have you received from teachers?*
- e. *What factors contribute to current successes related to PD? What barriers have been encountered? How did you overcome them/might you overcome them in the future?*
- f. *Has the school begun to make plans/goals for next year for teacher/administrator professional development related to GEAR UP? If yes, what role did GEAR UP play in this effort?*
- g. *In what ways, if any, has GEAR UP PD continued for other teachers (i.e., those currently teaching Grades 9, 10, and 11, middle school teachers if known)?*

12. Since we last talked last spring, have you or any of the teachers at this school been engaged in any vertical alignment activities? NOTE if none identified in prior conversations or in response to main prompt, has the school begun to work on establishing a team/plan to ensure that vertical alignment occurs? Why/why not? When do you anticipate beginning to work on vertical alignment?

- a. *If not already known: Were you or the teachers at this school engaging in vertical alignment activities since the GEAR UP program began in 2012–2013 school year?*
- b. *If new vertical alignment events have occurred, or are underway or planned, what is the scope of the effort? (Probe for: Grades and major subjects covered by vertical alignment and whether new vertical alignment activities were provided through GEAR UP or through other funding).*

- c. *In what ways is the school/district meeting the goal of 5 days of vertical team preparation? What are your perceptions about the success of this vertical alignment work? What factors contribute to successes?*
- d. *What barriers have been encountered? How did you overcome them?*
- e. *What are your perceptions about the value of vertical alignment? How will it impact student achievement? How will it impact teachers and instruction at the school? If not satisfied with current status of vertical alignment, what might need to occur to improve satisfaction?*
- f. *If vertical alignment between middle and high school occurred in prior years, to what extent has that continued to occur this year? Has it changed since GEAR UP has been implemented?*

13. Effective transition to high school is another important element in promoting student preparation for college and college level coursework, as well as increased awareness of college to build interest in attending college.

- a. *This year's Grade 10 students had an opportunity to participate in a summer program before starting Grade 9 to help with the transition. In what ways, if any, were summer transition programs provided for this year's Grade 9 students (summer 2016) similar to those you provided to GEAR UP students in summer 2014? Has this been helpful to those Grade 9 students in your opinion? (If appropriate, probe for use of or planned use of EXPLORE, high school visits, academic early warning systems.)*

14. How would you describe Grade 12 students with regard to awareness of college and interest in attending college?

- a. *Are you aware of any activities to support awareness and interest in attending college or in choosing a career and how that might link to postsecondary education? Has this changed over the course of the year/over prior years/over experiences with other schools?*
- b. *Any challenges regarding participation? If yes, how did you overcome those challenges? Were all students able to participate? If not, why? Were all students provided with accommodations as needed? If not, what accommodations were unable to be provided?*

15. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to financial aid. How have these programs been going so far this year? What other financial aid programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. *How has student and family knowledge of financial aid changed this year from last year? What role, if any, has TG played this year in providing financial aid information?*
- b. *How many students have a FAFSA submitted already? How many are still working on it for this year? How many students have submitted a TASFA? How many are still working on it for this year? How do these numbers compare to previous years? Have there been resources or programming to support families in submitting the FAFSA and TASFA? What type of resources or programming? (Probe for both GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP resources/programming.)*
- c. *Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in submitting FAFSAs or TASFAs? Have any families been reluctant to submit FAFSAs or TASFAs? How have you worked to address that reluctance?*
- d. *What other types of financial aid has GEAR UP helped students and families apply for this year?*
- e. *Are there any students or families that have changed their perception about the affordability of postsecondary education since applying for financial aid?*
- f. *What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about financial aid and financial literacy? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- g. *What new financial aid-related services for parents and/or students initiated by GEAR UP do you hope to sustain in the future?*

- 16. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to college applications. Tell me how those programs have been going so far this year? What other related programs and services are you planning to offer this year?**
- How many students would you estimate have already submitted applications?*
 - Who has provided support to students and families in submitting applications (e.g., GEAR UP, school counselors, or other college access programs, mentors, teachers)?*
 - What challenges has GEAR UP helped students overcome in submitting applications (e.g., gathering all necessary personal information, drafting essays, adhering to submission timelines)?*
 - What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about college admissions? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
 - Have any students already been accepted to postsecondary education? How does that number compare to the number of Grade 12 students usually accepted at this point in the year?*
 - What new college application-related services for students and/or parents offered by GEAR UP do you hope to sustain in future years?*
- 17. One of the GEAR UP goals is to have at least 30% of the students involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level (AP classes; dual credit classes), ease transitions, and increase college awareness each summer. Tell us about your experiences with engaging students in these types of summer programs. (If not aware, focus on Probes c & d)**
- Tell us about student participation in summer programs this past summer. Were you involved in guiding students towards any programs? What type(s) of programs did students attend, to your knowledge? Where were the programs attended (e.g., locally, elsewhere in Texas, in another state)? Who provided the programs (e.g., university or community college, business)?*
 - Please share any college visits that occurred in summer 2017.*
 - If aware of student participation, how successful would you describe that participation as being? About how many students were involved in summer programs (how close to goal of 30% enrolled)? How do you think the summer programs contribute to students' college readiness?*
 - If not aware of student participation, what challenges have there been to engaging students in the summer? Ideas on how to overcome those challenges going forward?*
- 18. How involved/knowledgeable are you about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events? [Probe for GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com), Texas Gateway and TEA's iTunes U page, GEAR UP activities/events (e.g., GEAR UP conference)]**
- What statewide activities/events do/did you/your school/district participate in this semester and/or over the past summer?*
 - Did you/your school utilize statewide resources this semester? If yes, how did you use them? If not, why not?*
 - What facilitators and barriers are there to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events?*
 - What Texas GEAR UP collaborators did your school work with this semester and/or over the summer? How was your experience?*
 - To what extent do students in other grades use these resources?*
 - Thinking specifically about AMS Pictures, what services or resources are you aware that they offer? Did you use these resources or services? Why or why not? If you did use them, what did you use? What made you want to utilize them? If you did not use them, what would have made you more likely to use them?*

19. Looking ahead, what roles would you like GEAR UP to play at your school?

- a. *How might successful GEAR UP activities be sustained for next year's students and their families? For middle school students (if known)?*
- b. *How might GEAR UP activities be sustained with any new teachers at the school and/or other grades?*
- c. *What strategies do you anticipate will be difficult to sustain?*
- d. *What factors do you think contribute to your ability to sustain or not activities over time?*
- e. *How do you envision that GEAR UP will impact your school once it has left? In what ways that we haven't already discussed do you believe that the overall goal and mission of GEAR UP will be sustained at your school?*

Thank you for your time.

D.9. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Administrator Interview

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Note to briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP state grant initiative to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals with a particular interest in this school year. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role in GEAR UP as a school/district leader with a particular interest in this school year so far. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 60 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Try to find out ahead of time if administrator is new to district or continues from the fall, in new or same role and use that to guide initial items in particular. If no, exclude items on interview that they would not be able to answer (e.g., comparison to prior years). Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. The most recent GUIDES data and reported plans for the 2017–18 school year, and prior interview data in particular, will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.

Interviewer notes: If you already met the person and had a chance to engage with them previously, review prior notes and identify any key issues that were not addressed. If basic items were all addressed and unlikely to change, skip the item. These items are indicated by “*If not already addressed ask all/otherwise ask once a year for change*”. Questions to focus on change over the year have been identified. Identify prior discussions about planned activities/services to inquire about progress on those plans.

1. **Tell me a little about yourself. (Probe for how long at school, how long in role if not already known).** If already met, reintroduce self and begin interview.
 - a. *If new to school/district, what if anything do you know about GEAR UP? Have you heard anything so far about school/district participation in GEAR UP? Where (from whom) did you learn about the GEAR UP grant on your campus? (Interviewer note: Be prepared to briefly explain program and goals and let them know we are still interested in their thoughts.*
2. **Are there any changes in how GEAR UP is structured at your school over the course of the year?**
 - a. *If not known: What is the structure of GEAR UP at this school? Who leads GEAR UP planning and activities/events with students? With staff? With families? Who are the key players on a day-to-day basis? How has this changed over the course of the year/from the prior year?*

- b. *How and to what extent are you involved in GEAR UP since we last spoke? (Probe for when first learned about it/when began focusing on GEAR UP if not already known.) How, if at all, has the extent of your involvement changed from prior years? How satisfied are you with your role in the program? To the extent satisfied, what do you like about your role (what factors contribute to satisfaction); if unsatisfied, how would you like your role to differ (what factors contribute to dissatisfaction)? How has your satisfaction changed over the current year/from the prior year?*
- c. *What do you feel are the goals of GEAR UP this year at this school? Do you feel you understand the role each GEAR UP staff member has in achieving these goals and implementing the grant? Do you feel you have a clear understanding of the role the GEAR UP team wishes you to have in GEAR UP?*
- d. *Did you have a role in planning for GEAR UP implementation this year? Did you contribute any data collected by the school to help plan? If so, what data were included and from where were the data collected?*
- e. *At this point, in general how satisfied are you with the structure of the program? To the extent satisfied, what do you like about the structure (what factors contribute to satisfaction); if unsatisfied, how would you have liked the structure to differ (what factors contribute to dissatisfaction)? How has your satisfaction changed over the current year/from the prior year?*
- f. *Since we last spoke, who have you interacted with about GEAR UP? Have you interacted with the state GEAR UP implementation office (Note to interviewer: define if they are unsure who this is)? If so, how would you describe the relationship between the office and you/your GEAR UP site? How satisfied have you been? How has your satisfaction changed over the current year/from prior years?*
- g. *What new business, government, education and community organizations are involved in GEAR UP at your site since we last spoke? To what extent has GEAR UP played a role in establishing these alliances? If organizations are active in the program, what are your perceptions about their roles? How do you interact with these organizations? Has there been any change in organizations or their involvement over the course of the year? (Probe for distinction between school- and district-level alliances.) Has collaboration with business, government, education and community organizations initiated through GEAR UP continued at your site? Have you participated in an advisory council meeting?*
- h. *How does GEAR UP leverage or coordinate with other programs/services within the school building? With other programs/services in the community? (Probe for links with specific programs.) How has this changed from prior years?*
- i. *Have you played a role in planning what type of college readiness and awareness information will be distributed to this year's GEAR UP students? Who at the school will be distributing this information? How do you think the counselors' college readiness tasks with Grade 12 students in the past compare to their tasks with this year's Grade 12 students? In what ways have counselors and GEAR UP staff collaborated? What is your level of satisfaction with this collaboration? In what areas could they collaborate more? Are there any tasks that you would prefer the counselors solely manage?*

3. What are your overall thoughts about the GEAR UP program?

- a. *In what ways can the GEAR UP program supplement the campus's goals and objectives?*
- b. *Generally, what are the key successes that you feel can be contributed to the GEAR UP program across years? What factors do you think contributed to the success of the program?*
- c. *Generally, what barriers did you encounter in promoting goals of GEAR UP this school year? Were you able to overcome any barriers? Over prior years?*
- d. *How/to what extent was the school keeping in mind long-term GEAR UP goals in conducting events/activities and providing services this school year? (Probe for on-time promotion/ high school graduation; ACT/SAT; college credit; college entrance requirements; and financial literacy.) Are there any changes from prior years?*

4. The primary goal of GEAR UP is to promote college readiness and college going. In what ways has GEAR UP contributed to the college-going culture at this school? *Has it changed from prior years? Is the change across a broad range of students? What features of GEAR UP do you think have contributed to this change? If any factors identified, do you think those factors will continue in the future? What more do you think the GEAR UP program could have done to improve college-going culture at this school?*

- a. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Relative to being college ready and college going -- What are the characteristics of this school and its students (e.g., student and staff demographics, student needs)? How did you consider these characteristics/needs in designing a GEAR UP action plan at the school this year? (Probe on English Language Learners in particular, subgroups in general throughout.) Has this changed from prior years?*
- b. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: What are the characteristics of households from which students come? (Family structure, employment status, education, attitudes toward postsecondary education). Has this changed from prior years?*

If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: How involved/engaged are parents in their children's education and postsecondary plans?

- c. *Has parent/family involvement/engagement changed from prior years?*
- d. *How have students been doing on the ACT/SAT/TSIA? What steps do you see taking to improve in this area going forward? Outside of the SAT School Day, if your school held one, have students been registering for the SAT or ACT? Do students at your school usually take the ACT or SAT? Why or why not?*
- e. *How many youth from this school have been going to college after graduating? Do you know what their persistence rates are? What are some of the reasons students from your school are leaving college? In general, how would you say your school/district has been doing on these issues relative to other schools/districts in the state? Are there any changes from prior years? In general, how would you say your school/district has been doing on the topics we have discussed so far (e.g., parent involvement, on-time promotion, ACT/SAT/TSIA performance, postsecondary education persistence) relative to other schools/districts in the state? Are there any changes from prior years?*
- f. *If not already addressed ask all/ otherwise ask once a year for change: What programs and student support services (other than GEAR UP) are available to students this school year? (Probe for other programs that encourage/support attending college; student support services that assist with on-time promotion/ high school graduation and school success [such as mentoring, counseling, tutoring].) What is the level of student involvement in these services (percentage of participation) approximately? How has this changed from prior years? How helpful are these programs at preparing students to be college going? What programs do you hope to sustain in future years because they have been helpful? Are there any plans for new/additional programs/support services for next year or this summer?*
- g. *What programs and services (other than GEAR UP) are available to families? For example, other programs that inform about college; family nights; support services (e.g., counseling). How long have they been in place? How has this changed over the course of the year? Going forward: Over from prior years? How successful have parent events been? What programs do you hope to sustain in future years because they have been helpful? Are there any plans for new/additional programs/support services for next year?*
- h. *What types of opportunities to explore different types of postsecondary schools (e.g., public, private, 4-year, 2-year) has your school been able to offer students? Has your school offered college visits to a variety of postsecondary schools? What role has GEAR UP played in offering those opportunities? How do the opportunities of students in the GEAR UP cohort compare to those not in the cohort?*

- i. *What resources are available to students to determine what type of postsecondary path and school is the best fit for them? Who provides these resources? What about resources for parents? Are there any additional resources you would like offer, but currently do not?*
 - j. *What barriers to attending college do students at your school perceive?*
5. **Let's discuss endorsements and the Foundation High School Program graduation plan. How has that been going at this school with the GEAR UP cohort? How has it been going with the classes below the GEAR UP cohort? What features of GEAR UP, if any, have been helpful in implementing the FHSP overall? Are there any challenges/barriers to implementing changes? How has this changed from prior years? Are there any planned changes?**
- a. *Are there any planned changes regarding the implementation of endorsements and pathways for classes following the GEAR UP cohort? (Probe for endorsements that are offered at the school and decisions about selecting/changing endorsement offerings. Remind them that this is related to HB 5 changes in graduation requirements to the Foundation High School Program if needed.) Any change from prior years planned for next year in endorsement offerings?*
 - b. *If not already addressed ask all: Who at your school has a key role in helping students succeed both in selecting/changing/adding an endorsement and graduating with an endorsement? What has the school done to help teachers/students with selecting endorsements and selecting courses in line with endorsements? (Probe for any use of the TEA Graduation Toolkit or other district resources.) How has this changed from prior years? What, if any, changes are planned for next year to help students with endorsement selection/changes? Any challenges in having the right courses and the right number of each course aligned with each endorsement? Tell us about any successes or challenges associated with being able to connect students with the endorsements and coursework they are interested in.*
 - c. *Any challenges in allowing students to change their endorsement? How many students have been changing, adding, and/or dropping endorsements? Do you know why students may have been changing, adding, or dropping endorsements? Are students still interested in the endorsements, pathways, and coursework they initially selected? Are you aware if GEAR UP staff or programs played a role in the endorsement(s) students selected? If yes, how influential was GEAR UP? If no, do you think it would have been appropriate for GEAR UP to play a role?*
 - e. *To your knowledge, are there any practices related to the implementation of endorsements and the Foundation High School Program initiated through GEAR UP that have continued for other students (current Grades 9, 10, and 11 students; middle school students, if known)?*
 - f. *What are the differences between the ways GEAR UP students and non-GEAR UP students who are at risk of not graduating this year are supported/served? Are there plans for providing any new supports later this year or this summer for GEAR UP students who are not on track to graduate this year? Has the school had to set up an Individual Graduation Committee for any GEAR UP students at risk for not graduating on time? Is GEAR UP providing any additional supports to these students or the committee?*
6. **Are services/events encouraged or sponsored by GEAR UP helping to promote the goals of student success and college readiness in your school? If so, how? If not, why not? (NOTE: Focus on support services and activities/events related to GEAR UP goal of college readiness.)**
- a. *For tutoring/mentoring/academic support services, how were decisions made to involve students in these activities? How has this changed over the course of the year/over prior years? Who is involved in making those decisions?*
 - b. *As each GEAR UP event was planned, how were decisions made about which students and parents to invite to participate in college readiness/awareness events, if any held so far this year? Were some events open to all parents/students while others were not? What are your perceptions about the success of college readiness/awareness efforts? What factors facilitate success of events? What*

barriers impede success? What GEAR UP initiated programs are being continued for other students (current Grades 9, 10, and 11 students, middle school students if known, etc.)?

- c. *The goal is to have at least 50% of parents attend 3 events each year; to what extent do you see this school succeeding at meeting this goal? In what ways do you believe these parent events have or will contribute to students' college readiness? What might the school need to do to be more successful? How do you see the high school successfully meeting this goal? What factors facilitated the success of any given event/activity or service? What barriers impeded success of events? How has this changed over the course of the year/over prior years? What programs are being continued for other families (parents of Grades 9, 10, and 11 students)? What kind/populations of parents or families are you able to successfully engage with? Which do you struggle with more? What kind of support do you receive from GEAR UP and IPSI staff to facilitate successful parent engagement as an administrator?*
- d. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Were you involved in any conversations about services/activities/events that occurred in the past and how you might build on their success/learn from their failures? Has your school been able to sustain any successful services/activities/events over time (over the course of the year/Over prior years)? (For example, mentors, TG financial literacy courses for parents)?*

7. Improving the number of advanced and college credit courses, including dual credit and AP courses, as well as the number of students involved in these is also a GEAR UP goal. To what extent has your school increased the number of advanced courses so far? Does your school(s) have a specific plan to increase the number of advanced courses offered in high school grades and/or to increase enrollment in these courses? How would you describe the progress in students passing advanced courses? [NOTE: Clarify throughout advanced includes dual credit and AP courses]

- a. *If not already addressed ask all; otherwise ask once a year for change: Tell us about how your offerings of advanced courses have changed over time. Are there any new advanced courses or any advanced courses no longer offered? How are the advanced courses planned for students next year different from those offered this year? (Cite list of advanced/honors math, English, science courses for current year based on GUIDES if available and/or prior site visit knowledge.) Does your school have a specific plan to increase the number of advanced courses or dual credit/enrollment courses offered and/or to increase enrollment in advanced courses/AP courses? If yes, please tell us about what you have been doing/planning, including who is involved. If no, why not? In what ways, if any, do other students (current Grades 9, 10, and 11 or middle school students if known) continue to have opportunities to take advanced courses? For example, did you have many students who started Grade 9 this year who had already completed Algebra I? Did you have many students who started Grade 10 this year who had already completed Algebra II?*
- b. *To what extent, if any, have you seen any change in the interest of/performance of GEAR UP students in advanced courses in comparison to prior years' students? To what extent was/has the school prepared to enroll a greater number of students in advanced courses this year/next year? What are your school's policies for enrolling students into advanced courses? How are these policies different for the GEAR UP cohort than they were for previous students? Do you plan to sustain these policy changes? Why or why not? What tools and data, such as the AP Potential tool provided by College Board, are used to identify students to enroll in AP courses? Are you aware of any cases in the GEAR UP cohort of students identified by school or GEAR UP staff as students who should be enrolled in AP or advanced courses, but who were instead enrolled in standard-level courses instead? What are the school's policies on transferring? If students like these are identified in this way? A goal of GEAR UP is to provide students with opportunities to receive 18 hours of college credit by graduation. What progress has the school made on this goal to date? Since we last talked, what steps has the school taken to ensure that this goal can be met? What about student progress*

towards graduating with a distinguished level of achievement (including Algebra II, endorsement and 26 credits)? In what ways are students becoming eligible for dual credit courses at your school?

- c. *To what extent, if any, have you seen any change in the interest of/performance of GEAR UP students in advanced courses in comparison to prior years' students? To what extent was/has the school prepared to enroll a greater number of students in advanced courses this year/next year? What are your school's policies for enrolling students into advanced courses? How are these policies different for the GEAR UP cohort than they were for previous students? Do you plan to sustain these policy changes? Why or why not? What tools and data, such as the AP Potential tool provided by College Board, are used to identify students to enroll in AP courses? Are you aware of any cases in the GEAR UP cohort of students identified by school or GEAR UP staff as students who should be enrolled in AP or advanced courses, but who were instead enrolled in standard-level courses instead? What are the school's policies on transferring? If students like these are identified in this way? A goal of GEAR UP is to provide students with opportunities to receive 18 hours of college credit by graduation. What progress has the school made on this goal to date? Since we last talked, what steps has the school taken to ensure that this goal can be met? What about student progress towards graduating with a distinguished level of achievement (including Algebra II, endorsement and 26 credits)? In what ways are students becoming eligible for dual credit courses at your school?*
- d. *What are your perceptions about how prepared students in your school/district are to take these (advanced and college credit) courses? At this point, have this year's GEAR UP students seemed better prepared than students in the past or about the same? What successes or challenges are there in students completing/passing advanced courses?*
- e. *If school includes an Early College High School: How does the college readiness of the GEAR UP students in the Early College High School compare to the GEAR UP students not in the Early College High School? How does their opportunity to earn dual credit compare to those not in the Early College High School? Has the existence of the Early College High School influenced or impacted the availability of dual credit courses in any way?*
- f. *What types of non-academic skills do you think it takes for a student to be successful in high school, and ultimately college aware and ready? How successful would you say the Grade 12 students have been at having these skills? What aspects of being a successful high school student have gone well/not so well for the GEAR UP students? In what ways, if at all, have you noticed students recognizing when they need supplemental help to succeed academically? Are students motivated to seek supplemental help out on their own? Do they know where to turn for the help? To what extent is the district able to guide them to supports or programs?*
- g. *How would you describe progress towards the goal of having 70% of students having knowledge of and being academically prepared for college?*
- h. *Discuss any facilitators and barriers to long term planning for increasing the number of, and student enrollment in, advanced courses and college credit courses.*

8. We understand students could be participating in the, SAT, ACT, and/or TSIA this year. Do you have a role in that?

- a. *If yes, tell us about your role. What is your vision of success regarding participating in these programs?*
- b. *What kind of preparations for taking these assessments did students receive? Which students had the opportunity to take advantage of this preparation?*
- c. *How many students would you estimate took the SAT and/or ACT for their second or third time this semester?*
- d. *Any anticipated challenges regarding participation? If yes, how might you overcome those challenges?*
- e. *Did your school participate in an SAT School Day this semester? Who was involved in making that decision this semester? Did GEAR UP play a role in the decision to participate this semester? If so*

describe the role. Do you know if this decision was part of a larger GEAR UP strategy? How did GEAR UP participate in the planning, implementation, and/or preparation for this day? Do you plan to continue this moving forward? If GEAR UP has been involved in this year's SAT School Day, do you believe the school and/or district will be able to implement SAT School Days in upcoming years without GEAR UP staff? How do you anticipate this year's SAT completion rate to compare to Grade 12 students from previous years? Would you consider the day to be successful? Why or why not?

- f. Any challenges regarding participation? If yes, how did you overcome those challenges? Were all students able to participate? If not, why? Were all students able to be provided with accommodations as needed? If not, what accommodations were unable to be provided?*
- g. What kind of preparations for taking these assessments did students receive? Which students had the opportunity to take advantage of this preparation?*
- h. Can you estimate the number of GEAR UP students who have passed the math portion of the TSIA? The reading portion? How do these numbers compare to previous Grade 12 students? If there are differences, why do you think that is? Do you think the pass rates of GEAR UP students accurately reflects their level of academic readiness?*

- 9. Since we last talked: Have you/the teachers at your school engaged in any GEAR UP related professional development (PD)? (If new, ask since GEAR UP began in the district in 2012–13.) This includes any GEAR UP-related PD that occurred over the past summer or school year. If so, what were your impressions of it and of teachers' ability to implement what was learned in the PD into their classrooms? If not, what barriers prevented conducting GEAR UP-related PD?**

Also probe for any additional PD activities that we should be aware of that were not reported in GUIDES, which may have occurred after the latest GUIDES submission. Probe for impressions of professional development for advanced instructional strategies; improving academic rigor, differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and financial literacy.

- a. If not already known: What are the school's/district's major goals for teacher and administrator professional development for the current school year?*
- b. Has any PD occurred since we last spoke? (Probe whether PD was provided by GEAR UP including through Texas Gateway.) If none, why not?*
- c. Did the planned number of PD events for this semester meet your expectations? Why/why not? What about participation in these events, did it meet expectations? Probe for any critical PD still needed at the school in the year in order for GEAR UP to be successful?*
- d. Have you worked with the IPSI Educator Outreach Coach? Has anyone else in your school? What are your thoughts on her work with the teachers in this school? What feedback have you received from teachers?*
- e. What factors contribute to current successes related to PD? What barriers have been encountered? How did you overcome them/might you overcome them in the future?*
- f. In what ways, if any, has GEAR UP PD continued for other teachers (i.e., those currently teaching Grades 9, 10, and 11, middle school teachers if known)?*

- 10. Since we last talked, have you or any of the teachers at this school been engaged in any vertical alignment activities? NOTE if none identified in prior conversations or in response to main prompt, has the school begun to work on establishing a team/plan to ensure that vertical alignment occurs? Why/why not? When do you anticipate beginning to work on vertical alignment?**

- a. If not already known: Were you or the teachers at this school engaging in vertical alignment activities since the GEAR UP program began in 2012–13 school year?*
- b. If new vertical alignment events have occurred, or are underway or planned, what is the scope of the effort? (Probe for: Grades and major subjects covered by vertical alignment and whether new vertical alignment activities were provided through GEAR UP or through other funding).*

- c. *In what ways is the school/district meeting the goal of 5 days of vertical team preparation? What are your perceptions about the success of this vertical alignment work? What factors contribute to successes?*
- d. *What barriers have been encountered? How did you overcome them?*
- e. *What are your perceptions about the value of vertical alignment? How will it impact student achievement? How will it impact teachers and instruction at the school? If not satisfied with current status of vertical alignment, what might need to occur to improve satisfaction?*
- f. *If vertical alignment between middle and high school occurred in prior years, to what extent has that continued to occur this year? Has it changed since GEAR UP has been implemented?*

11. Increased awareness of college and building interest in attending college is another important aspect of GEAR UP. How would you describe Grade 12 students with regard to awareness of college and interest in attending college?

- a. *Are you aware of any activities to support awareness and interest in attending college or in choosing a career and how that might link to postsecondary education? Has this changed over the course of the year/over prior years/over experiences with other schools?*
- b. *Any challenges regarding participation? If yes, how did you overcome those challenges? Were all students able to participate? If not, why? Were all students provided with accommodations as needed? If not, what accommodations were unable to be provided?*

12. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to financial aid. How have these programs been going so far this year? What other financial aid programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. *How has student and family knowledge of financial aid changed this year from last year? What role, if any, has TG played this year in providing financial aid information?*
- b. *How many students have a FAFSA submitted already? How many are still working on it for this year? How many students have submitted a TASFA? How many are still working on it for this year? How do these numbers compare to previous years? Have there been resources or programming to support families in submitting the FAFSA and TASFA? What type of resources or programming? (Probe for both GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP resources/programming.)*
- c. *Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in submitting FAFSAs or TASFAs? Have any families been reluctant to submit FAFSAs or TASFAs? How have you worked to address that reluctance?*
- d. *What other types of financial aid has GEAR UP helped students and families apply for this year?*
- e. *Are there any students or families that have changed their perception about the affordability of postsecondary education since applying for financial aid?*
- f. *What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about financial aid and financial literacy? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- g. *What new financial aid-related services for parents and/or students initiated by GEAR UP do you hope to sustain in the future?*

13. Let's talk more about the programs and services offered this year for students and families related to college applications. Tell me how those programs have been going so far this year? What other related programs and services are you planning to offer this year?

- a. *How many students would you estimate have already submitted applications?*
- b. *Who has provided support to students and families in submitting applications (e.g., GEAR UP, school counselors, or other college access programs, mentors, teachers)?*
- c. *What challenges has GEAR UP helped students overcome in submitting applications (e.g., gathering all necessary personal information, drafting essays, adhering to submission timelines)?*

- d. *What training, if any, has GEAR UP offered to teachers and counselors about college admissions? How did it go? Have teachers and counselors been able to incorporate this information into classrooms and discussions with students about postsecondary education?*
- e. *Have any students already been accepted to postsecondary education? How does that number compare to the number of Grade 12 students usually accepted at this point in the year?*
- f. *What new college application-related services for students and/or parents offered by GEAR UP do you hope to sustain in future years?*

14. One of the GEAR UP goals is to have at least 30% of the students involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level (AP classes; dual credit classes), ease transitions, and increase college awareness each summer. Tell us about your experiences with engaging students in these types of summer programs.

- a. *Has any planning occurred to date for summer 2018? What types of summer programs are planned this year? Ideas for what you would like/not like to see occur in summer 2018? Will you be involved in guiding students towards any summer programs for this year? How responsive to outreach regarding these programs were the staff/students? How is that outreach usually conducted?*
- b. *How has planning for summer activities for GEAR UP students been different this year than previous years?*
- c. *If you are aware of any summer programs students will be participating in this summer, what will be the focus of those programs?*

15. How involved/knowledgeable are you about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events? [Probe for GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com), Texas Gateway and TEA's iTunes U page, GEAR UP activities/events (e.g., GEAR UP conference).]

- a. *What statewide activities/events do/did you/your school/district participate in this school year?*
- b. *Did you/your school utilize statewide resources this school year? If yes, how did you use them? If not, why not? Did you find them useful? Why or why not?*
- c. *What facilitators and barriers are there to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events?*
- d. *What Texas GEAR UP collaborators did your school work with this semester? How was your experience?*
- e. *To what extent do students in other grades use these resources?*
- f. *Thinking specifically about AMS Pictures, what services or resources are you aware that they offer? Did you use these resources or services? Why or why not? If you did use them, what did you use? What made you want to utilize them? If you did not use them, what would have made you more likely to use them?*

16. Looking ahead, what initiatives or activities implemented by GEAR UP that we haven't already discussed do you plan to sustain at your school?

- a. *What activities have you already sustained for this year's Grades 9, 10, and 11 students?*
- b. *How has the quality of GEAR UP events and services, for students and parents, evolved since your time in GEAR UP? For any programs you plan to sustain, how will the quality change?*
- c. *Which strategies do you not plan to sustain? Why do you plan to not sustain them?*
- d. *What strategies do you anticipate will be difficult to sustain? Why will they be difficult to sustain?*
- e. *Have you worked with any GEAR UP staff to plan for sustainability? Have you worked with any of the other programs at your school to plan for implementing GEAR UP strategies next year?*
- f. *Which, if any, organizations on your campus or in your community that partnered with GEAR UP do you plan to continue working with after GEAR UP has left? Any organizations you do not plan to continue to partner with?*
- g. *What factors do you think contribute to your ability to sustain or not activities over time?*

h. How do you envision that GEAR UP will impact your school once it has left? In what ways that we haven't already discussed do you believe that the overall goal and mission of GEAR UP will be sustained at your school?

17. Please share anything else you would like us to know about GEAR UP and how it has been going in your district/at your school.

Thank you for your time.

D.10. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: Student Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group as representatives of ICF and describe your roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker). Students selected for the focus group should have experience with one or more GEAR UP activities/workshops.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *Those funding the GEAR UP program would like to know what it is like to be a part of the program. Particularly, they are interested in students' experience with GEAR UP's college awareness activities, tutoring, mentoring, summer programs, and field trips. This is not an evaluation of your school or your GEAR UP leaders. The purpose of this focus group is to get a variety of views about the program, so that we can gather information about activities to help plan for the future. People can agree or disagree with comments, but only one person can speak at a time. The session will take approximately 30-50 minutes.*
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time – participation will not impact you at school; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses not to have the focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify a student will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participants to sign the assent form. Parent permission forms will be collected prior to the focus group.
- Each focus group should have six to eight participants. The focus group is open to any 12th grade GEAR UP student in the 2017-2018 school year. Ideally at least some will have participated in GEAR UP activities/events/services but this is not required for participation in the focus group.

Materials

- Name tag (first names only), pen for each participant
- Paper (to write down their thoughts)
- Chart paper and markers to be used by facilitator

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please introduce yourself, your name, and how long you’ve been involved in GEAR UP (i.e., has anyone been involved since Grade 7?). Have you participated in a GEAR UP focus group with us previously? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Length of time in GEAR UP ○ Previous focus group participation 	
<p>WHAT IS GEAR UP?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When someone mentions GEAR UP, what do you think of? What activities, events, or programs do you think of? For those of you who have been involved in prior grades, how has your thinking about the GEAR UP program changed over time? • <i>Probe for where they have heard about GEAR UP at school, if anywhere. Provide examples of activities from APR/GUIDES to help get students started if needed.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic knowledge if available 	<p>List student ideas on chart paper. <i>Provide background if students lack basic knowledge.</i></p>
<p>EXPERIENCE WITH GEAR UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like to know the range of any activities/events you attended or participated in this year to help you succeed in school and be prepared to go to college. What did you do? When did you do it? Who wants to go first? (<i>Review list of site-specific activities from GUIDES to provide examples of activities if needed to get started. Prompt for summer 2017 activities or camps and any activities/events from current school year— tutoring/mentoring/ counseling, college visits, etc.</i>) <i>Probe specifically for participation in GeoForce and/or PREP; and if these come up, ask the students: Has there been any follow through on these specific programs?</i> • <i>Any plans to participate in activities that GEAR UP is offering this year that you know about?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When ○ Nature of activity ○ Content covered/goal of activity 	<p>List student responses on chart paper. Then ask to see if other students participated in named activities. Prompt for recent activities in the past month. Prompt specifically for helping to select courses/endorsements and for helping to make the transition to high school (learning how to navigate schools, selecting/changing classes, meeting teachers/ counselors). (NOTE: We will have a list of endorsements to share so that we are communicating about the same things.)</p>
<p>SAT/ACT/TSIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has anyone taken the SAT or ACT yet? How have you prepared? How are you currently preparing? Do you feel prepared? If you completed the SAT or ACT already, how did you feel about your scores? (<i>Probe for whether students completed the test(s) a second time and if they scored higher</i>) • How many times do you plan on taking the SAT and/or ACT by the time you graduate? • Has anyone taken or planning to take the TSIA? If you have already taken the TSIA, have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparedness for SAT, ACT, and TSIA 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>you passed one or more sections? How many times have you taken the TSIA so far? For those that plan to take it later, how are you preparing for it?</p>		
<p>LEARNING / ATTITUDE CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a piece of paper in front of you. Write down things you learned from any activities/events you attended or services you received to help you succeed in school and be prepared to go to college. Write as many as you can think of. Think about any that may have changed your thinking about attending college in particular. <i>(Note: Use list of activities created in the previous discussion. If a student did not attend any activities, ask them to think about what they have learned about GEAR UP and its goals and what they would like to learn more about college including learning about attending college/ entrance requirements/ financial aid.)</i> • (after 2min) • I’d like each of you to select the most valuable learning experience from your list. Please share with the group and talk about why you selected it. Ask if others in the group agree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Change in attitude ○ Change in knowledge 	<p>List ideas shared on chart paper. Discuss how different ideas may be related.</p> <p>Separate ideas based on attendance vs. not at activities.</p> <p>Probe for any change in thinking about attending college that has occurred for them since participating in GEARUP.</p>
<p>POSTSECONDARY PLANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your plans for after high school graduation? <i>(Probe for types of postsecondary education, going straight to work, military.)</i> How did you come to this decision? How prepared do you feel for the path you are planning to pursue? • For those intending to pursue education after high school, are you intending to pursue a 4-year degree, a 2-year degree, a certification, or something else? What factors are important to you in selecting a college? Did you research each of these factors about colleges you are considering? What sources did you use to conduct your research? Who helped you select the colleges you are interested in attending <i>(Probe for friends, School Counselor, GEAR UP staff, and parents.)</i>? Have you visited any colleges you are interested in attending, either virtually or in-person? Did you become interested in this college before or after the visit? What about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Postsecondary plans ○ Best fit factors ○ Plans to submit applications ○ Support offered/used 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>the visit made you interested (or reinforced your interest) in the college? Did the visit teach you anything else about selecting the right campus for you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you submitted college applications? If so, where did you apply? (<i>Probe for type of postsecondary education applied to, how many applications submitted.</i>) Did GEAR UP offer any support in terms of preparing your applications? What types of support? Did you receive individualized support or group support? Who provided the support? What types of non-GEAR support have you received to help you with your college applications? (<i>Probe for family, counselors, other college access programs, etc.</i>) What types of support have been most helpful? What types of support have been least helpful? • For those considering a career or the military, do you feel that you will be prepared for these fields once you graduate high school? • How does your family feel about your plans for after high school? Are they supportive of your plans? Is there anything they wish you would do differently than what you are planning to do? 		
<p>FINANCIAL AID</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of financial aid are you aware of (e.g., Pell Grants, federal student loans, private loans, scholarships)? What types of financial aid are you planning on applying for? Have you already submitted a FAFSA? What other types of financial aid have you already applied for? • Overall, how much effort have you made so far this year in applying for financial aid? What efforts has your family made in applying for financial aid? How comfortable are you and your parents in filling out and submitting a FAFSA? (<i>Probe for knowledge of IRS tool and FAFSA form.</i>) • Did GEAR UP offer any support to you and/or your family in terms of filling out the FAFSA and other financial aid applications? What types of support? Did you receive individualized support or group support? Who provided the support? What types of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness of financial aid options ○ Progress made in applying for financial aid ○ Financial aid support ○ Financial aid challenges ○ Change in knowledge about financial aid 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>non-GEAR UP support have you and/or your family received to help you with financial aid applications? (<i>Probe for counselors, other college access programs, etc.</i>) What types of support have been most helpful? What types of support have been least helpful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What challenges have you and your family faced in applying for financial aid? What has been done to address these challenges? If the challenge(s) have not been addressed, why have they not? • Has there been a change in your knowledge of financial aid since last year? If so, what facilitated this change? 		
<p>ACADEMIC RIGOR AND ADVANCED COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please tell me about the endorsement(s) you selected (major/minor). Have any of you changed your endorsement since last spring? If yes, what prompted you to change your endorsement? How have your teachers/administrators/GEAR UP staff helped you with meeting the endorsement requirements/goals (e.g., helping you to select courses to take)? Are you each still interested in the endorsement you selected? Why or why not? Do you plan to study this endorsement/topic in college? • Is anyone working towards a distinguished level of achievement? What prompted you to seek that? • One goal of GEAR UP is to encourage student participation in advanced courses that will give them college credit and to improve how challenging courses are at your school. Are any of you taking AP classes this year? (<i>Probe for specific classes.</i>) What about dual credit classes? What factors did you consider when deciding to take these classes? • Did anyone decide to take AP instead of dual credit classes or vice versa? Why did you make that decision? Did you talk to GEAR UP staff when deciding to enroll in AP and/or dual credit classes? Did you talk to your school counselor? Did you talk to anyone else? How did the discussions between these people differ? What roles do teachers/administrators/ parents/GEAR UP staff play in helping you select these courses? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Endorsements ○ Participation in advanced courses ○ Means of earning college credit ○ Knowledge of colleges accepting college credit via AP and dual credit ○ Impact of GEAR UP in deciding to pursue college credit 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What AP classes are you all taking right now? Are they challenging for you? How did you decide which AP classes to take? Do you plan to take the AP exam for these courses? In what ways, if any, have you started preparing for AP exams? Do you know if the schools you are interested in will give you credit for your AP courses? • What dual credit classes are you taking right now? How did you become eligible to enroll in a dual credit class? Are they challenging for you? Are you taking the classes here on your high school campus? How did you decide which classes to take? Do you know if the schools you are interested in will accept your credits for these classes? • Have many classes will you take by graduation that offer the opportunity to earn college credit? Do you know how many college credits that is, total? • What role has GEAR UP played—if any—in your decision to pursue college credit before graduation? • Are you in any other advanced classes (e.g., pre-AP courses)? Do you plan to enroll in any other advanced courses next semester? 		
<p>EFFECTIVENESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like you to tell us what is “working well” in GEAR UP and at your school as far as helping you to be successful in school and to prepare to go to college. What issues might we want to look at to improve your school for the future? We will use the chart paper to write down your thoughts. Please tell us what is working well and issues that could be improved. Who wants to go first? • How knowledgeable would you say that you are regarding college requirements? [<i>Probe for knowledge of ACT/SAT, TSIA, and plans for this year and next.</i>] • To what extent do you feel academically prepared for college? [<i>Probe for any specifics like knowing major and/or meeting entrance requirements associated with that.</i>] • (<i>NOTE: If students begin to focus on issues like a disliked teacher or cafeteria food, remind them that we want to focus on</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Understanding college admissions and financial literacy ○ Learning about/Taking SAT and ACT ○ Implementation issues (facilitators and barriers) ○ Student learning ○ Outcome (change in attitude, views, and knowledge) ○ Factors that shape specific implementation, learning, and outcomes 	<p>Use the chart paper to list students’ ideas for each category. Prompt for tutoring, mentoring, college visits if needed. Note that students may have different views about whether a service or program is working well.</p>

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p><i>success in school in general. Let them know that if they think some teachers engage in strategies that do/do not help them to be successful we want to know about that but we do not need to analyze any given teacher, etc.)</i></p>		
<p>SOURCES OF INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like to create a map of where information and knowledge about college are coming from. We know people learn not just from classes, but from other people, and we want to capture this information. Could you list where you learn about college and career options? Please list as many sources as you can think of. Who wants to go first? • What information regarding college have you been talking to your GEAR UP college prep advisor about this year? What is different this year? What information regarding college have you been talking to your school counselor about this year? What is different this year? • How do you receive information from GEAR UP (e.g., staff, during one-on-one advisor meetings, hand-outs, announcements)? Are there any other ways you would prefer to receive information? Do GEAR UP staff usually have an answer to your questions about college and career options? Where do you turn if they do not? • Do you think your parents are well-informed about college and career options? Where do they usually find information? Have they attended any meetings or events at school related to your college and career options? • <i>PROBE: Any people / information / resources you would like to have access to in order to prepare for college?</i> • <i>If state websites or Texas GEAR UP social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) do not come up, ask if they have heard of them and/or visited state GEAR UP website</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formal (school, GEAR UP) ○ Informal (friends, family, media) 	<p>Use the chart paper to list and group student responses.</p>

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>www.texasgearup.com) or the Texas GEAR UP social media sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider probing for who they think provides the best / most accurate information they receive from various resources and any barriers to seeking information. 		
<p>STUDENT SUGGESTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have any suggestions to improve the GEAR UP program? What opportunities would you like to have/information do you need to succeed in school and to feel prepared to go to college after high school? [Probe for any interest in summer opportunities] Possible follow up questions to their ideas: “Why is that important?” “How will it change the way you learn about college?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation issues Content Delivery Resource Where students are in their learning about college 	<p>If no suggestions offered, focus on information needs</p>
<p>CLOSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there anything else we should know to understand how students in your grade in this school are working with GEAR UP staff and programs? 		

Thank you very much for your time.

D.11. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Student Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group as representatives of ICF and describe your roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker).
- Student Assent and Parent Consent: Only students with signed parent consent can participate in the focus group. Confirm that you have collected signed consent forms for each participating student and walk student through their assent to participate.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *Those funding the GEAR UP program would like to know what it is like to be a part of the program. Particularly, they are interested in students' experience with GEAR UP's college awareness activities, tutoring, mentoring, summer programs, and field trips. This is not an evaluation of your school or your GEAR UP leaders. The purpose of this focus group is to get a variety of views about the program, so that we can gather information about activities to help plan for the future. People can agree or disagree with comments, but only one person can speak at a time. The session will take approximately 30-50 minutes.*
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time – participation will not impact you at school; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses not to have the focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify a student will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. Review and ask participants to sign the assent form. Parent permission forms will be collected prior to the focus group.
- Each focus group should have six to eight participants. The focus group is open to any 12th grade GEAR UP student in the 2017–18 school year. Ideally at least some will have participated in GEAR UP activities/events/services but this is not required for participation in the focus group.

Materials

- Name tag (first names only), pen for each participant
- Paper (to write down their thoughts)
- Chart paper and markers to be used by facilitator
- Digital recorder

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator's Activity
<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please introduce yourself, your name, and how long you've been involved in GEAR UP (i.e., has anyone been involved since Grade 7?). Have you participated in a GEAR UP focus group with us previously? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length of time in GEAR UP Previous focus group participation 	
<p>WHAT IS GEAR UP?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When someone mentions GEAR UP, what do you think of? What activities, events, or programs do you think of? For those of you who have been involved in prior grades, how has your thinking about the GEAR UP program changed over time? <i>Probe for where they have heard about GEAR UP at school, if anywhere. Provide examples of activities from APR/GUIDES to help get students started if needed.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic knowledge if available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List student ideas on chart paper. <i>Provide background if students lack basic knowledge.</i>
<p>EXPERIENCE WITH GEAR UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would like to know the range of any GEAR UP activities/events you attended or participated in this year to help you succeed in school and be prepared to go to college. What did you do? When did you do it? Who wants to go first? <i>(Review list of site-specific activities from GUIDES to provide examples of activities if needed to get started. Prompt for any activities/events from current school year-tutoring/mentoring/counseling, college visits, etc.) Probe specifically for participation in GeoForce and/or PREP; and if these come up, ask the students: Has there been any follow through on these specific programs?</i> <i>Any plans to participate in activities that GEAR UP is offering this summer that you know about?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Nature of activity Content covered/goal of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List student responses on chart paper. Then ask to see if other students participated in named activities. Prompt for recent activities in the past month. Prompt specifically for helping to select courses/endorsements and for helping to make the transition to high school (learning how to navigate schools, selecting/changing classes, meeting teachers/ counselors). (NOTE: We will have a list of endorsements to share so that we are communicating about the same things.)
<p>SAT/ACT/TSIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has anyone taken the SAT or ACT yet? Did you feel prepared? If no, why did you not take the SAT or ACT? Are you planning to take either test in the future? Do you feel prepared? If you completed the SAT or ACT already, how did you feel about your scores? <i>(Probe for whether students completed the test(s) a second or third time and if they scored higher)</i> How many times do you plan on taking the SAT and/or ACT by the time you graduate? Has anyone taken or planning to take the TSIA? If you have already taken the TSIA, have you passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparedness for SAT, ACT, and TSIA 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator's Activity
<p>one or more sections? How many times have you taken the TSIA so far? For those that plan to take it later, how are you preparing for it?</p>		
<p>LEARNING / ATTITUDE CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a piece of paper in front of you. Write down things you learned from any activities/events you attended or services you received to help you succeed in school and be prepared to go to college. Write as many as you can think of. Think about any that may have changed your thinking about attending college in particular. (<i>Note: Use list of activities created in the previous discussion. If a student did not attend any activities, ask them to think about what they have learned about GEAR UP and its goals and what they would like to learn more about college including learning about attending college/entrance requirements/financial aid.</i>) (after 2 min) I'd like each of you to select the most valuable learning experience from your list. Was your learning experience related to a GEAR UP activity/event? What was valuable about your learning experience? Please share with the group and talk about why you selected it. Ask if others in the group agree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in attitude Change in knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List ideas shared on chart paper. Discuss how different ideas may be related. Separate ideas based on attendance vs. not at activities. Probe for any change in thinking about attending college that has occurred for them since participating in GEAR UP and within the past year. What, if anything, contributed to these changes over time.
<p>POSTSECONDARY PLANS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your plans for after high school graduation? (<i>Probe for types of postsecondary education, going straight to work, military.</i>) How did you come to this decision? How prepared do you feel for the path you are planning to pursue? For those intending to pursue education after high school, are you intending to pursue a 4-year degree, a 2-year degree, a certification, or something else? Do you have a college in mind to attend? What factors are important to you in selecting a college? Did you research each of these factors about colleges you are considering? What sources did you use to conduct your research? Who helped you select the colleges you are interested in attending (<i>Probe for friends, school counselor, GEAR UP staff, other college access program staff, and parents.</i>)? Have you visited any colleges you are interested in attending, either virtually or in-person? Was the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postsecondary plans Best fit factors Plans to submit applications Support offered/used 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>visit related to GEAR UP or did you go on your own/with your parents/or another group? Did you become interested in this college before or after the visit? What about the visit made you interested (or reinforced your interest) in the college? Did the visit teach you anything else about selecting the right campus for you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you submitted college applications? If so, where did you apply? <i>(Probe for type of postsecondary education applied to, how many applications submitted.)</i> Did GEAR UP offer any support in terms of preparing your applications? What types of support? Did you receive individualized support or group support? What types of non-GEAR UP support have you received to help you with your college applications? <i>(Probe for family, counselors, other college access programs, etc.)</i> What types of support have been most helpful? What types of support have been least helpful? • For those considering a career or the military, do you feel that you will be prepared for these fields once you graduate high school? • How does your family feel about your plans for after high school? Are they supportive of your plans? Is there anything they wish you would do differently than what you are planning to do? • In the past year, have you had any opportunities through your school or GEAR UP to participate in activities aligned with your post high school goals? Have you done any job shadowing, work internships, college visits, college shadowing, or career field trips? If not, is that something you would be interested in? If yes, how did you find these experiences? Can you estimate how many college visits you’ve been on with GEAR UP? Have you been on any other college visits? Have you participated in college shadowing this year? If yes, what kinds of activities did you participate in? How did you like this experience compared to other college visits? Did you learn anything new about the college experience during your college shadowing experience? 		

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator's Activity
<p>FINANCIAL AID</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of financial aid are you aware of (e.g., Pell grants, federal student loans, private loans, scholarships)? What types of financial aid are you planning on applying for? Have you already submitted a FAFSA? What other types of financial aid have you already applied for? • Overall, how much effort have you made so far this year in applying for financial aid? What efforts has your family made in applying for financial aid? How comfortable are you and your parents in filling out and submitting a FAFSA? (<i>Probe for knowledge of IRS tool and FAFSA form.</i>) • Did GEAR UP offer any support to you and/or your family in terms of filling out the FAFSA and other financial aid applications? What types of support? Did you receive individualized support or group support? What types of non-GEAR UP support have you and/or your family received to help you with financial aid applications? (<i>Probe for counselors, other college access programs, etc.</i>) What types of support have been most helpful? What types of support have been least helpful? • Has the amount of financial aid you've been approved for so far influenced the schools that you are interested in attending? Or degree(s) you are interested in pursuing? • What challenges have you and your family faced in applying for financial aid? What has been done to address these challenges? If the challenge(s) have not been addressed, why have they not? • Has there been a change in your knowledge of financial aid since last year? If so, what facilitated this change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of financial aid options • Progress made in applying for financial aid • Financial aid support • Financial aid challenges • Change in knowledge about financial aid 	
<p>ACADEMIC RIGOR AND ADVANCED COURSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please tell me about the endorsement(s) you selected (major/minor). Have any of you changed or dropped your endorsement since last fall? If yes, what prompted you to change or drop your endorsement? How have your teachers/administrators/GEAR UP staff helped you with meeting the endorsement requirements/goals (e.g., helping you to select courses to take)? Are you each still interested in the endorsement you selected? Why or why not? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsements • Participation in advanced courses • Means of earning college credit • Knowledge of colleges accepting college credit via AP and dual credit 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator's Activity
<p>Do you plan to study this endorsement/topic in college?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us about how you see your endorsement preparing you for what you want to do after high school and for going to college. • Is anyone working towards a distinguished level of achievement? What prompted you to seek that? • Is anyone planning to graduate with any other performance acknowledgements? Any AP course recognitions? What made you want to pursue these accolades? Did GEAR UP play a role in this decision? If yes, how so? • One goal of GEAR UP is to encourage student participation in advanced courses that will give them college credit and to improve how challenging courses are at your school. Are you currently in any advanced or dual credit courses (AP courses, including in other subjects besides mathematics)? <i>Tell us about any pre-AP or AP courses you are taking.</i> Are any of you taking AP classes? Dual credit this year? (<i>Probe for specific classes.</i>) What factors did you consider when deciding to take these classes? • Did anyone decide to take AP instead of dual credit classes or vice versa? Why did you make that decision? Did you talk to GEAR UP staff when deciding to enroll in AP and/or dual credit classes? Did you talk to your school counselor? Did you talk to anyone else? Does your school offer an endorsement or pathway you'd rather pursue? Why have you not pursued the alternative endorsement or pathway? Have you had any challenges with enrolling in the courses you need to graduate with your endorsement? Are you each still interested in the endorsement you selected? Why or why not? Do you plan to study this endorsement/topic in college? • What AP classes are you all taking right now? Are they challenging for you? How did you decide which AP classes to take? Did you feel prepared to take these classes? Do you plan to take the AP exam for these courses? In what ways, if any, have you started preparing for AP exams? Do you know if the schools you are interested in will give you credit for your AP courses? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of GEAR UP in deciding to pursue college credit 	

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What dual credit classes are you taking right now? How did you become eligible to enroll in a dual credit class? Are they challenging for you? Are you taking the classes here on your high school campus? How did you decide which classes to take? Did you feel prepared to take these classes? Why or why not? Do you know if the schools you are interested in will accept your credits for these classes? • Have many classes you will take by graduation offered the opportunity to earn college credit? Do you know how many college credits that is, total? • What role has GEAR UP played—if any—in your decision to pursue college credit before graduation? 		
<p>SOURCES OF INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like to create a map of where information and knowledge about college are coming from. We know people learn not just from classes, but from other people, and we want to capture this information. Could you list where/from whom you learn about college and career options? Please list as many sources as you can think of. Who wants to go first? • What information regarding college have you been talking to your GEAR UP college prep advisor about this year? What is different this year? What information regarding college have you been talking to your school counselor about this year? What is different this year? • How do you receive information from GEAR UP (e.g., staff, during one-on-one advisor meetings, hand-outs, announcements, text messages, social media)? Are there any other ways you would prefer to receive information? Do GEAR UP staff usually have an answer to your questions about college and career options? Where do you turn if they do not? • Do you think your parents are well-informed about college and career options? Where do they usually find information? Have they attended any meetings or events at school related to your college and career options? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal (school, GEAR UP) • Informal (friends, family, media) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the chart paper to list and group student responses.

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator's Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PROBE: Any people/information/resources you would like to have access to in order to prepare for college?</i> • <i>If state websites or Texas GEAR UP social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) do not come up, ask if they have heard of them and/or visited state GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com) or the Texas GEAR UP social media sites.</i> • <i>Consider probing for who they think provides the best/most accurate information they receive from various resources and any barriers to seeking information.</i> 		
<p>EFFECTIVENESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like you to tell us what is “working well” in GEAR UP and at your school as far as helping you to be successful in school and to prepare to go to college. Additionally, what issues might we want to look at to improve your school for the future? We will use the chart paper to write down your thoughts. Please tell us what is working well as well as issues that could be improved. Who wants to go first? • How knowledgeable would you say that you are regarding college requirements? • To what extent do you feel academically prepared for college? [<i>Probe for any specifics like knowing major and/or where they may want to attend and meeting entrance requirements associated with that.</i>] • (<i>NOTE: If students begin to focus on issues like a disliked teacher or cafeteria food, remind them that we want to focus on success in school in general. Let them know that if they think some teachers engage in strategies that do/do not help them to be successful we want to know about that but we do not need to analyze any given teacher, etc.</i>) • <i>What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? Do you think participating has been helpful in making you prepared for postsecondary education? Has it helped your family to understand how to prepare for postsecondary education? What did you like most about it? What did you like least?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding college admissions and financial literacy • Learning about/Taking SAT and ACT • Implementation issues (facilitators and barriers) • Student learning • Outcome (change in attitude, views, and knowledge) • Factors that shape specific implementation, learning, and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the chart paper to list students' ideas for each category. Prompt for tutoring, mentoring, college visits if needed. Note that students may have different views about whether a service or program is working well.
<p>STUDENT SUGGESTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any suggestions to improve the GEAR UP program? What opportunities would 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation issues • Content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no suggestions offered, focus on information needs

Opening Questions	Aspects to be covered	Facilitator’s Activity
<p>you like to have/information do you need to succeed in school and to feel prepared to go to college after high school? [<i>Probe for any interest in summer opportunities</i>]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible follow up questions to their ideas: • “Why is that important?” “How will it change the way you learn about college?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery • Resource • Where students are in their learning about college 	
<p>CLOSING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything else we should know to understand how students in your grade in this school are working with GEAR UP staff and programs? 		

Thank you very much for your time.

D.12. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: Parent Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group as representatives of ICF and describe your roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker). This session is expected to include a translator.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this focus group is to better understand parents' thinking about the GEAR UP program and how parents are participating in services and activities under the GEAR UP program. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this focus group to take approximately 45 minutes.*
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) The focus group is voluntary and data collected will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participation at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person in the focus group chooses not to have it recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*
- Each focus group should have six to 10 participants. The focus group is open to any parent of a GEAR UP student in the 2017-18 school year. Ideally at least some will have participated in GEAR UP activities/events/services but this is not required for participation in the focus group.
- Note to facilitator: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. When available, the most recent GUIDES data will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes. Additionally, there will be outreach to GEAR UP partners to determine activities that they have conducted with the districts.*

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. **Conduct introductions. In addition to Grade 12 students, do you have students in any other grades? Probe to find out if any parents participated in prior GEAR UP focus groups.**

- 2. When someone mentions GEAR UP, what do you think of? What do you know about it? If long-term cohort parent, how has your understanding of the program changed over time? (If needed, facilitator provides a short overview of the program including specific examples where appropriate. Note to ask about participation in events more specifically in a separate question.)**
- By what means and how often has the school communicated with parents so far this year about the GEAR UP program (e.g., mail/email, robo-calls, text messages, at school events)? In what ways, if any, have you interacted with GEAR UP staff [or parent liaison (if your district has one)]? Have you ever interacted with the IPSI Family Engagement Coach? If yes, how would describe your experience interacting and communicating with her? How do you feel about this means of interaction/communication (effectiveness, timeliness, frequency, means)?*
 - What information are GEAR UP staff communicating to you through outreach, resources, meetings, and events? Is there any additional information you would like to receive from GEAR UP staff?*
 - What is your understanding of the goals of GEAR UP at your high school? For students? Parents? Teachers? The school/district? Statewide?*
 - What activities, events, or programs do you think of when someone mentions GEAR UP (e.g., college workshops/visits for students, financial literacy, tutoring/mentoring/academic support services, workshops for parents, summer programs)?*
- 3. Let's talk about the summer activities as they relate to GEAR UP. Did your child attend any such activities this past summer?**
- Where was this activity hosted? (Probe for high school campus, college campus, or other locations.) Who hosted the activity? What did your child do during this activity?*
 - If your child did attend, what did you/your child think about the activities? Were there activities or events that occurred during the summer that you think were particularly helpful or not particularly helpful? Since the school year started, do you think the summer activities have helped your child to be more successful in high school this year?*
 - What do you think was the purpose of the summer activities (e.g., specific content like math, being a successful high school student, college-going thinking)?*
 - Has your child participated in similar activities in previous summers? How did this one compare?*
 - If your child did attend, to what extent were parents involved in the summer activities? Were you able to be involved? Why/why not?*
 - If your child did not attend, why not?*
 - For all parents, how and when did the school inform you about the summer activities? Were there features of the summer activities that made it easier for your child to attend or for you/your child to want to attend? Any challenges to participating in the summer activities?*
 - Would you encourage the school to continue these types of summer activities in the future? Why/why not? Any recommendations for changing the activities to improve them or things you would not change?*
- 4. Now let's talk about the school year so far. Has your child(ren) shared any information with you about their experiences in the GEAR UP program so far during the current school year? If so, what information have they shared?**
- Experience with college awareness (including workshops, college visits/tours/shadowing); experience with tutoring/mentoring; experience with course selection; experience with information resources/educational planning (e.g., encourage/prepared to take advanced*

- courses); experience with career exploration (e.g., job site visits, job shadowing, career fairs)?*
- b. Have they found it easy/difficult to enroll in the classes they need for their endorsement? Have they decided to add another/drop their endorsement or change/add to their endorsement? What contributed to any decision to change/drop/add endorsements? Probe for awareness of endorsements, graduation plans, or distinguished level of achievement.*
 - c. What, if anything, do you think about the events/activities your student has participated in (college visits, job shadowing)? Any ideas about events/activities you would like you child to participate in/have made available to your child based on what you know about GEAR UP?*
 - d. Are there any GEAR UP activities that you are aware of that you wish your child could participate in but was not/will not be able to? What other factors facilitate or hinder your child's ability to participate in GEAR UP?*
 - e. Are there any other types of activities you would like your child to participate in to prepare them for college?*
- 5. (If not already discussed) GEAR UP is also interested in helping students to succeed in high school at each grade and be ready for college level work. What, if anything, would you say about your child regarding succeeding in high school? Academically? Socially? Engaging in college ready strategies? What factors may have contributed to their success/struggles? (Note: Probe for content [e.g., making high school culture clear, training on specific "soft" skills like organization or study skills, encouraging to get involved, taking AP or dual credit courses, SAT/ACT, TSIA])**
- a. In general, what have you seen/experienced to suggest your child is succeeding in high school and will be prepared for college? What about challenges?*
 - b. What do you think you/your school has done well to help your child succeed in high school and be college ready?*
 - c. What more do you think you/your school could do to support your child to succeed in high school and beyond? (Probe for any involvement in summer activities.)*
 - d. Has the school or someone from GEAR UP communicated with you about advanced placement courses or college credit opportunities at your school and encouraged you to have your child enroll in these types of courses? Is your child enrolled in AP classes? Dual credit classes? If so, how are they doing in the class(es)? If not, would you like for them to be enrolled? Did you encourage your child to take either AP or dual credit instead of both? If so, what is your preference? Why?*
 - e. Do you speak to any GEAR UP staff about your child's academic progress or academic future? What do you discuss? Do you feel satisfied with the frequency of these conversations? Why or why not? Are you satisfied with the amount and type of information you receive? Why or why not? Do you speak with school counselors or other staff about these topics? Is the information you receive from school staff and GEAR UP staff consistent? Is there a specific person you prefer to speak to? Why do you prefer that person?*
- 6. How helpful has GEAR UP been in helping your child to think about attending college? Choosing a major in college? Choosing the college they want to attend?**
- a. Anything you think has been particularly helpful with this? Not helpful?*
 - b. What more would you like to see your school/GEAR UP doing?*
 - c. How about understanding college entrance requirements and affording college? Has the school engaged with you/your child to be prepared to meet requirements/afford college?*

- d. *What is the college and career pathway that your child is considering after completing high school? (Probe for 2-year degree, 4-year degree, certification, straight to work, and military.) Is this your preferred choice for your child? Why or Why not?*
- e. *What factors do you think are important for students to consider when selecting where and how to further their education? (Probe for postsecondary school factors [e.g., class size, school location, community type, where peers plan to attend, graduation rate, how similar school population demographics match the student, program availability, degrees available, affordability] as well as program factors [e.g., types of degrees offered, choices in major, length of program].)*
- f. *Has your child applied to any postsecondary schools or programs yet? If yes: did you understand the application and process? Did GEAR UP provide any support or resources to help you help your child submit the application? Did anyone else provide similar supports? (Probe for family, counselors, other college access programs, etc.) What support or resources do you not have that you believe you would still be helpful?*

7. What is your understanding about affording college? Has the school engaged with you/your child to be prepared to afford college or apply for financial aid?

- a. *What is your understanding about applying for financial aid?*
- b. *What financial aid options are you aware of to help pay for your child's postsecondary education? What types of financial aid are you aware of (e.g., Pell Grants, federal student loans, private loans, scholarships)?*
- c. *What types of financial aid are you planning on applying for? Have you already submitted a FAFSA? What other types of financial aid have you already applied for?*
- d. *What actions, if any, have you taken to apply for financial aid? How comfortable are you in filling out and submitting a FAFSA? (Probe for knowledge of IRS tool and FAFSA form.)*
- e. *Did GEAR UP offer any support to you and/or your family in terms of filling out the FAFSA and other financial aid applications? What types of support? Did you receive individualized support or group support? Who provided the support?*
- f. *What types of non-GEAR UP support have you and/or your family received to help you with financial aid applications? (Probe for counselors, other college access programs, etc.)*
- g. *What types of support have been most helpful? What types of support have been least helpful? What challenges have you and your family faced in applying for financial aid? What has been done to address these challenges? If the challenges have not been addressed, why have they not? Has there been a change in your knowledge of financial aid since last year? If so, what facilitated this change?*

8. Knowing what GEAR UP can provide to your children, do you believe GEAR UP activities, events, and services in the summer or during the school year have been/would be helpful to your children as far as helping them to succeed in school/be ready for college? If yes, in what ways?

- a. *Probe for helping students succeed/stay in school; encouraging students to take and to successfully complete higher-level/more advanced classes (e.g., Algebra II, AP classes) and/or dual credit courses; usefulness in planning for college academically/financially.*

9. Have you or another adult in your household attended a GEAR UP activity or event during the current school year? (Probe again about summer if it has not already been discussed. Probe whether few/some/all parents were aware of activities and events. Probe for how schools might be able to successfully meet the goal of at least 50% of parents attending at least three events.)

- a. *If yes, what activities or events did you attend? Did you participate in any events around financial literacy or financial aid? (Probe to understand if the parents knew about events and did/did not attend as compared to not knowing about events.)*
- b. *What did you most like about what you participated in? Least like? What did you learn from them? What factors facilitated your participation/encouraged you to participate?*
- e. *If no, why not? What barriers prevented you from attending (e.g., schedule, child care/family issues, work schedule, other)? What services or supports might help you attend future GEAR UP activities or events? Probe whether few/some/all parents were aware of activities and events. Probe for how schools might be able to successfully meet the goal of at least 50% of parents attending at least three events.*
- c. *Do you know who your child's College Preparation Advisor is? Have you met or spoken with this person one-on-one this year? In previous years? Who initiated these discussions – you, the College Preparation Advisor, your child, or someone else? Did you find this time helpful? What information, or resources, if any, did you receive during this time that you would have not received in the larger GEAR UP meetings? Do you have a preference for GEAR UP activities with a larger group or the one-on-one discussions? If yes, why do you prefer the scenario that you do?*
- d. *What other resources do you use to get information on preparing your child for college?*
- e. *How have this semester's event(s) compared to the events that you have attended in previous years? What could the school and/or GEAR UP staff do to improve the quality of these events? What topics would you like to be covered at these events? Would the inclusion of such topics make you more likely to attend the events?*

10. Do you believe GEAR UP activities, events, and services are helpful for you as a parent to help your child succeed in college? If yes, in what ways? How do they build on what you already know? Any activities, events, and services that might be helpful to you as a parent going forward?

- a. *What do you think has been/would be most helpful for your child's school to do to help your child succeed in school/be prepared to go to college? Probe for: supporting you in helping your child to succeed in school, learning to advocate for your child, usefulness in academic and financial planning for college.*
- b. *What other college access programs have you worked with this year to help prepare your child for postsecondary education? How has the information or resources they provided differed from what GEAR UP has provided? Have they provided any information that was similar to what you have received from GEAR UP?*

11. We understand that your child may be participating in, or has participated in, the SAT, ACT, and/or TSIA this year.

- a. *Do you feel well-informed about these assessments? [If school had SAT School Day this fall/last spring] Were you aware of the SAT School Day [this fall/last spring]? If so, did you encourage your child to participate?*
- b. *Have you received any materials or resources, such as Khan Academy, to help your child prepare at home? If at all, how have you used these items to help your child prepare for an assessment? Describe how useful they were.*
- c. *Did your child's experience with the PSAT last year change your understanding of the SAT and the role it has in their college acceptance? If so, in what ways?*

12. The program at this school is part of a statewide Texas GEAR UP program. Have you received any information about statewide GEAR UP? [Describe materials and www.texasgearup.com in more detail].

- a. *If yes, what information did you receive? How/from whom?*
- b. *Have you accessed any statewide resources, like those described earlier on the Texas GEAR UP website, to date? If so, what did you learn from them? What did you think of them? Probe for quality of the resources and ability to meet various levels of understanding/literacy.*
- c. *If no, facilitator will describe. Would you like to learn more about these resources? What would be the best way to inform you about statewide initiatives? What ways are not helpful in informing you about new resources?*
- d. *Did you participate in last year's state GEAR UP conference? If yes, what did you get out of that experience? How were you notified of the opportunity to attend? Are you planning to attend this year?*
- e. *Have you received any financial coaching or financial resources from TG this semester? Did you find the information helpful? Why or why not? How did you find out about these resources?*

13. What more would you like to learn from GEAR UP about helping your child to succeed in school/preparing for your child to attend college?

- a. *Are there things you really feel you do not yet know enough about to help your child? (Gaps in knowledge)*

14. What final thoughts do you have about GEAR UP and how it can help you and your child?

Thank you for your thoughtful participation and spending time to discuss with us.

D.13. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Parent Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group as representatives of ICF and describe your roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker). This session is expected to include a translator.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this focus group is to better understand parents' thinking about the GEAR UP program and how parents are participating in services and activities under the GEAR UP program. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this focus group to take approximately 45 minutes.*
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) The focus group is voluntary and data collected will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participation at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person in the focus group chooses not to have it recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*
- Each focus group should have six to 10 participants. The focus group is open to any parent of a GEAR UP student in the 2017-18 school year. Ideally at least some will have participated in GEAR UP activities/events/services but this is not required for participation in the focus group.
- Note to facilitator: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. When available, the most recent GUIDES data will be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes. Additionally, there will be outreach to GEAR UP partners to determine activities that they have conducted with the districts.*

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1. Conduct introductions. In addition to Grade 12 students, do you have students in any other grades? Probe to find out if any parents participated in prior GEAR UP focus groups.**
- 2. When someone mentions GEAR UP, what do you think of? What do you know about it? If long-term cohort parent, how has your understanding of the program changed over time? (If needed, facilitator provides a short overview of the program including specific examples where appropriate. Note to ask about participation in events more specifically in a separate question.)**
 - a. What/how often has the school communicated with parents so far this year about the GEAR UP program (e.g., mail/email, robo-calls, text messages, at school events)? In what ways, if any, have you interacted with GEAR UP staff [or parent liaison (if your district has one)]? Have you ever interacted with the IPSI Family Engagement Coach? If yes, how would describe your experience interacting and communicating with her? How do you feel about this interaction/communication (effectiveness, timeliness, frequency, means)?*
 - b. What information are GEAR UP staff communicating to you through outreach, resources, meetings, and events? Is there any additional information you would like to receive from GEAR UP staff?*
 - c. What is your understanding of the goals of GEAR UP at your high school? For students? Parents? Teachers? The school/district? Statewide?*
 - d. What activities, events, or programs do you think of when someone mentions GEAR UP (e.g., college workshops/visits for students, financial literacy, tutoring/mentoring/academic support services, workshops for parents, summer programs)?*
- 3. Now let's talk about the school year so far. Has your child(ren) shared any information with you about their experiences in the GEAR UP program during the current school year? If so, what information have they shared?**
 - a. Experience with college awareness (including workshops, college visits/tours/shadowing); experience with tutoring/mentoring; experience with course selection; experience with information resources/educational planning (e.g., encouraged/prepared to take advanced courses); experience with career exploration (e.g., job site visits, job shadowing, career fairs)?*
 - b. Have they found it easy/difficult to enroll in the classes they need for their endorsement? Have they decided to add another/drop their endorsement or change/add to their endorsement? What contributed to any decision to change/drop/add endorsements? Probe for awareness of endorsements, graduation plans, or distinguished level of achievement.*
 - c. What, if anything, do you think about the events/activities your student has participated in (college visits, job shadowing)? Any ideas about events/activities you would like your child to participate in/have made available to your child based on what you know about GEAR UP?*
 - d. Are there any GEAR UP activities that you are aware of that you wish your child could participate in but was not/will not be able to? What other factors facilitate or hinder your child's ability to participate in GEAR UP?*
 - e. Are there any other types of activities you would like your child to participate in to prepare them for college?*
- 4. (If not already discussed) GEAR UP is also interested in helping students to succeed in high school at each grade and be ready for college level work. What, if anything, would you say about your child regarding succeeding in high school? Academically? Socially? Engaging in college ready strategies? What factors may have contributed to their success/struggles? (Note: Probe for**

content [e.g., making high school culture clear, training on specific “soft” skills like organization or study skills, encouraging to get involved, taking AP or dual credit courses, SAT/ACT, TSIA])

- a. *In general, what have you seen/experienced to suggest your child is succeeding in high school and will be prepared for college? What about challenges?*
- b. *What do you think you/your school has done well to help your child succeed in high school and be college ready?*
- c. *What more do you think you/your school could do to support your child to succeed in high school and beyond?*
- d. *Is your child enrolled in AP classes? Dual credit classes? If so, how are they doing in the class(es)? If not, would you like for them to be enrolled? Did you encourage your child to take either AP or dual credit instead of both? If so, what is your preference? Why?*
- e. *Do you speak to any GEAR UP staff about your child’s academic progress or academic future? What do you discuss? Do you feel satisfied with the frequency of these conversations? Why or why not? Are you satisfied with the amount and type of information you receive? Why or why not? Do you speak with school counselors or other staff about these topics? Is the information you receive from school staff and GEAR UP staff consistent? Is there a specific person you prefer to speak to? Why do you prefer that person?*

5. How helpful has GEAR UP been in helping your child to think about attending college? Considering a major in college? Choosing the college they want to attend?

- a. *Anything you think has been particularly helpful with this? Not helpful?*
- b. *What more would you like to see your school/GEAR UP doing?*
- c. *How about understanding college entrance requirements and affording college? Has the school engaged with you/your child to be prepared to meet requirements?*
- d. *What is the college and career pathway that your child is considering after completing high school? (Probe for 2-year degree, 4-year degree, certification, straight to work, and military.) Is this your preferred choice for your child? Why or Why not?*
- e. *What factors do you think are important for students to consider when selecting where and how to further their education? (Probe for postsecondary school factors [e.g., class size, school location, community type, where peers plan to attend, graduation rate, how similar school population demographics match the student, program availability, degrees available, affordability] as well as program factors [e.g., types of degrees offered, choices in major, length of program].)*
- f. *Has your child applied to any postsecondary schools or programs yet? If yes: did you understand the application and process? Did GEAR UP provide any support or resources to help you help your child submit the application? Did anyone else provide similar supports? (Probe for family, counselors, other college access programs, etc.) What support or resources do you not have that you believe you would still be helpful? If your child has applied, have they been accepted into any schools yet? If so, where?*

6. Let’s talk about the summer activities as they relate to GEAR UP. Do you plan for your child to attend any activities this summer?

- a. *If you are planning to have your child attend, what is the general focus of the summer program your child will attend? What was it about this program that you hope will benefit your child to participate in? How do you think these summer activities/this summer activity will be helpful to your child next school year or as they prepare to enroll in postsecondary education?*

- b. *How many programs are they planning to attend? Do you know who is hosting or offering the program (TX college, business or community organization)? Is the program local or in the state of Texas?*
 - c. *Do you think your child will be prepared to succeed academically in postsecondary education? If your child is attending a summer program, how do you think it will help further prepare them to succeed academically?*
 - d. *Do you plan to be involved in the summer program your child attends? Why/why not?*
 - e. *For all parents, how and when does the school inform you about the summer activities? Are there features of the summer activities that will make it easier for your child to attend or for you/your child to want to attend? Any challenges to participating in the summer activities?*
- 7. What is your understanding about affording college? Has the school engaged with you/your child to be prepared to afford college or apply for financial aid?**
- a. *What is your understanding about applying for financial aid?*
 - b. *What financial aid options are you aware of to help pay for your child's postsecondary education? What types of financial aid are you aware of (e.g., Pell Grants, federal student loans, private loans, scholarships)?*
 - c. *What types of financial aid are you planning on applying for? Have you already submitted a FAFSA? What other types of financial aid have you already applied for?*
 - d. *What actions, if any, have you taken to apply for financial aid? How comfortable are you in filling out and submitting a FAFSA? (Probe for knowledge of IRS tool and FAFSA form.)*
 - e. *Did GEAR UP offer any support to you and/or your family in terms of filling out the FAFSA and other financial aid applications? What types of support? Did you receive individualized support or group support? Who provided the support?*
 - f. *What types of non-GEAR UP support have you and/or your family received to help you with financial aid applications? (Probe for counselors, other college access programs, etc.)*
 - g. *What types of support have been most helpful? What types of support have been least helpful? What challenges have you and your family faced in applying for financial aid? What has been done to address these challenges? If the challenges have not been addressed, why have they not? Has there been a change in your knowledge of financial aid since last year? If so, what facilitated this change?*
 - h. *Have you/your child received or been approved for any financial aid yet? If so, has it influenced the schools and programs you and your child are considering for enrollment?*
- 8. Knowing what GEAR UP can provide to your children, do you believe GEAR UP activities, events, and services in the summer or during the school year have been/would be helpful to your children as far as helping them to succeed in school/be ready for college? If yes, in what ways?**
- a. *Probe for helping students succeed/stay in school; encouraging students to take and to successfully complete higher-level/more advanced classes (e.g., Algebra II, AP classes) and/or dual credit courses; usefulness in planning for college academically/financially.*
- 9. Have you or another adult in your household attended a GEAR UP activity or event during the current school year? (Probe whether few/some/all parents were aware of activities and events. Probe for how schools might be able to successfully meet the goal of at least 50% of parents attending at least three events.)**
- a. *If yes, what activities or events did you attend? Did you participate in any events around financial literacy or financial aid? (Probe to understand if the parents knew about events and did/did not attend as compared to not knowing about events.)*

- b. *What did you most like about what you participated in? Least like? What did you learn from them? What factors facilitated your participation/encouraged you to participate?*
- e. *If no, why not? What barriers prevented you from attending (e.g., schedule, child care/family issues, work schedule, other)? What services or supports might have helped you attend GEAR UP activities or events? Probe whether few/some/all parents were aware of activities and events. Probe for how schools might be able to successfully meet the goal of at least 50% of parents attending at least three events.*
- c. *Do you know who your child's College Preparation Advisor is? Have you met or spoken with this person one-on-one this year? In previous years? Who initiated these discussions – you, the College Preparation Advisor, your child, or someone else? Did you find this time helpful? What information, or resources, if any, did you receive during this time that you would have not received in the larger GEAR UP meetings? Do you have a preference for GEAR UP activities with a larger group or the one-on-one discussions? If yes, why do you prefer the scenario that you do?*
- d. *What other resources do you use to get information on preparing your child for college?*
- e. *How did this year's event(s) compare to the events that you attended in previous years? What could the school and/or GEAR UP staff do to improve the quality of these events? What topics would you like to be covered at these events? Would the inclusion of such topics make you more likely to attend the events?*

10. Do you believe GEAR UP activities, events, and services are helpful for you as a parent to help your child succeed in college? If yes, in what ways? How do they build on what you already know? Any activities, events, and services that might be helpful to you as a parent going forward?

- a. *What do you think has been/would be most helpful for your child's school to do to help your child succeed in school/be prepared to go to college? Probe for: supporting you in helping your child to succeed in school, learning to advocate for your child, usefulness in academic and financial planning for college.*
- b. *What other college access programs have you worked with this year to help prepare your child for postsecondary education? How has the information or resources they provided differed from what GEAR UP has provided? Have they provided any information that was similar to what you have received from GEAR UP?*

11. We understand that your child may be participating in, or has participated in, the SAT, ACT, and/or TSIA this year.

- a. *Do you feel well-informed about these assessments? [If school had SAT School Day] Were you aware of the SAT School Day? If so, did you encourage your child to participate?*
- b. *Have you received any materials or resources, such as Khan Academy, to help your child prepare at home? If at all, how have you used these items to help your child prepare for an assessment? Describe how useful they were.*

12. The program at this school is part of a statewide Texas GEAR UP program. Have you received any information about statewide GEAR UP? [Describe materials and www.texasgearup.com in more detail].

- a. *If yes, what information did you receive? How/from whom?*
- b. *Have you accessed any statewide resources to date? If so, what did you learn from them? What did you think of them? Probe for quality of the resources and ability to meet various levels of understanding/literacy.*

- c. If no, facilitator will describe. Would you like to learn more about these resources? What would be the best way to inform you about statewide initiatives? What ways are not helpful in informing you about new resources?*
- d. Did you participate in this year's state GEAR UP conference? If yes, what did you get out of that experience? How were you notified of the opportunity to attend? Are you planning to attend this year?*
- e. Have you received any financial coaching or financial resources from TG this year? Did you find the information helpful? Why or why not? How did you find out about these resources?*

13. What more would you like to learn from GEAR UP about helping your child to succeed in school/preparing for your child to attend college?

- a. Are there things you really feel you do not yet know enough about to help your child?*
- b. Do you feel prepared to help your child finalize their decisions regarding postsecondary education and ensure that they will be properly enrolled in the fall? If not, what additional information would be helpful?*

14. What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you feel it has been in your child's school?

- a. Do you feel that GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not? What barriers and facilitators were in place affect this outcome?*
- b. Do you think GEAR UP has made an impact on the school and district administrations' approach or thoughts towards postsecondary education readiness and awareness?*
- c. What impact do you think GEAR UP has made on your child? On the families of students in this school/district? Do you think the implementation has had any effects on the community and their involvement in postsecondary education-related initiatives?*

15. What final thoughts do you have about GEAR UP and how it can help you and your child?

Thank you for your thoughtful participation and spending time to discuss with us.

D.14. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: Teacher Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *GEAR UP is a federally funded strategy to promote college awareness and academic achievement in high-need middle and high schools across the country. In support of that goal, GEAR UP also supports school-wide improvements and professional development that can help current and future students. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals and the impact of the program. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. Note that there are no right and wrong answers to the questions in this session, and that the goal is for all participants to contribute to the discussion. We expect this focus group will take approximately 50–55 minutes.*
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) participation is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Evaluation team members will have access to the recording, and the Texas Education Agency will only have access to a de-identified written transcript. If at least one person chooses not to have the focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes or the transcript.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and complete the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?*
- Note to facilitator: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Reserve 5 minutes to discuss focus group purpose and obtain signatures.*
- Each focus group should have no more than 10 participants. *The focus group is open to any teacher at the school who was a teacher of a GEAR UP student in the 2014–15, 2015–16, 2016–17, or 2017–18 school years. We anticipate 2-3 teacher focus groups per school to accommodate teacher schedules and minimize classroom disruptions. Teachers of students in the target grade are the primary focus for participation. Groupings might include one for content area teachers and one for teachers in non-tested subjects, although the group can be mixed. If appropriate given GEAR UP planning at the school, a focus group may be held with a vertical team of teachers. (NOTE: Facilitator will be trained to probe/check for differences in group particularly when group is mixed.)*

Materials

- Name tag (first names only), pen for each participant
- Paper (to write down their thoughts)
- Chart paper and markers to be used by facilitator
- Digital Voice Recorder

1. Please tell me your first name, how long you have been working at this school, and how long you have been a teacher.

- a. *What grade(s)/subjects do you primarily teach? (Facilitator: Note # of core content teachers – math, science, English, social studies, # teach AP/ dual credit courses.)*
- b. *Have you participated in one of our focus groups previously? (Ask in particular if session includes teachers of GEAR UP students from 2016–17.)*

2. Have you heard of GEAR UP before today? What do you know about it, about GEAR UP goals? (Have the GEAR UP goal sheet to share.)

If little or no knowledge at all, provide brief description of program (2 min.). If knowledge, probe using these questions:

- a. *How ready do you feel that students and families are for reaching the goals of GEAR UP (to succeed in schools and be college ready)? How might you have answered the question in previous years? What do you perceive to be the major challenges with regard to the students and families you serve in reaching goals of the program? (Probe for student support services, and student/family activities/events.)*
- b. *Many of the Grade 12 students have been participating in GEAR UP for the past five years. Given what you know about the goals, have you noticed any differences in this year's Grade 12 students compared to Grade 12 students in previous years?*
- c. *To what extent, if any, have you interacted with the GEAR UP team in your district/school (Coordinator, College Preparation Advisor(s), IPSI Educator Outreach Coach, family liaison, data clerk) and/or other GEAR UP staff members? What kind of information does this person/people provide? What expectations do you have of GEAR UP staff in helping the school/district meet these college readiness goals?*
- d. *If any Grades 9, 10, and 11 teachers: in what ways, if any, do you continue to interact with GEAR UP staff this year as you work with Grades 9, 10, and 11 students who are not the primary recipients of the program, but rather, may benefit from sustained GEAR UP strategies?*

3. To your knowledge, have you participated in any GEAR UP-sponsored professional development over the past five years? What about during summer 2017? So far during this school year? Do you have plans to participate in any GEAR UP-sponsored professional development later this year?

- a. *If Yes, what programs/workshops/events do you recall? (Probe for participation in pre-AP/AP training, increasing academic rigor in general, differentiation strategies, vertical alignment, college admission requirements, project-based learning, professional learning communities, and data-driven instruction offered by GEAR UP and financial literacy curriculum PD provided by TG. Ask them to recall details on the sessions including length of training and delivery format.)*
- b. *If No, were you invited to participate? If yes, why did you not participate? (Probe for scheduling conflicts, inability for others to cover classes, status as non-core content teacher, other factors. Also probe for recent non-GEAR UP funded PD to better understand PD goals for the school.)*
- c. *What do you know about GEAR UP goals of teacher professional development (PD)? If little or no knowledge of professional development goals, provide brief description of PD and vertical alignment goals (from local APR data) (3 min.)*

- 4. For teachers who participated in GEAR UP-sponsored professional development, when did you participate (last year, this past summer, this year) and what did you think of the PD? To what extent has it been pertinent to your work?**
- Were any of the PD sessions particularly successful (i.e., you would recommend that new teachers take the same PD)? Why/why not? Why were some sessions less successful and how might you improve less successful sessions? [Probe for successes/issues with delivery, make up of group, content, timing, etc. Probe for any that participated in prior year that continue to be of value (sustainability).]*
 - What strategies have you taken away from these PD sessions? (List on chart paper if available.) Did you incorporate them into your instruction? If yes, how? If no, why not? (Probe again for differentiated instruction, project based learning, improving academic rigor if appropriate.)*
 - One of the goals of TX GEAR UP SG is that teachers and counselors will complete training on the college admissions and financial aid process. Have you participated in any trainings or PD events related to these topics? If yes, how many trainings have you attended so far? Did the training(s) provide you with enough information? What specific topics were addressed in the trainings? How have you applied what you learned in these trainings to your work with students (both individually and with a group in a classroom setting)?*
 - For those receiving PD through TG, have you utilized any of these financial literacy curriculum materials? If so, what is your perception of these materials and their usefulness in the classroom?*
 - Are there factors at school that have helped you implement strategies/content learned at PD? Were there barriers that prevented you from using the PD? How did you overcome these barriers? Will you be able to sustain implementation in the future or might additional training be needed? (Probe for areas of agreement/disagreement and differences based on subjects taught.)*
 - Have you worked with the IPSI Educator Outreach Coach last school year or this school year? How have you found working with the coach? What strategies from the coach have you been able to implement in your classes? What barriers exist that prevent you from implementing other strategies? In what ways has the coach's work and support of PD been helpful to you? What, if anything, might be helpful to you with respect to having a coach?*
 - Do you feel that the PD you have received helps you service a wide-range of students (such as ELL students)?*
- 5. This GEAR UP grant has a performance measure that schools will participate in vertical alignment trainings and meetings. In vertical alignment, teachers across different grades work together to promote student transition and curriculum alignment. This includes alignment with middle school teachers/curriculum as well as across high school grade levels. What can you tell us about vertical alignment activities at your school? (NOTE: If a vertical alignment team is identified for their own focus group, this group will focus on a deeper discussion related to this item.)**
- To your knowledge what activities occurred at your school focused on facilitating vertical alignment in the past five years? Going on now? If not, why do you think this is? Are there plans to begin working on vertical alignment? (Probe for vertical alignment across high school grades as well as between the middle and high school level. Probe for distinction between training and implementation of vertical alignment.)*
 - Have you participated in vertical alignment activities in the past five years? (If yes, probe for number of days engaged in vertical alignment preparation/implementation, extent of involvement and topics covered, frequency of meetings, composition of the vertical team.*

- Ask teachers their perceptions of vertical alignment activities and future plans for their vertical team. Probe to see whether they know if activities are GEAR UP-funded. If No, probe for reasons for not participating (time, scheduling, teaching non-core content area).]*
- c. *What are your perceptions of the value of vertical alignment? How will it contribute to student academic achievement and college readiness? (Probe for the role of vertical alignment in helping prepare teachers and students to handle the transition of students from middle to high school.)*
 - d. *How successful has your school been at integrating strategies across grade levels to improve academic rigor (i.e., how challenging the course is to students)? To increase the number of advanced courses offered by the schools? (Probe for future oriented planning around graduating college ready (distinguished/endorsements), college entrance requirement knowledge, financial aid knowledge, 18 hours of college credit by graduation). Discuss any facilitators and barriers to vertical alignment with regard to each issue.*
- 6. Looking to the future, what other professional development subjects or workshops would be most helpful to you in supporting student achievement and/or supporting students/families to be ready for college? (Facilitator list and group responses on chart paper if available.) (Probe for college admissions and financial aid training.)**
- a. *Do you see a need to have any PD that builds on PD you participated in so far?*
 - b. *If not already clear, what PD might teachers new to the school need to participate in to be ready to support GEAR UP goals?*
 - c. *Are there any ways that GEAR UP has influenced your practice outside of specific PD? If so, do you think you will continue those practices going forward?*
 - d. *Is there any additional PD that you would like to have to help you make your students more college ready?*
- 7. GEAR UP seeks to improve the readiness of students to succeed in rigorous high school courses (e.g., advanced courses, college credit courses), successfully pass any AP exam(s) and, later, attend college. How are students preparing to take their AP exam(s) next semester?**
- a. *Overall, how prepared do you believe students are for enrolling in advanced courses at your school? What has helped facilitate this preparedness? What do you think could make them better prepared? How do you help students who may struggle in advanced courses? What resources do you refer them to for additional help?*
 - b. *Overall, how challenging would you say courses are for students at your school? To what extent do they/don't they challenge students at a level that will prepare them for college? Are there some students who consistently receive content in a manner that is not challenging enough (e.g., ELL students)? (Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 teacher probe: Have you had to adjust how to challenge Grades 9, 10, or 11 students this year relative to last year's GEAR UP cohort?)*
 - c. *One specific goal is to increase the number of advanced courses offered and to increase enrollment in advanced courses. Have you met with colleagues, the GEAR UP coordinator, or the College Preparation Advisor about this goal? (Probe for understanding the role of these staff as compared to teachers and for being introduced to resources (Graduation Toolkit). Probe for use of GEAR UP website, and if using how.) What steps might you suggest to help the school to succeed at these goals? To what extent do you think you might sustain this goal beyond the GEAR UP cohort of students? (Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 Probe: How does the enrollment in advanced courses and the number of advanced course sections in the past two*

- years compare to the numbers when the GEAR UP cohort was in these grades? Have the numbers remained the same? Increased? Decreased?)*
- d. *Are you aware of any cases in which students who could have been successful in advanced courses, but were not enrolled in them? If yes, why were they not enrolled in the advanced courses? What role, if any, did you play in the decision?*
 - e. *Discuss any facilitators or barriers to improving academic rigor at your school (e.g., teacher enthusiasm/resistance, student skill levels). (Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 sustainability probe have there been any changes since last year or the year before when you worked with GEAR UP cohort?) How/to what extent have PD opportunities supported you as a teacher in improving rigor? (NOTE: this may have already been addressed in earlier responses.)*
 - f. *To what extent do you believe that any increases in academic rigor will be able to be sustained over time? What factors might influence sustainability? For Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 teachers, in what ways, if any, have you continued instructional practices or student support services that you offered to GEAR UP students last year to the current cohort of Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 students?*
 - g. *For math teachers, how would you assess the school's effort to prepare more Grade 12 students to enroll and succeed in advanced/AP math courses? What successes or challenges have you found with Grade 12 students so far this school year?*
 - h. *Overall, to what extent would you say that your students are academically prepared for college? What about their knowledge of college requirements?*
- 8. What has been your role with helping students understand the requirements/options for their chosen endorsement path and Foundation High School Program (graduation plan) more generally?**
- a. *How prepared do you feel to help students on these? How successful have students been at meeting endorsement requirements?*
 - b. *What about helping students graduate with a distinguished level of achievement? [If mathematics teacher: Algebra II is one of the requirements for distinguished level of achievement. When did the majority of the cohort take Algebra II? (Probe Grade 10 or Grade 11? Are many cohort students taking Algebra II this year?) If Grade 10: How prepared is the current group of Grade 10 students to complete Algebra II at a college ready level? How does the current group compare to the GEAR UP cohort when they were in Grade 10? If Grade 11: How prepared is the current group Grade 11 students to complete Algebra II at a college ready level? How does the current group compare to the GEAR UP cohort?*
 - c. *What has been your role with helping students graduate with an endorsement(s) or with a distinguished level of achievement?*
- 9. One of the goals of TX GEAR UP SG is that by the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit. Based on your knowledge as a teacher, do you feel that this goal is attainable?**
- a. *Is the GEAR UP cohort meeting this goal either through AP exams or dual-credit? Is this similar to previous years? Why or why not?*
 - b. *What impact did GEAR UP have on students' decision to pursue college credit before graduation? Different from previous years? What support provided by GEAR UP helped students complete AP courses successfully?*
 - c. *Are you aware of the likeliness of colleges accepting college credit earned through AP courses? (Probe based on college, subject of AP class, AP exam scoring, etc.)*

10. In what other GEAR UP activities/events have you been involved (outside of PD and vertical alignment) this past summer or so far this school year?

- a. *What are your perceptions of these activities/events? (Probe for involvement in student activities, college visits, parent/family events, etc.)*
- b. *How have these activities/events, as well as any other GEAR UP activities/events affected the college going culture of this school?*

11. How involved/knowledgeable are you about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events? [Probe for GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com), Texas Gateway and TEA's iTunes U page, GEAR UP activities/events (e.g., GEAR UP conference)]

- a. *What statewide activities/events have you participated in this school year?*
- b. *Did you utilize statewide resources this school year? If yes, how did you use them? If not, why not? Did you find them useful? Why or why not?*
- c. *What facilitators and barriers are there to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events?*
- d. *To what extent do you use these resources with students in other grades other than the GEAR UP (current grade)?*

12. Is there anything else you would like to share related to GEAR UP and GEAR UP goals at this school?

That concludes the focus group. Thanks so much for your ideas and your time.

D.15. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Teacher Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *GEAR UP is a federally funded strategy to promote college awareness and academic achievement in high-need middle and high schools across the country. In support of that goal, GEAR UP also supports school-wide improvements and professional development that can help current and future students. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals and the impact of the program. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. Note that there are no right and wrong answers to the questions in this session, and that the goal is for all participants to contribute to the discussion. We expect this focus group will take approximately 50–55 minutes.*
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) participation is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Evaluation team members will have access to the recording, and the Texas Education Agency will only have access to a de-identified written transcript. If at least one person chooses not to have the focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes or the transcript.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and complete the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?*
- Note to facilitator: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Reserve 5 minutes to discuss focus group purpose and obtain signatures.*
- Each focus group should have no more than 10 participants. *The focus group is open to any teacher at the school who was a teacher of a GEAR UP student in the 2017–18 school year. We anticipate only one teacher focus group per school to accommodate teacher schedules and minimize classroom disruptions. Teachers of students in the target grade are the primary focus for participation. Groupings might include one for content area teachers and one for teachers in non-tested subjects, although the group can be mixed. If appropriate given GEAR UP planning at the school, a focus group may be held with a vertical team of teachers. (NOTE: Facilitator will be trained to probe/check for differences in group particularly when group is mixed.)*

Materials

- Name tag (first names only), pen for each participant
- Paper (to write down their thoughts)
- Chart paper and markers to be used by facilitator

- Digital Voice Recorder

1. Please tell me your first name, how long you have been working at this school, and how long you have been a teacher (3 min).

- What grade(s)/subjects do you primarily teach? (Facilitator: Note # of core content teachers – math, science, English, social studies, # teach AP courses/dual credit courses.)*
- Have you participated in one of our focus groups previously? (Ask in particular if session includes teachers of GEAR UP students from 2016–17.) Note: Teachers who participated in fall do not need to be asked probes regarding prior years or summer 2017, focus will be on since fall site visit.*

2. Have you heard of GEAR UP before today? When did you first hear about GEAR UP and what it might mean to you as a teacher? What do you know about it, about GEAR UP goals? (5-8 min.) (Have the GEAR UP goal sheet to share.)

If little or no knowledge at all, provide brief description of program (2 min.).

If knowledge, probe using these questions:

- At this point, how ready do you feel that students and families are for reaching the goals of GEAR UP (to succeed in high school and be college ready)? Tell us how you might have answered the question in previous years? What do you perceive to be the major challenges with regard to the students and families you serve in reaching goals of the program? (Probe for student support services, and student/family activities/events.)*
- Many of the Grade 12 students have been participating in GEAR UP for the past six years. Given what you know about the goals, have you noticed any differences in this year's Grade 12 students compared to Grade 12 students in previous years?*
- To what extent, if any, have you interacted with the GEAR UP team in your district/school (Coordinator, College Preparation Advisor(s), IPSI Educator Outreach Coach, family liaison, data clerk) and/or other GEAR UP staff members? What kind of information does this person/people provide? What expectations do you have of GEAR UP staff in helping the school/district meet these college readiness goals?*
- If any Grades 9, 10, and 11 teachers: in what ways, if any, do you continue to interact with GEAR UP staff this year as you work with Grades 9, 10, and 11 students who are not the primary recipients of the program, but rather, may benefit from sustained GEAR UP strategies?*
- What are your overall thoughts on how GEAR UP has been implemented at your school? Do you think it has impacted the college-going culture at your school? Has it impacted the prioritization of academic readiness at your school? Do you think the GEAR UP goals and activities were appropriate for your school, district, and your students? Among the services offered by GEAR UP for teachers, what you would change and what would you keep? Among the services offered by GEAR UP for students, what you would change and what would you keep?*

3. To your knowledge, have you participated in any GEAR UP-sponsored professional development during summer 2017? So far during this school year? For those of you who participated in the fall focus group, have you participated in any GEAR UP-sponsored professional development since we last spoke? (10 min.)

- If yes, what programs/workshops/events do you recall? (Probe for participation in pre-AP/AP training, increasing academic rigor in general, differentiation strategies, vertical alignment, college admission requirements, project-based learning, professional learning communities,*

and data-driven instruction offered by GEAR UP and financial literacy curriculum PD provided by TG. Ask them to recall details on the sessions including length of training and delivery format.)

- b. If no, were you invited to participate? If yes, why did you not participate? (Probe for scheduling conflicts, inability for others to cover classes, status as non-core content teacher, and other factors. Also probe for recent non-GEAR UP funded PD to better understand PD goals for the school.)*
- c. What do you know about GEAR UP goals of teacher professional development (PD)? If little or no knowledge of professional development goals, provide brief description of PD and vertical alignment goals (from local GUIDES data). (3 min.)*

4. For teachers who participated in GEAR UP-sponsored professional development, what did you think of the PD? To what extent has it been pertinent to your work? (8-10 min.)

- a. Were any of the PD sessions particularly successful (i.e., you would recommend that new teachers take the same PD)? Why/why not? Why were some sessions less successful and how might you improve less successful sessions? [Probe for successes/issues with delivery, make up of group, content, timing, etc. Probe for any that participated in prior year that continue to be of value (sustainability).]*
- b. What strategies have you taken away from these PD sessions? (List on chart paper if available.) Did you incorporate them into your instruction? If yes, how? If no, why not? (Probe again for differentiated instruction, project based learning, improving academic rigor if appropriate.)*
- c. One of the goals of TX GEAR UP SG is that teachers and counselors will complete training on the college admissions and financial aid process. Have you participated in any trainings or PD events related to these topics? If yes, how many trainings have you attended so far? Did the training(s) provide you with enough information? What specific topics were addressed in the trainings? How have you applied what you learned in these trainings to your work with students (both individually and with a group in a classroom setting)?*
- d. For those receiving PD through TG, have you utilized any of these financial literacy curriculum materials? If so, what is your perception of these materials and their usefulness in the classroom?*
- e. Are there factors at school that have helped you implement strategies/content learned at PD? Were there barriers that prevented you from using the PD or resources obtained through PD? How did you overcome these barriers? Will you be able to sustain implementation in the future or might additional training be needed? (Probe for areas of agreement/disagreement and differences based on subjects taught.)*
- f. Have you worked with the IPSI Educator Outreach Coach last school year or this school year? How have you found working with the coach? What strategies from the coach have you been able to implement in your classes? What barriers exist that prevent you from implementing other strategies? In what ways has the coach's work and support of PD been helpful to you? What, if anything, might be helpful to you with respect to having a coach?*
- g. Do you feel that the PD you have received helps you service a wide-range of students (such as ELL students)?*

5. This GEAR UP grant has a performance measure that schools will participate in vertical alignment trainings and meetings. In vertical alignment, teachers across different grades work together to promote student transition and curriculum alignment. This includes alignment with middle school teachers/curriculum as well as across high school grade levels. What can you tell us about vertical

alignment activities at your school? (NOTE: If a vertical alignment team is identified for their own focus group, this group will focus on a deeper discussion related to this item.)

- a. *To your knowledge what activities occurred at your school focused on facilitating vertical alignment in the past six years? Going on now? If not, why do you think this is? Are there plans to begin working on vertical alignment or sustain any vertical alignment activities initiated or enhanced in the past six years? (Probe for vertical alignment across high school grades as well as between the middle and high school level. Probe for distinction between training and implementation of vertical alignment.)*
 - b. *Have you participated in vertical alignment activities in the past six years? (If yes, probe for number of days engaged in vertical alignment preparation/implementation, extent of involvement and topics covered, frequency of meetings, composition of the vertical team. Ask teachers their perceptions of vertical alignment activities and future plans for their vertical team. Probe to see whether they know if activities are GEAR UP-funded. If No, probe for reasons for not participating (time, scheduling, teaching non-core content area).]*
 - c. *What are your perceptions of the value of vertical alignment? How will it contribute to student academic achievement and college readiness? (Probe for the role of vertical alignment in helping prepare teachers and students to handle the transition of students from middle to high school.)*
 - d. *How successful has your school been at integrating strategies across grade levels to improve academic rigor (i.e., how challenging the course is to students)? To increase the number of advanced courses offered by the schools? (Probe for future oriented planning around graduating college ready (distinguished/endorsements), college entrance requirement knowledge, financial aid knowledge, 18 hours of college credit by graduation). Discuss any facilitators and barriers to vertical alignment with regard to each issue.*
- 6. Looking to the future, what other professional development subjects or workshops would be most helpful to you in supporting student achievement and/or supporting students/families to be ready for college? (5 min.) (Facilitator list and group responses on Chart Paper if available.) (Probe for college admissions and financial aid training.)**
- a. *Do you see a need to have any PD that builds on PD you participated in so far?*
 - b. *If not already clear, what PD might teachers new to the school need to participate in to be ready to support GEAR UP goals?*
 - c. *Are there any ways that GEAR UP has influenced your practice outside of specific PD? If so, do you think you will continue those practices going forward?*
 - d. *Is there any additional PD that you would like to have to help you make your students more college ready?*
 - e. *Has there been any PD funded or provided by GEAR UP that you would like for your school/district to continue to offer?*
- 7. GEAR UP seeks to improve the readiness of students to succeed in rigorous high school courses (e.g., advanced courses, college credit courses), successfully pass any AP exam(s) and, later, attend college. How are students preparing to take their AP exam(s) this semester?**
- a. *Overall, how prepared do you believe students are for enrolling in advanced courses at your school? What has helped facilitate this preparedness? What do you think could make them better prepared? How do you help students who may struggle in advanced courses? What resources do you refer them to for additional help?*

- b. Overall, how challenging would you say courses are for students at your school? For students in your classes? To what extent do they/don't they challenge students at a level that will prepare them for college? Are there some students who consistently receive content in a manner that is not challenging enough (e.g., ELL students)? (Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 teacher probe: Have you had to adjust how to challenge Grades 9, 10, or 11 students this year relative to last year's GEAR UP cohort?)*
- c. One specific goal is to increase the number of advanced courses offered and to increase enrollment in advanced courses. This includes AP courses and dual credit courses more broadly. Have you met with colleagues, the GEAR UP coordinator, or the College Preparation Advisor about this goal? (Probe for understanding the role of these staff as compared to teachers and for being introduced to resources [Graduation Toolkit]. Probe for use of GEAR UP website, and if using how.) What steps might you suggest to help the school to succeed at these goals? To what extent do you think you might sustain this goal beyond the GEAR UP cohort of students? (Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 Probe: How does the enrollment in advanced courses and the number of advanced course sections in the past two years compare to the numbers when the GEAR UP cohort was in these grades? Have the numbers remained the same? Increased? Decreased?)*
- d. Are you aware of any cases in which students who could have been successful in advanced courses, but were not enrolled in them? If yes, why were they not enrolled in the advanced courses? What role, if any, did you play in the decision?*
- e. Discuss any facilitators or barriers to improving academic rigor at your school (e.g., teacher enthusiasm/resistance, student skill levels, student motivation). (Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 sustainability probe: have there been any changes since when you worked with the GEAR UP cohort?) How/to what extent have PD opportunities supported you as a teacher in improving rigor? (NOTE: this may have already been addressed in earlier responses.) How motivated do you find the GEAR UP students to be in comparison to other cohorts of students? How motivated are GEAR UP students to take advanced courses and to get ready for college?*
- f. What steps do you take when students are struggling in classes to help them get needed supports to be more successful? How aware are you of supports for students and how to connect students with needed supports? What GEAR UP supports, specifically, are you aware of? Would you recommend them to students? Why or why not? Do students seem motivated to seek these supports (GEAR UP or non-GEAR UP)? Who else (such as parents, peers, GEAR UP staff, and school staff) encourages students to seek academic supports?*
- g. To what extent do you believe that any increases in academic rigor will be able to be sustained over time? What factors might influence sustainability? For Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 teachers, in what ways, if any, have you continued instructional practices or student support services that you offered to GEAR UP students last year to the current cohort of Grades 9, 10, and/or 11 students?*
- h. For math teachers, how would you assess the school's effort to prepare more Grade 12 students to enroll and succeed in advanced/AP math courses? What successes or challenges have you found with Grade 12 students so far this school year?*
- i. Overall, to what extent would you say that your students are academically prepared for college? What about their knowledge of college requirements? Thinking more specifically, how prepared are students in math? In reading?*

- 8. What has been your role with helping students understand the requirements/options for their chosen endorsement path and Foundation High School Program (graduation plan) more generally?**
- How prepared do you feel to help students on these? How successful have students been at meeting endorsement requirements? Are you aware if any of your students have dropped their endorsement completely? If so, do you know why they chose to do so?*
 - What about helping students graduate with a distinguished level of achievement? [If mathematics teacher: Algebra II is one of the requirements for distinguished level of achievement. When did the majority of the cohort take Algebra II? (Probe Grade 10 or Grade 11? Are many cohort students taking Algebra II this year?) If Grade 10: How prepared is the current group of Grade 10 students to complete Algebra II at a college ready level? How does the current group compare to the GEAR UP cohort when they were in Grade 10? If Grade 11: How prepared are the current group Grade 11 students to complete Algebra II at a college ready level? How does the current group compare to the GEAR UP cohort?*
 - What has been your role with helping students graduate with an endorsement(s) or with a distinguished level of achievement?*
 - Are you aware of any current or upcoming supports that are available for GEAR UP students who are not on track to graduate at all? Have you participated in or do you plan to participate in/provide any supports for these students?*
- 9. One of the goals of TX GEAR UP SG is that by the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit. Based on your knowledge as a teacher, do you feel that this goal is attainable?**
- Is the GEAR UP cohort meeting this goal either through AP exams or dual-credit? Is this similar to previous years? Why or why not?*
 - What impact did GEAR UP have on students' decision to pursue college credit before graduation? Different from previous years? What support provided by GEAR UP helped students complete AP courses successfully?*
 - Are you aware of the likeliness of colleges accepting college credit earned through AP courses? (Probe based on college, subject of AP class, AP exam scoring, etc.)*
- 10. In what other GEAR UP activities/events have you been involved (outside of PD and vertical alignment) this past summer or so far this school year?**
- What are your perceptions of these activities/events? (Probe for involvement in student activities, college visits, job site visits/job shadowing, parent/family events, etc.)*
 - How have these activities/events, as well as any other GEAR UP activities/events affected the college going culture of this school?*
 - What other activities or programs (outside of GEAR UP) are promoting a college going culture at your school?*
- 11. How involved/knowledgeable are you about Texas statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events? [Probe for GEAR UP website (www.texasgearup.com), Texas Gateway and TEA's iTunes U page, GEAR UP activities/events (e.g., GEAR UP conference).]**
- What statewide activities/events have you participated in this school year?*
 - Did you utilize statewide resources this school year? If yes, how did you use them? If not, why not? Did you find them useful? Why or why not?*
 - What facilitators and barriers are there to successful participation in/interaction with statewide GEAR UP activities/resources/events?*

d. *To what extent do you use these resources with students in other grades other than the GEAR UP (current grade)?*

12. Is there anything else you would like to share related to GEAR UP and GEAR UP goals at this school?

That concludes the focus group. Thanks so much for your ideas and your time.

D.16. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2017: Community Partner Interview/Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group/interview as representatives of ICF and describe your roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker). If needed, a given community partner can be interviewed individually.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The initial purpose of this focus group/interview is to better understand the role partners play in the GEAR UP program. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this focus group/interview to take approximately 30-40 minutes.*
- Convey to participant(s) our confidentiality policy: *(1) The focus group/interview is voluntary and data collected will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participation at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group/interview.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group/interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. If you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*
- The focus group should have up to 8 participants. The focus group is open to any local partner of a GEAR UP grantee. Ideally at least some partners will have participated in GEAR UP activities/events/services but this is not required for participation in the focus group.
- Note to interviewer/facilitator: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.*

QUESTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us about GEAR UP. First, we would like some background on you and your organization.

1. Conduct introductions. Tell us about your organization(s).

Probe for organizational background and context; role in the community; expertise in education, career services, mentoring, etc.

2. Tell us a little about how your partnership with the school came about and to what extent you work collaboratively as partners. What school officials or other partners have you met with this year regarding GEAR UP? How did you collaborate with these individuals? What are your goals for this partnership?

- a. *Is this a new or ongoing partnership?*
- b. *[If a new partnership] What is your impression so far about how your organization can support the GEAR UP program?*
- c. *What is the frequency/format of contact/meetings? What school or GEAR UP staff do you usually interact/work with?*
- d. *Discuss current status of MOU.*
- e. *Is the level of collaboration appropriate from your perspective (e.g., with the school and/or with other partners)?*
- f. *What factors facilitate successful partnerships/collaborations? What are the barriers, if any, you have faced regarding engaging in a successful partnership? How have/will you overcome them?*
- g. *[If an ongoing partnership] How has your partnership evolved since it first began? How is it different this year?*
- h. *How do the goals and objectives of your organization align with those of GEAR UP? Are you aware of any work/initiatives that GEAR UP does that is duplicative of your organization's work? If yes, how have you worked with GEAR UP to streamline the work? In which other areas do you think your organization and GEAR UP could streamline work?*

3. Please tell us about your role in the GEAR UP program with regard to activities/events/resources. If you were the sponsor or lead of the activity/event/resources please let us know that.

- a. *How are the students you work with identified to receive your services or resources? Do you have a role in identifying those in need of your resources or services?*
- b. *Have you provided support in college preparation and awareness, including financial aid and college application submission?*
- c. *Have you provided supplemental academic assistance (e.g., mentoring/tutoring or other services to students, including summer programs)? (Also probe for: career exploration [job site visits, job shadowing, internships, etc.]; college visits/college shadowing – where and when; college workshops – format and content; parent outreach activities.)*
- d. *If you have not yet been involved in any activities/events/resource implementation – what is your plan to do so?*
- e. *In general, any plans/next steps for involvement in activities/events/resources?*

4. In your view, how successful were these activities/events/resources with regard to supporting the goals of GEAR UP (success in school/college readiness) or other goals of your partnership?

- a. *Impact/Outcomes (e.g., be clear about what the impact was on and to what extent the impact was felt; if appropriate probe for impact relative to cost)*
- b. *[If participant refers to an event] Attendance at an event – did it meet expectations?*
- c. *Support from GEAR UP/school – did it meet expectations/needs?*

- d. *What factors facilitated success? Any barriers and challenges (e.g., scheduling, access to students, etc.)? What might you do differently next time or how did you handle any challenges?*
- 5. Are you aware of statewide Texas GEAR UP activities/events/resources, such as texasgearup.com or the Texas GEAR UP Conference?**
- a. *If Yes: What are you aware of? Have you/will you participate/utilize? What factors are facilitators or barriers to participating/using?*
- b. *If No: What activities/events/resources from the state might you find useful or want to participate in?*
- c. *Are there any resources that you would like to have that would enhance your partnership with GEAR UP that you currently do not have?*
- 6. Based on what you learned in your partnership so far, what would you change in order to help the program be more successful at helping students to succeed in school and prepare for college?**
- a. *Ideas for future workshops/courses*
- b. *Ideas for scheduling/outreach*
- c. *Gaps in services*
- d. *In what ways, if at all, do you anticipate continuing this collaboration after the Texas GEAR UP grant ends?*
- e. *If you previously collaborated with middle school staff, have you continued any collaborations with middle school staff?*
- 7. What factors do you see as facilitating or hindering sustainability?**
- 8. What other final thoughts do you have about GEAR UP that you would like to share?**

Thank you for your time.

D.17. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Community Partner Interview/Focus Group Protocol

Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and/or leaders of the focus group/interview as representatives of ICF and describe your roles in supporting the meeting (i.e., facilitator, note taker). If needed, a given community partner can be interviewed individually.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The initial purpose of this focus group/interview is to better understand the role partners play in the GEAR UP program. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this focus group/interview to take approximately 30-40 minutes.*
- Convey to participant(s) our confidentiality policy: *(1) The focus group/interview is voluntary and data collected will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participation at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group/interview.*
- Ask permission to record the focus group/interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. If you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*
- The focus group should have up to 8 participants. The focus group is open to any local partner of a GEAR UP grantee. Ideally at least some partners will have participated in GEAR UP activities/events/services but this is not required for participation in the focus group.
- Note to interviewer/facilitator: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.*

QUESTIONS

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us about GEAR UP. First, we would like some background on you and your organization.

1. Conduct introductions. Tell us about your organization(s).

Probe for organizational background and context; role in the community; expertise in education, career services, mentoring, etc.

2. Tell us a little about how your partnership with the school came about and to what extent you work collaboratively as partners. What school officials or other partners have you met with this year regarding GEAR UP? How did you collaborate with these individuals? What are your goals for this partnership?

- a. *Is this a new or ongoing partnership?*
- b. *[If a new partnership] What is your impression so far about how your organization can support the GEAR UP program?*
- c. *What is the frequency/format of contact/meetings? What school or GEAR UP staff do you usually interact/work with?*
- d. *Discuss current status of MOU.*
- e. *Is the level of collaboration appropriate from your perspective (e.g., with the school and/or with other partners)?*
- f. *What factors facilitate successful partnerships/collaborations? What are the barriers, if any, you have faced regarding engaging in a successful partnership? How have/will you overcome them?*
- g. *[If an ongoing partnership] How has your partnership evolved since it first began? How is it different this year?*
- h. *How do the goals and objectives of your organization align with those of GEAR UP? Are you aware of any work/initiatives that GEAR UP does that is duplicative of your organization's work? If yes, how have you worked with GEAR UP to streamline the work? In which other areas do you think your organization and GEAR UP could streamline work?*

3. Please tell us about your role in the GEAR UP program with regard to activities/events/resources. If you were the sponsor or lead of the activity/event/resources please let us know that.

- a. *How are the students you work with identified to receive your services or resources? Do you have a role in identifying those in need of your resources or services?*
- b. *Have you provided support in college preparation and awareness, including financial aid and college application submission?*
- c. *Have you provided supplemental academic assistance (e.g., mentoring/tutoring or other services to students, including summer programs)? (Also probe for: career exploration [job site visits, job shadowing, internships, etc.]; college visits/college shadowing – where and when; college workshops – format and content; parent outreach activities.)*
- d. *If you have not yet been involved in any activities/events/resource implementation – what is your plan to do so?*
- e. *In general, any plans/next steps for involvement in activities/events/resources? Probe specifically for summer activities if appropriate.*

4. In your view, how successful were these activities/events/resources with regard to supporting the goals of GEAR UP (success in school/college readiness) or other goals of your partnership?

- a. *Impact/Outcomes (e.g., be clear about what the impact was on and to what extent the impact was felt; if appropriate probe for impact relative to cost)*
 - b. *[If participant refers to an event] Attendance at an event – did it meet expectations?*
 - c. *Support from GEAR UP/school – did it meet expectations/needs?*
 - d. *What factors facilitated success? Any barriers and challenges (e.g., scheduling, access to students, etc.)?*
- 5. Are you aware of statewide Texas GEAR UP activities/events/resources, such as texasgearup.com or the Texas GEAR UP Conference?**
 - a. *If Yes: What are you aware of? Have you/will you participate/utilize? What factors are facilitators or barriers to participating/using?*
 - b. *If No: What activities/events/resources from the state might you find useful or want to participate in?*
 - c. *Are there any resources that you would like to have that would enhance your partnership with GEAR UP that you currently do not have?*
- 6. Based on what you learned in your partnership so far, what would you change in order to help the program be more successful at helping students to succeed in school and prepare for college?**
 - a. *Ideas for future workshops/courses*
 - b. *Ideas for scheduling/outreach*
 - c. *Gaps in services*
 - d. *If you previously collaborated with middle school staff, have you continued any collaborations with middle school staff?*
- 7. Have you been involved in planning for GEAR UP activities or strategies for Year 7?**
 - a. *Do you know what your role in implementation will be next year? If yes, how will you be involved? Who will you be working with to conduct the activities for next year?*
 - b. *Have you worked with any school or district staff to plan for any implementation efforts to take place at the schools or district next school year? What challenges regarding sustainability have you helped staff address? Do you anticipate providing any support for sustainability between now and the beginning of the next school year?*
- 8. Will you or your organization work with the students/schools/district next year?**
 - a. *What activities or strategies are you or your organization considering sustaining next year that was implemented by GEAR UP?*
 - b. *What factors do you see as facilitating or hindering sustainability?*
 - c. *What activities or strategies implemented by GEAR UP will you not be implementing in the future? Why?*
 - d. *Will any aspects of your programming be affected next year without the GEAR UP grant and staff? Do you have plans in place to address those changes?*
 - e. *If your organization will be working with students/ schools/ districts next year, what might you do differently?*
- 9. What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you feel it has been in the district?**
 - a. *Do you feel that GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not? What barriers and facilitators were in place that affect this outcome?*

- b. Do you think GEAR UP has made an impact on the school and district administrations' approach or thoughts towards postsecondary education readiness and awareness?*
- c. What impact do you think GEAR UP has made on the families of students in this district? Do you think the implementation has had any effects on the community and their involvement in postsecondary education-related initiatives?*

10. What other final thoughts do you have about GEAR UP that you would like to share?

Thank you for your time.

D.18. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: Texas Education Agency Interview

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges in implementing GEAR UP. As an independent, external evaluator, ICF is seeking input that will help in describing the program and the vision for GEAR UP held by TEA. We expect this interview will last 45-60 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *You will indicate your consent to participate by answering the questions.*

Note to interviewer: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.*

Interview Questions

Where appropriate describe anything that has changed over the time since you have been in this role when responding to questions.

1. **Please briefly describe any changes in your role at TEA more broadly and then specifically with Texas GEAR UP this year.**
 - a. *Is your workload solely on GEAR UP or is your time also allocated to other projects?*
2. **First, I'd like to talk about your role in working with GEAR UP schools, districts, and collaborators. What is the extent of your GEAR UP role in working with district grantees?**
 - a. *What types of supports/services do you provide? How is the support you provide similar or different across sites?*
 - b. *What portion of your work is devoted to districts? Schools? Is your time evenly distributed among the schools and districts?*
 - c. *How would you describe the level of buy-in from district leadership? Teachers? Administrators? Students? Parents? What, if anything, has your role been in influencing buy-in with each of these people?*

- d. *How frequently do you interact with district grantees? Schools? IPSI? Collaborators? Who initiates that contact? In what ways do you interact with each of these groups? In what ways, if any, are there differences in those interactions with high schools?*
- e. *How do you interact with GEAR UP staff who are in the districts/schools (e.g., College Preparation Advisors, Texas GEAR UP Coordinators, parent liaisons, data clerks, etc.)? What is the necessary skill set for staff in these positions? To what extent are those skills evident in the current staff? How do you see each role contributing or not to helping Texas GEAR UP SG to succeed?*
- f. *What factors facilitate your relationship with GEAR UP grantees? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*
- g. *What Support Center staff do you interact with most often? What changes, if any, would you make in your interaction with them? Any additional staff you would like to interact with more frequently or differently?*

3. How would you describe implementation of the program within schools/districts this year?

- a. *What do you consider to be some of the primary implementation successes? Implementation challenges? How do you see your organization's role contributing or not to helping Texas GEAR UP SG to succeed?*
- b. *To what extent are district grantees and collaborators adhering to their action plans as they implement GEAR UP? What is the process for modification if it is necessary?*
- c. *How is TEA assessing progress by grantees on goals? Is GUIDES the only format or are you assessing/tracking progress in other ways? How satisfied is TEA with grantee progress on short-term goals to date (e.g., student support services, promotion, knowledge about college enrollment and financing college, academic rigor, ACT/SAT, TSIA)? How satisfied is TEA with grantee progress toward long term goals to date (e.g., graduating on Foundation High School Plan with an endorsement or with Distinguished Level of Achievement, pre-AP/AP course offerings/course taking, opportunities to complete college credit, college application and enrollment)? Any key successes or challenges to date? To what extent does the GUIDES system continue to be a useful tool for progress monitoring?*
- d. *How are you kept up to date regarding GEAR UP implementation within schools? What role, if any, does TEA have in the design of professional development, student and parent workshops or services this year? How satisfied are you with this role? What changes would you make regarding TEA's role in the design of these activities?*
- e. *To what extent does GEAR UP address service gaps at the district level? School level? Are there any gaps that you feel GEAR UP has not yet been able to successfully address?*
- f. *Based on GUIDES data and what you know through other sources, how satisfied are you with events to involve students? Parents? Teachers? Are there any specific GEAR UP-funded activities that have impressed staff at TEA? Disappointed staff at TEA?*
- g. *What factors have facilitated GEAR UP implementation this year? What factors have hindered GEAR UP implementation this year? How have you addressed these challenges? What challenges are ongoing? What unexpected issues have you encountered?*
- h. *Are there any additional GEAR UP activities or events you would like to see schools engaging in?*

4. With regard to Texas GEAR UP, who are the key players that you have worked with regularly this year and in what ways did you engage with them? (NOTE: This may include non-formal collaborators.)

- a. *Who are the major (non-school) Texas GEAR UP collaborators this year? [probe for Trellis (formerly TG), AMS, Raise Achievement, Focus Training, Signal Vine, and GeoForce] What roles do / will they play in program implementation? Do they have a formal relationship with TEA or the IPSI Support Center? Are there particular collaborators you work closely with? Who? How? Has this changed from previous years? If IPSI is primary, how does IPSI keep you up to date on the work of the other collaborators?*
- b. *In what ways do you/IPSI Support Center involve collaborators in GEAR UP activities? Has this changed from previous years? This may include involvement with grantees and/or with the statewide initiatives? Any collaborators you would like to see more/less involved?*
- c. *What factors facilitate your relationship with GEAR UP collaborators this year? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*
- d. *To what extent have districts continued to work with the College Board by procuring services directly this year? How are you updated on this type of work? Are there any program gaps you'd like to see filled by a collaborator? Are you currently seeking any organization(s) to fill that gap?*

5. How would you describe the current status of the statewide initiative?

- a. *What has been the primary focus of the statewide initiative this year? Is the focus shifting at all for the upcoming year, given that it will be the final year of the grant?*
- b. *How much progress has been made? How satisfied are you with the progress?*
- c. *Are there any new/revised topics that have been made available relevant to college readiness on the website? Are there any new topics relevant to college readiness not yet available that you would really like to see be part of the statewide initiative? What are plans/next steps to make progress? (NOTE: Be sure to document any progress in particular anything that parents or students might be aware of.)*
- d. *What components of the statewide initiative have been rolled out so far this year? How? To who? Which of these components are new this year? How? To who? What steps, if any, has been taken to communicate to schools and families about information/resources available through the statewide initiative this year? If not, what are plans/next steps to make progress towards statewide initiative roll out?*
- e. *Have any new GEAR UP professional learning opportunities been made available to educators (e.g., Project Share Gateway, face-to-face) this year? How are such opportunities communicated statewide?*
- f. *If opportunities are available, how many educators, including those not at current GEAR UP campuses, are participating in such opportunities and what are some of the opportunities this year? Any challenges in tracking participation statewide? Plans to overcome those challenges? If opportunities are not yet available, what are plans/next steps to make progress on making these available? Are there any additional opportunities you would like to offer?*
- g. *What factors facilitate working on the GEAR UP statewide initiative this year? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*

6. Can you describe what you know so far about implementation for Year 7? What will it look like?

- a. *Who will play a role in implementation?*
- b. *How much has already been planned out? What decisions are left to be made?*
- c. *What would you like for implementation to include?*

d. How has planning for Year 7 implementation been different from previous years?

7. What role, if any, will TEA play in the sustainability of GEAR UP strategies across the state, districts, and schools?

- a. What strategies do you think will be important to sustain? Are there any strategies that should not be sustained? Why?*
- b. What support, if any, will TEA provide to districts to help them sustain GEAR UP strategies? Who should play a role in the sustainability?*

8. Anything else you would like us to know? Anything that would be important in our describing Texas GEAR UP?

This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

D.19. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: IPSI Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges in implementing GEAR UP. As an independent, external evaluator, ICF is seeking input that will help in describing the program and the vision for GEAR UP held by TEA. We expect this interview will last 45-60 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *You will indicate your consent to participate by answering the questions.*

Note to interviewer: *Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.*

Interview Questions

1. **Please briefly describe any changes this year in your role at IPSI more broadly and then specifically with Texas GEAR UP.**
 - a. *What new staff members at IPSI work on GEAR UP since we spoke last year?*
 - b. *What portion of time is devoted to GEAR UP among IPSI staff who work on GEAR UP?*
 - c. *Please describe the changes in IPSI staff who focus on GEAR UP.*
2. **First, I'd like to talk about your role in working with GEAR UP schools, districts, and collaborators. What is the extent of your GEAR UP role in working with district grantees? For each of these where relevant, how has your role been different/stayed the same this year (with students in Grade 12) than in prior years?**
 - a. *What types of supports/services do you and your staff provide? How is the support you and your staff provide similar or different across sites? How has this support changed since last year?*
 - b. *What portion of your staff's and your work is devoted to districts? Schools?*

- c. *How would you and your staff describe the level of buy-in from district leadership? Teachers? School administrators? Students? Parents? What, if anything, has your role been in influencing buy-in with each of these people?*
- d. *How frequently do you and your staff interact with district grantees? Schools? Who initiates that contact? In what ways do you and your staff interact with each of these groups?*
- e. *In what ways, if any, are there differences in those interactions with each high school?*
- f. *How would you describe the level of communication with TEA?*
- g. *How do you and your staff interact with College Preparation Advisors? Specifically, how do you ensure that College Preparation Advisors receive necessary training, feedback, and tools to do their jobs effectively?*
 - i. *What guidance, if any, have you provided College Preparation Advisors regarding how to target students for services (such as FAFSA/financial aid application support, college application support, advising, etc.) this year? Do you feel that the College Preparation Advisors and the people they work with (including GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP staff) have been able to provide all necessary services to each cohort student? Do you have any input in how College Preparation Advisors determine which students receive which services and when?*
- h. *How do you and your staff interact with other GEAR UP staff who are in the districts/schools (e.g., Texas GEAR UP Coordinators, Parent Liaisons, Data Clerks)? What is the necessary skill set for staff in these positions? To what extent are those skills evident in the current staff? Any challenges associated with transitions in staff?*
 - ii. *What feedback have you received from the Educator Outreach Coach regarding her work with school administrators and teachers? Is she satisfied with the way she has been able to work with the schools?*
 - iii. *What feedback have you received from the Family Engagement Trainer about her experiences working with the GEAR UP staff in the districts and the schools? Does she feel satisfied with the level of collaboration she's been able to have?*
- i. *What factors facilitate your relationship with GEAR UP grantees? Have you or your staff faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome them?*

3. How would you describe implementation of the program this year?

- a. *What do you consider to be some of the primary implementation successes? Implementation challenges? How do you see your organization's role contributing or not to helping Texas GEAR UP SG to succeed?*
- b. *To what extent are district grantees and collaborators adhering to their action plans as they continue to implement GEAR UP? What is the process for modification if it is necessary? Have any grantees or collaborators modified their plan this year? In what ways?*
- c. *How do you assess progress by grantees on goals? Is GUIDES/ASPR Progress Report the only format or are you assessing/tracking progress in other ways? If so, how satisfied are you with grantee progress toward long term district goals to date? Are you satisfied with grantee progress toward short term district goals to date? (Goals to probe for include: on-time promotion, student support services, knowledge about college enrollment and financing college, academic rigor, graduating on Foundation High School Plan with an endorsement or with Distinguished Level of Achievement, pre-AP/AP course offerings/course taking, opportunities to complete college credit, college entrance exams [SAT/ACT, TSIA])? To what extent has the GUIDES/ASPR system been a useful tool for progress monitoring?*
- d. *How does your data inform the technical assistance you provide to districts?*

- e. *How are you kept up to date regarding GEAR UP implementation within schools? What role, if any, do you have in the design of professional development, student and parent workshops or services? If any, how satisfied are you with the way you receive this information and your role?*
- f. *To what extent does GEAR UP address service gaps at the district level? School level?*
- g. *Based on ASPR/GUIDES data and what you know through other sources, how satisfied are you with events to involve students? Parents? Teachers? Are there any specific GEAR UP-funded activities that have impressed staff at IPSI? Disappointed staff at IPSI?*
- h. *What factors have facilitated GEAR UP implementation this year? What factors have hindered GEAR UP implementation this year? How have you addressed these challenges? What challenges are ongoing? What unexpected issues have you encountered?*
- i. *Are there any additional GEAR UP activities or events you would like to see schools engaging in?*

4. With regard to Texas GEAR UP, who are the key players that you have worked with regularly this year and in what ways did you engage with them? (NOTE: This may include non-formal collaborators.)

- a. *Who are the major (non-school) Texas GEAR UP collaborators this year? [probe for Trellis (formerly TG), Signal Vine, Focus Training, AMS Pictures, Raise Achievement, and GeoForce] What roles do / will they play in program implementation? Are they formal collaborators or more informal collaborators? Any that you are trying to partner with more formally? Are there particular collaborators you work closely with? Who? How?*
- b. *In what ways do you involve collaborators in GEAR UP activities? Has this changed from previous years? This may include involvement with grantees and/or with the statewide initiatives? Any collaborators you would like to see more/less involved?*
- c. *What factors facilitate your relationship with GEAR UP collaborators this year? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*
- d. *To what extent have districts continued to work with the College Board by procuring services directly? How are you updated on this work?*
- e. *Are there any program gaps you'd like to see filled by a collaborator? Are you currently seeking any other organization(s) to fill that gap?*

5. How would you describe the current status of the statewide initiative?

- a. *What has been the primary focus of the statewide initiative this year? Is the focus shifting at all for the upcoming year, given that it will be the final year of the grant?*
- b. *How much progress has been made? How satisfied are you with the progress?*
- c. *Are there any new/ revised topics that have been made available relevant to college readiness on the website? Are there any new topics relevant to college readiness not yet available on the website that you would really like to see be part of the statewide initiative? What are plans/next steps to make progress? (NOTE: Be sure to document any progress in particular anything that parents or students might be aware of.)*
- d. *What components of the statewide initiative have been rolled out so far this year? How? To whom? Which of these components are new this year? What steps, if any, have been taken to communicate to schools and families about information/resources available through the statewide initiative this year? If not, what are plans/next steps to make progress towards statewide initiative roll out?*

- e. *Have any new GEAR UP professional learning opportunities been made available to educators (e.g., Texas Gateway, face-to-face) this year? How are such opportunities communicated statewide? Any challenges in tracking participation statewide?*
- f. *If opportunities are available, how many educators, including those not at current GEAR UP campuses, are participating in such opportunities and what are some of the opportunities this year? Are there challenges to reaching educators on non-GEAR UP campuses? What plans do you have to overcome those challenges? Are there any additional opportunities you would like to offer? If opportunities are not yet available, what are plans/next steps to make progress on making these available?*
- g. *What factors facilitate working on the GEAR UP statewide initiative this year? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*

6. Can you describe what you know so far about implementation for Year 7? What will it look like?

- a. *Who will play a role in implementation?*
- b. *How much has already been planned out? What decisions are left to be made?*
- c. *What would you like for implementation to include?*
- d. *How has planning for Year 7 implementation been different from previous years?*
- e. *Are there any plans or strategies for addressing potential concerns about “summer melt” this summer before students enroll in postsecondary education in the fall?*
- f. *Have you made any plans or had any discussions for how the statewide services, like the conference and texasgearup.com that you, AMS, and your sub-contractors have developed may be sustained or maintained after this state grant concludes next year? What would you prefer to happen with these services?*

7. Anything else you would like us to know? Anything that would be important in our describing Texas GEAR UP?

This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

D.20. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2018: State Collaborator Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as a collaborator – how your collaboration with TEA came about and what services or input you provide or will provide to the GEAR UP program. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 30-45 minutes.*
- Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data (summary reports may indicate particular organizations by the roles they describe but challenges and successes will be reported confidentially); and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*
- Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording and the transcript, which will name the organization and individuals interviewed. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking detailed notes. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*
- Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *You will indicate your consent to participate by answering the questions.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. ICF will review existing documents such as the original RFP and any in place agreements to guide questions where appropriate.

Interview Questions

1. **In 2-3 sentences, please briefly describe your organization and your role in the organization.**
2. **Please describe your organization's role in supporting TEA/IPSI/AMS Pictures and specifically Texas GEAR UP.**
 - a. *How, if at all, has this relationship changed over time? What changes do you hope to see in this relationship going forward?*
 - b. *How would you describe the level of communication with TEA/IPSI Support Center/AMS Pictures? Who do you usually communicate with? How has this changed from previous years?*

- c. *In what ways, if at all, do you interact with GEAR UP Coordinators, College Preparation Advisors, Parent Liaisons, and/or Data Clerks? How has this changed from previous years?*
- d. *What types of supports/services does your organization provide to TX GEAR UP? How has this changed from previous years?*
- e. *What is the current status of the work? What is your organization's current level of involvement? How actively engaged is your organization? How do you see this changing going forward?*
- f. *Does your organization serve similar roles in other state or local GEAR UP initiatives? Has this changed from previous years?*

3. What, if any, is the extent of your organization's involvement related to statewide GEAR UP initiatives and at each GEAR UP school (in the 4 districts, 6 high schools)?

Statewide Initiative:

- a. *Are you involved in GEAR UP statewide efforts? If so, how?*
- b. *What portion of your organization's work is devoted to supporting the state? Districts? Schools? Students? Parents? GEAR UP staff?*
- c. *How frequently are these services provided? Who initiates/requests these services?*
- d. *How has your involvement changed from previous years?*

School Programs [Note: Only ask if direct services to schools have begun. Some TEA collaborators may not work as directly with schools.]:

- a. *How is the support your organization provides similar/different across sites? Are there specific GEAR UP districts or schools that your organization primarily focuses on? If so, which ones and how was that decided? Who makes that sort of decision?*
- b. *How frequently are these services provided? Who initiates/requests these services?*
- c. *Has your organization's role changed as GEAR UP students progress through high school? How?*
- d. *How has your involvement changed from previous years?*
- e. *What, if any, progress do you see towards short-term and long-term GEAR UP goals (e.g., on-time promotion, student support services, knowledge about college enrollment and financing college, academic rigor, graduating on Foundation High School Plan or with Distinguished Level of Achievement, pre-AP/AP course offerings/course taking, opportunities to complete college credit, SAT/ACT/TSIA)?*
- f. *What progress have you made so far this year in your goals:*
 - i. *AMS: 40% of GEAR UP students using the website by the end of the grant and expand use of resources outside of GEAR UP schools?*
 - ii. *GeoFORCE: Ongoing activities with students who first participated in the program in the summer following Grade 7 (2013); providing science PD for teachers; conduct test preparation and financial aid workshops?*
 - iii. *Focus Training: continue to provide logistical/planning/coordination support for summer camps/ programs/ retreats?*
 - iv. *Signal Vine: continue to work with GEAR UP staff to provide a text messaging platform?*

4. What, if any, are benefits you see in your organization's role as a GEAR UP collaborator?

- a. *What factors (facilitators) have helped the collaboration to succeed this year? Have you faced any barriers to a successful collaboration? If yes, have you been able to overcome the barriers and how? What could make it even better?*

- 5. In what ways, if any, does your organization collaborate with other Texas GEAR UP collaborators?**
- What, if any, formal/informal opportunities are there to interact with other collaborators?*
 - Are there particular collaborators you work closely with? Who? How? Is there any other collaborator that you'd like to work more closely with?*
 - What supports or resources does TEA/IPSI/AMS Pictures provide to you with regard to working with one another? Clarify any facilitators or barriers to collaboration. Are there any additional supports or resources you'd like to have from TEA/IPSI Support Center/AMS Pictures?*
- 6. Do you have an agreement in place (MOU)? To what extent is your organization's current role aligned with the collaboration agreements initially established?**
- If different, why is it different than intended?*
 - What factors have facilitated being able to fulfill this plan? What factors have hindered being able to fulfill this plan? Have you been able to overcome any barriers? To what extent do you anticipate being able to overcome these barriers?*
- 7. Will you be working with GEAR UP in Year 7? Who have you been working with to establish what your role will be? If you will be working with GEAR UP in Year 7, how is planning for the work different than it has been in previous years?**
- What are your goals for the coming year related to GEAR UP?*
 - What challenges have you experienced in planning for implementation next year?*
 - Have you been able to coordinate with everyone you wish to do so with to plan for next year? Who haven't you coordinated with, yet, that you would like to?*
- 8. What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you feel it has been in the districts?**
- Do you feel that GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not? What barriers and facilitators were in place to affect this outcome?*
 - Do you think GEAR UP has made an impact on the school and district administrations' approach or thoughts towards postsecondary education readiness and awareness?*
- 9. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your work with Texas GEAR UP, TEA and/or other collaborators?**

This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

APPENDIX E: Implementation Analyses Technical Detail

E.1. Characteristics of Students Participating in Texas GEAR UP State Grant

Table E.1. Student Demographic Characteristics by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of Students	Hispanic/Latino Students	Limited English Proficient
High School H	321	96.6%	10.0%
High School I	259	97.3%	5.0%
High School J	148	43.9%	0.7%
High School K	413	66.1%	18.2%
High School L	98	49.0%	7.1%
High School M	251	88.0%	4.0%
Total	1490	78.5%	9.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

E.2. Student Support Services: Tutoring

Table E.2. Students Receiving Tutoring in Any Subject and Average Number of Hours Tutored by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year—February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Who Received Tutoring*	Average Hours of Tutoring**
High School H	321	44.5%	2.7
High School I	259	68.0%	3.0
High School J	148	93.9%	6.5
High School K	413	13.6%	2.1
High School L	98	77.6%	5.8
High School M	251	59.4%	18.2
Total	1490	49.6%	6.9

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving tutoring was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 409.3$, $p < 0.001$.

**Average hours of tutoring received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 733) = 80.0$, $p < 0.001$.

Table E.3. Students Receiving Mathematics Tutoring and Average Number of Hours Tutored in Mathematics by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year—February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Who Received Tutoring*	Average Hours of Tutoring**
High School H	321	18.4%	1.9
High School I	259	64.9%	2.1
High School J	148	77.0%	2.6
High School K	413	12.6%	1.5
High School L	98	72.4%	1.5
High School M	251	29.5%	3.3
Total	1490	36.1%	2.2

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving mathematics tutoring was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 403.9$, $p < 0.001$.

**Average hours of tutoring received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 532) = 7.7$, $p < 0.001$.

Table E.4. Students Receiving English Language Arts Tutoring and Average Number of Hours Tutored in English Language Arts by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year—February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Who Received Tutoring*	Average Hours of Tutoring**
High School H	321	34.6%	2.2
High School I	259	52.1%	1.0
High School J	148	77.7%	3.0
High School K	413	5.8%	1.3
High School L	98	72.4%	1.5
High School M	251	42.2%	22.9
Total	1490	37.7%	5.8

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving ELA tutoring was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 356.4$, $p < 0.001$.

**Average hours of tutoring received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 556) = 168.8$, $p < 0.001$.

Table E.5. Students Receiving Science Tutoring and Average Number of Hours Tutored in Science by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year—February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Who Received Tutoring*	Average Hours of Tutoring**
High School H	321	4.7%	1.6
High School I	259	3.5%	1.4
High School J	148	28.4%	1.6
High School K	413	0.2%	9.0
High School L	98	14.3%	16.0
High School M	251	3.2%	3.0
Total	1490	6.0%	4.1

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving science tutoring was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 175.8$, $p < 0.001$.

**Average hours of tutoring received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 83) = 32.7$, $p < 0.001$.

Table E.6. Students Receiving Social Studies Tutoring and Average Number of Hours Tutored in Social Studies, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year–February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Received Tutoring*	Average Hours of Tutoring**
High School H	321	0.6%	5.3
High School I	259	2.3%	5.2
High School J	148	61.5%	2.2
High School K	413	0.0%	-
High School L	98	0.0%	-
High School M	251	4.0%	1.5
Total	1490	7.3%	2.3

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving social studies tutoring was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 715.7, p < 0.001$

**Average hours of tutoring received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(3, 105) = 5.4, p < 0.01$

E.3. Student Support Services: Mentoring

Table E.7. Students Receiving Mentoring and Average Number of Hours Mentored, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year–February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Received Mentoring*	Average Hours of Mentoring**
High School H	321	24.9%	6.3
High School I	259	23.9%	5.4
High School J	148	77.7%	3.7
High School K	413	18.4%	2.8
High School L	98	18.4%	2.3
High School M	251	23.1%	2.3
Total	1490	27.4%	4.0

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving mentoring was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 213.7, p < 0.001$

**Average hours of mentoring received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 403) = 7.7, p < 0.001$.

E.4. Student Support Services: Counseling

Table E.8. Students Receiving Counseling and Average Number of Hours COUNSELED, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year–February 28, 2018)		
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Received Counseling*	Average Hours of Counseling**
High School H	321	92.2%	3.1
High School I	259	94.6%	5.8
High School J	148	99.3%	9.2
High School K	413	90.1%	3.1
High School L	98	98.0%	6.5
High School M	251	94.4%	6.0
Total	1490	93.5%	4.9

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving counseling was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 21.2, p < 0.001$

**Average hours of counseling received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 1,387) = 87.4, p < 0.001$.

Table E.9. Students Who Met with College Preparation Advisors, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Number of Students Who Met with College Preparation Advisors	%*
High School H	321	198	61.7%
High School I	259	200	77.2%
High School J	148	142	95.9%
High School K	413	269	65.1%
High School L	98	96	98.0%
High School M	251	211	84.1%
Total	1490	1116	74.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students who met with college preparation advisors was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 125.3, p < 0.001$.

E.5. Student Support Services: Financial Aid Services

Table E.10. Students Receiving Services Related to Financial Aid and Average Number of Hours Served, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Grade 12 (Start of School Year–February 28, 2018)						
	<i>n</i>	% of Students Received Counseling	Average Hours of Counseling	% of Students Received Mentoring	Average Hours of Mentoring	% of Students Received Counseling/Mentoring Related to Financial Aid*	Average Hours of Counseling/Mentoring Related to Financial Aid**
High School H	321	68.2%	1.7	3.7%	0.9	68.5%	1.7
High School I	259	64.5%	1.9	1.9%	0.6	64.9%	1.9
High School J	148	98.6%	7.3	63.5%	2.6	98.6%	8.9
High School K	413	81.1%	1.8	13.3%	2.9	81.1%	2.3
High School L	98	93.9%	3.7	18.4%	2.3	93.9%	4.1
High School M	251	81.3%	2.7	4.0%	1.2	81.3%	2.8
Total	1490	78.1%	2.8	13.0%	2.4	78.2%	3.2

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students receiving counseling/mentoring services related to financial aid was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 98.4, p < 0.001$.

**Average hours of financial aid services received by students was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 1,159) = 167.8, p < 0.001$.

E.6. Educational Field Trips

Table E.11. Students Participating in At Least One Educational Field Trip, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of GEAR UP Students	Participated in at Least One Educational Field Trip*	No Participation
High School H	321	0.0%	100.0%
High School I	259	0.0%	100.0%
High School J	148	0.0%	100.0%
High School K	413	0.0%	100.0%
High School L	98	0.0%	100.0%
High School M	251	4.0%	96.0%
Overall	1490	0.7%	99.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students participating in an educational field trip was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 49.7, p < 0.001$.

E.7. College Visits

Table E.12. Students Participating in College Visits, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Number of college visits offered	% of students participated in 1 college tour *	% of students participated in 2 college tours	% of students participated in 3 college tours	% of students participated in 4 or more college tours	% of students participated in any college tour (total)
School H	321	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
School I	259	1	45.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	45.6%
School J	148	3	0.0%	0.0%	12.2%	0.0%	12.2%
School K	413	1	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.2%
School L	98	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
School M	251	1	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.4%
Overall	1490	6	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students participating in at least one college tour was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 513.7, p < 0.001$.

E.8. Job Site Visits/Job Shadowing

Table E.13. Students Participating in Job Site Visits and/or Job Shadowing, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Number of Job Site Visits and/or Job Shadowing Offered	% Students Participating in Job Site Visits/Job Shadowing*
School H	321	2	20.2%
School I	259	2	25.5%
School J	148	16	41.2%
School K	413	9	12.3%
School L	98	6	5.1%
School M	251	8	31.1%
Overall	1490	43	21.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students participating in a job site visit and/or job shadowing was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 85.4, p < 0.001$.

E.9. Summer Programs

Table E.14. Students Participating in Summer Student Events, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School		College Tour	Job/ Site Visit	Educational Field Trip	Parent Family Workshop	Student Workshop	Total
High School H	Number of Events	5	1	4	1	31	42
	Average Number of Student Participants	31	3	40	10	27	28
	Total number of Participating Students	62	3	41	10	164	172
	% (n= 352)	17.6%	0.9%	11.6%	2.8%	46.6%	48.9%
High School I	Number of Events	4	0	5	0	22	31
	Average Number of Student Participants	34	-	29	-	23	25
	Total number of Participating Students	54	-	38	-	136	153
	% (n= 330)	16.4%	-	11.5%	-	41.2%	46.4%
High School J	Number of Events	1	0	1	0	19	22
	Average Number of Student Participants	20	-	45	-	64	58
	Total number of Participating Students	20	-	5	-	88	92
	% (n= 182)	11.0%	-	2.7%	-	48.4%	50.5%
High School K	Number of Events	9	4	2	0	13	28
	Average Number of Student Participants	16	23	12	-	26	21
	Total number of Participating Students	70	35	23	-	71	101
	% (n= 456)	15.4%	7.7%	5.0%	-	15.6%	22.1%
High School L	Number of Events	9	3	2	1	11	26
	Average Number of Student Participants	6	6	6	4	10	8
	Total number of Participating Students	19	15	10	4	24	34
	% (n= 110)	17.3%	13.6%	9.1%	3.6%	21.8%	30.9%
High School M	Number of Events	2	0	0	0	66	68
	Average Number of Student Participants	7	-	-	-	17	17
	Total number of Participating Students	14	-	-	-	128	128
	% (n=299)	4.7%	-	-	-	42.8%	42.8%
Total	Number of Events	30	8	14	2	162	217
	Average Number of Student Participants	17	14	27	7	25	24
	Total number of Participating Students	239	53	117	14	611	680
	% (n=1,729)	13.8%	3.1%	6.8%	0.8%	35.3%	39.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Note: Percentages were calculated based on Grade 11 enrollment rates.

E.10. Student Participation in Workshops/Events

Table E.15. Number of Grade 12 Student Events/Workshops, Average Number of Participants, and Average Event Length by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of Events	Average Number of Participants (range)	Average Activity Length (in hours)
High School H	13	32 (5-191)	2.4
High School I	15	68 (3-145)	1.7
High School J	26	10 (2-25)	3.2
High School K	21	36 (1-335)	3.3
High School L	9	4 (1-11)	5.6
High School M	18	24 (1-175)	2.5
Total	102	29 (1-335)	3.0

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through Feb. 28, 2018.

Table E.16. Students Participating in Student Workshops/Events, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of GEAR UP Students	Participated in at Least One Student Event*	No Participation
High School H	321	65.7%	34.3%
High School I	259	84.2%	15.8%
High School J	148	16.9%	83.1%
High School K	413	82.3%	17.7%
High School L	98	15.3%	84.7%
High School M	251	73.7%	26.3%
Overall	1490	66.7%	33.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students participating in a student workshop/event was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 368.6, p < 0.001$.

E.11. Parent and Family Events

Table E.17. Number of Grade 12 Family Events, Average Number of Student Participants, and Average Event Length by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of Events	Average Number of Participants (range)	Average Activity Length (in hours)
High School H	0	-	-
High School I	3	18 (13-27)	2.9
High School J	4	16 (3-25)	1.3
High School K	4	49 (6-89)	2.0
High School L	0	-	-
High School M	0	-	-
Total	11	29 (3-89)	2.1

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Table E.18. Students Participating in Parent and/or Family Workshops/Events, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of GEAR UP Students	Participated At Least One Parent and/or Family Event*	No Participation
High School H	321	0.0%	100.0%
High School I	259	20.5%	79.5%
High School J	148	33.8%	66.2%
High School K	413	24.5%	75.5%
High School L	98	0.0%	100.0%
High School M	251	0.0%	100.0%
Overall	1490	13.7%	86.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students participating in a student workshop/event was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 207.4, p < 0.001$.

Table E.19. Parent Participation in Events/Workshops, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of GEAR UP Students	No Participation	Participated in One to Two Parent Events	Participated in at Least 3 Parent Events
High School H	321	84.1%	4.7%	11.2%
High School I	259	59.1%	25.5%	15.4%
High School J	148	22.3%	53.4%	24.3%
High School K	413	68.5%	23.5%	8.0%
High School L	98	84.7%	14.3%	1.0%
High School M	251	50.2%	31.9%	17.9%
Overall	1490	63.6%	23.6%	12.8%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Table E.20. Parent Participation in Counseling/Mentoring, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of GEAR UP Students	No Participation	% Received Counseling/Advising	% Received Mentoring
High School H	321	46.4%	53.6%	0.3%
High School I	259	46.3%	53.7%	0.8%
High School J	148	10.1%	89.9%	1.4%
High School K	413	48.9%	51.1%	0.2%
High School L	98	21.4%	78.6%	0.0%
High School M	251	46.6%	53.4%	0.0%
Overall	1490	41.9%	58.1%	0.4%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

E.12. Professional Development Events

Table E.21. Number of PD Events Available to Texas GEAR UP SG Teachers, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)^a

School	Differentiated Instruction	Advanced Instructional Strategies	PBL	Vertical Teaming	Financial Literacy	GEAR UP Specific	Total PD Events
High School H	21	0	0	0	1	21	24
High School I	19	1	1	0	2	19	22
High School J	0	0	1	1	2	0	5
High School K	3	3	3	0	1	3	4
High School L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
High School M	7	14	1	0	1	7	17
Overall	50	18	6	1	7	50	72

Source: Texas Education Agency, Texas GEAR UP SG Annual Performance Report Data, February 28, 2018.

^a A PD event can include multiple content. Therefore, the total number of events might be smaller than the sum of contents.

Table E.22. Number of Texas GEAR UP SG Teachers Receiving at least one PD, by PD Type and by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Differentiated Instruction	Advanced Instructional Strategies	PBL	Vertical Teaming	Financial Literacy	GEAR UP Specific	Total Participating Teachers ^a
High School H	72	0	0	0	4	73	72
High School I	64	7	7	0	6	68	64
High School J	0	0	33	33	34	34	0
High School K	13	13	13	0	5	18	13
High School L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
High School M	71	71	5	0	1	71	71
Overall	220	91	58	33	50	264	220

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

^a One teacher participated in multiple events with multiple categories. Therefore, the total number of participating teachers might be smaller than the sum of content categories.

E.13. Advanced Course Enrollment and Completion

Table E.23. Enrollment of Students in Advanced Courses, by Grade Level and Number of Advanced Courses: Year 1 (Grade 7), Year 2 (Grade 8), Year 3 (Grade 9), Year 4 (Grade 10), Year 5 (Grade 11), and Year 6 (Grade 12)*

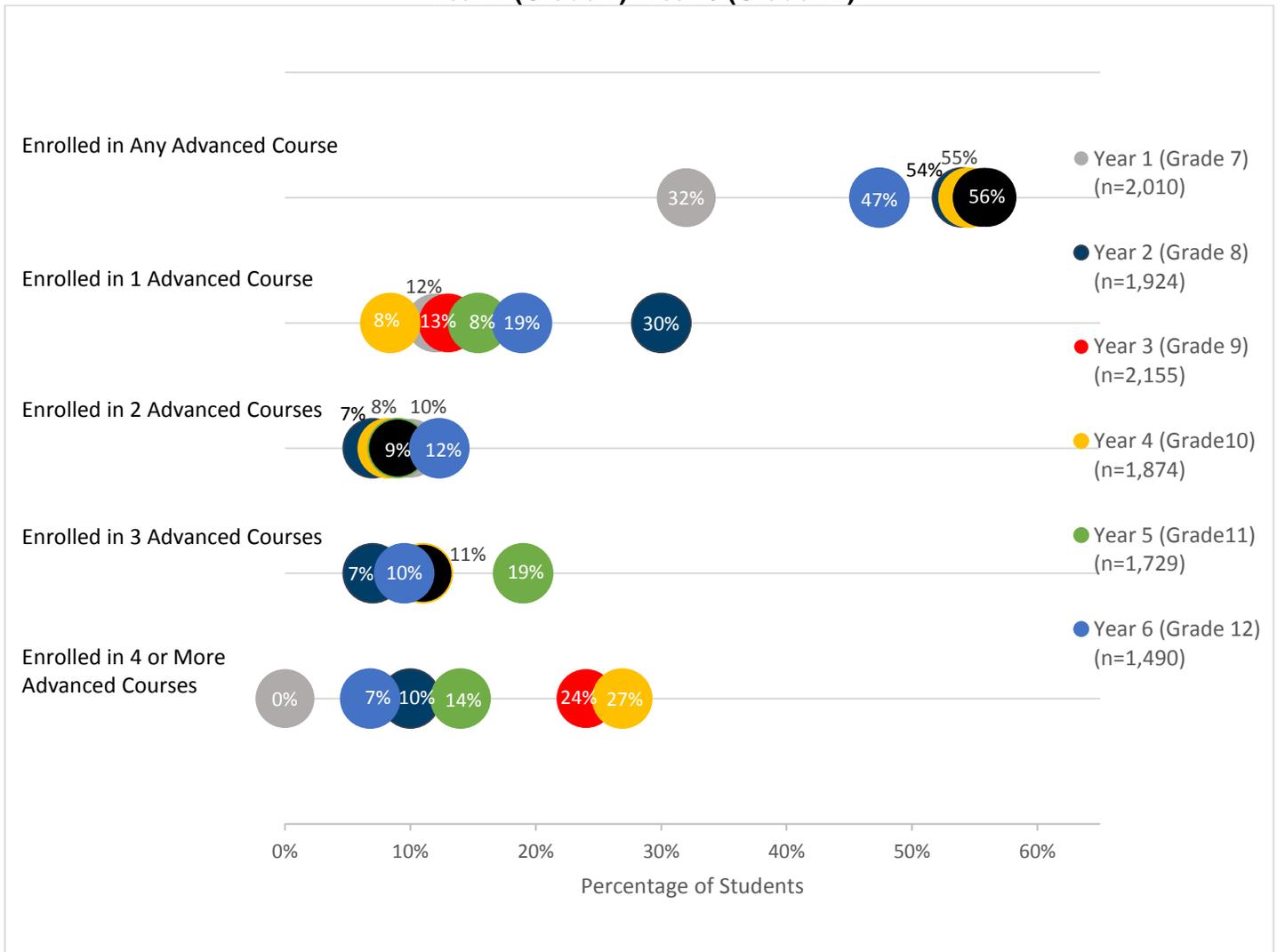
Advanced Course Enrollment Status	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
	<i>n</i>	%										
Not enrolled in any advanced course	1,370	68.2%	885	46.0%	957	44.4%	850	45.4%	753	43.6%	783	52.6%
Enrolled in 1 advanced course	234	11.6%	583	30.3%	271	12.6%	158	8.4%	263	15.2%	281	18.9%
Enrolled in 2 advanced courses	190	9.5%	131	6.8%	191	8.9%	154	8.2%	148	8.6%	184	12.3%
Enrolled in 3 advanced courses	216	10.7%	141	7.3%	229	10.6%	207	11.0%	329	19.0%	141	9.5%
Enrolled in 4 advanced courses	n/a	n/a	184	9.6%	507	23.5%	505	26.9%	236	13.6%	101	6.8%
Total	2,010	100.0%	1,924	100.0%	2,155	100.0%	1,874	100.0%	1,729	100.0%	1,490	100.0%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Note: There were no social studies advanced courses offered in Grade 7.

*Percentage of advanced course enrollment was significantly different across years: $\chi^2(20) = 1435.6$, $p < 0.001$.

Figure E.1. Percentage of Students Enrolled in Advanced Courses, Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Note: Black marker indicates the same values for multiple years. For “Enrolled in Any Advanced Course,” the black marker indicates the same value for Year 3 and Year 5; for “Enrolled in 2 Advanced Courses,” the black marker indicates the same value for Year 3 and Year 5; for “Enrolled in 3 Advanced Courses,” the black marker indicates the same value for Year 1, Year 3, and Year 4.

Table E.24. Pre-AP and AP Advanced Course Offerings and Enrollment, by Program Year and Content Area: Year 4 (Grade 10), Year 5 (Grade 11), and Year 6 (Grade 12)

Content Area	Year 4 (n=1874)		Year 5 (n=1729)		Year 6 (n=1490)	
	Number of Available Courses	Enrolled Students	Number of Available Courses	Enrolled Students	Number of Available Courses	Enrolled Students
Mathematics						
Pre-AP Courses*	4	n=314 (16.8%)	4	n=431 (24.9%)	8	n=169 (11.3%)
AP Courses*	0	n=0 (0%)	2	n=31 (1.8%)	7	n=194 (13.0%)
English Language Arts						
Pre-AP Courses*	2	n=703 (37.5%)	0	n=0 (0%)	0	n=0 (0%)
AP Courses*	1	n=1 (<0.1%)	3	n=413 (23.9%)	8	n=308 (20.7%)
Science						
Pre-AP Courses*	4	n=658 (35.1%)	4	n=393 (22.7%)	6	n=33 (2.2%)
AP Courses*	1	n=1 (<0.1%)	4	n=53 (3%)	9	n=125 (8.3%)
Social Studies						
Pre-AP Courses*	5	n=461 (24.6%)	1	n=1 (<0.1%)	0	n=0 (0%)
AP Courses*	2	n=114 (6.1%)	3	n=409 (23.7%)	16	n=278 (18.7%)
Total Available Pre-AP Courses	15	-	9	-	14	-
Total Available AP Courses	4	-	12	-	40	-

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of enrollment was significantly different across years for each content area. Pre-AP math: $\chi^2(2) = 103.2, p < 0.001$; AP math: $\chi^2(2) = 372.0, p < 0.001$; pre-AP ELA: $\chi^2(2) = 1400.9, p < 0.001$; AP ELA: $\chi^2(2) = 492.9, p < 0.001$; pre-AP science: $\chi^2(2) = 539.4, p < 0.001$; AP science: $\chi^2(2) = 171.6, p < 0.001$; pre-AP social studies: $\chi^2(2) = 866.8, p < 0.001$; AP social studies: $\chi^2(2) = 223.2, p < 0.001$.

Table E.25. Enrollment of Students in Advanced Courses, by Content Area, Grade Level, and School: Year 3 (Grade 9), Year 4 (Grade 10), Year 5 (Grade 11), and Year 6 (Grade 12)

Grade and Content Area	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M	Total
n (Grade 9, Year 3)*	475	474	197	572	117	320	2,155
Mathematics (Algebra I and Other)	50.1%	37.1%	19.3%	29.2%	96.6%	31.3%	44.6%
English Language Arts	59.4%	46.2%	35.5%	26.6%	100.0%	38.1%	38.6%
Science	46.1%	38.2%	21.8%	26.7%	100.0%	35.9%	38.4%
Social Studies	42.9%	25.9%	18.8%	26.6%	100.0%	35.3%	34.6%
n (Grade 10, Year 4)**	402	375	210	474	107	306	1,874
Mathematics	60.0%	36.5%	15.7%	25.9%	90.7%	58.8%	43.3%
English Language Arts	66.2%	42.4%	21.9%	31.2%	97.2%	40.2%	45.1%
Science	54.5%	34.9%	20.5%	28.9%	98.1%	45.8%	41.4%
Social Studies	49.3%	35.5%	18.1%	28.5%	96.3%	22.2%	36.0%
n (Grade 11, Year 5)***	352	330	182	456	110	299	1,729
Mathematics	26.7%	46.4%	23.1%	19.1%	100.0%	48.8%	36.6%
English Language Arts	38.4%	37.3%	25.3%	25.2%	100.0%	43.8%	38.2%
Science	21.9%	40.9%	13.7%	21.7%	97.3%	78.3%	39.2%
Social Studies	31.0%	47.0%	10.4%	22.1%	9.1%	42.5%	30.1%
n (Grade 12, Year 6)****	321	259	148	413	98	251	1,490
Mathematics	24.6%	42.9%	27.0%	13.8%	68.4%	48.2%	31.9%
English Language Arts	30.2%	44.8%	17.6%	20.1%	0.0%	31.5%	26.9%
Science	19.3%	16.2%	37.2%	1.7%	20.4%	30.3%	17.6%
Social Studies	26.2%	44.8%	13.5%	7.3%	0.0%	35.1%	22.7%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

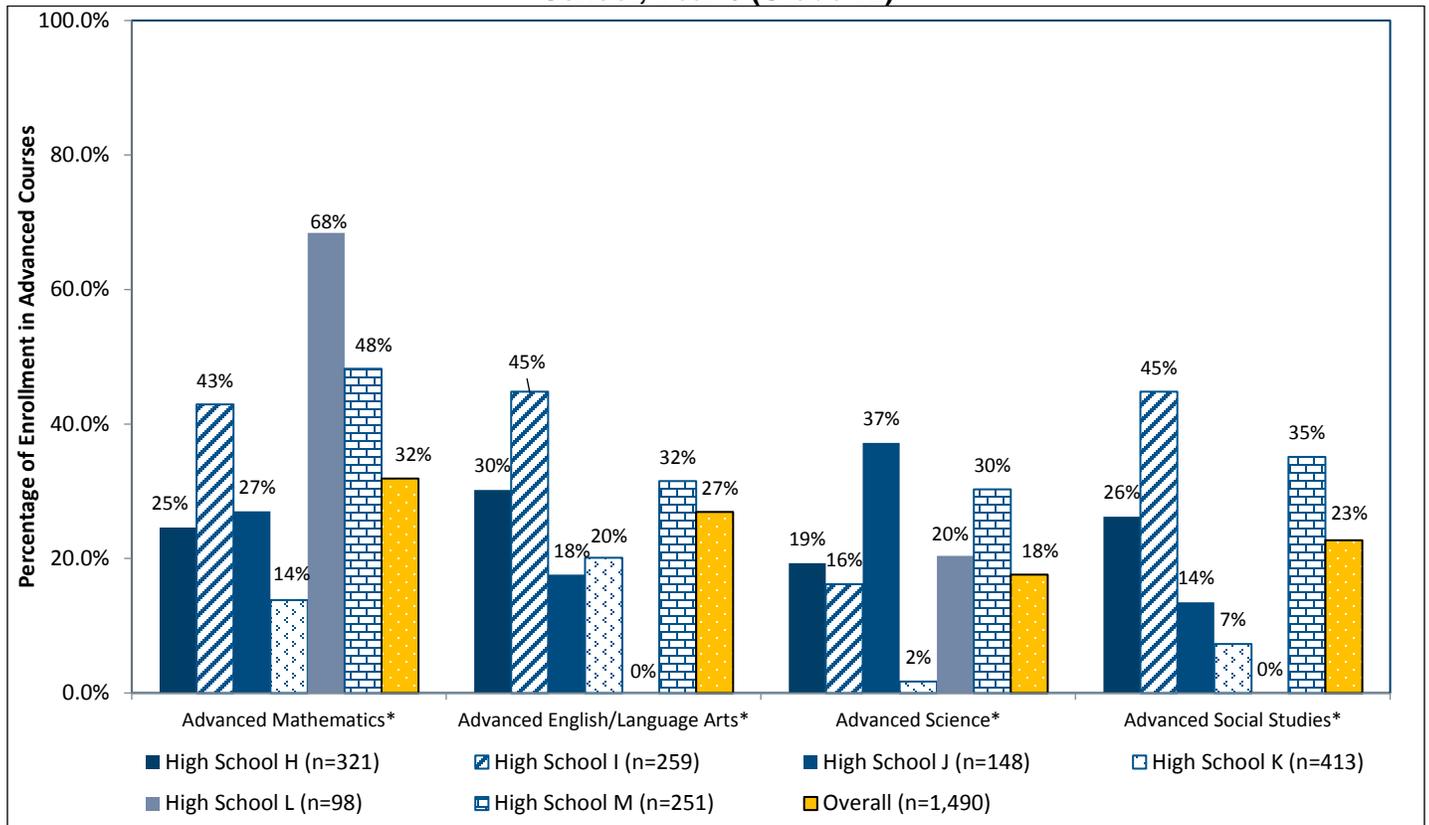
* Grade 9, Percentage of enrollment was significantly different across schools for each subject area. Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 252.5, p < 0.001$; ELA: $\chi^2(5) = 274.9, p < 0.001$; Science: $\chi^2(5) = 256.1, p < 0.001$; Social Studies $\chi^2(5) = 289.5, p < 0.001$.

** Grade 10, Percentage of enrollment was significantly different across schools for each subject area. Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 303.4, p < 0.001$; ELA: $\chi^2(5) = 275.9, p < 0.001$; Science: $\chi^2(5) = 247.6, p < 0.001$; Social Studies $\chi^2(5) = 265.3, p < 0.001$.

***Grade 11, Percentage of enrollment was significantly different across schools for each subject area. Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 316.6, p < 0.001$; ELA: $\chi^2(5) = 221.6, p < 0.001$; Science: $\chi^2(5) = 524.1, p < 0.001$; Social Studies $\chi^2(5) = 127.5, p < 0.001$.

****Grade 12, Percentage of enrollment was significantly different across schools for each subject area. Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 176.8, p < 0.001$; ELA: $\chi^2(5) = 98.9, p < 0.001$; Science: $\chi^2(5) = 140.5, p < 0.001$; Social Studies $\chi^2(5) = 188.1, p < 0.001$.

Figure E.2. Percentages of Grade 12 Students Enrolled in Advanced Courses by Content Area and by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

* Percentage of enrollment was significantly different across schools for each subject area. Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 176.8, p < 0.001$; ELA: $\chi^2(5) = 98.9, p < 0.001$; Science: $\chi^2(5) = 140.5, p < 0.001$; Social Studies $\chi^2(5) = 188.1, p < 0.001$.

Table E.26. Pre-Advanced Placement (AP) and AP Course Completion Rate by School and LEP Status, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n		Completed a Pre-AP and/or AP Course		Completed an AP Course		Not Completed		Missing	
	Total	LEP	Total	LEP	Total	LEP	Total	LEP	Total	LEP
School H	321	32	80.1%	65.6%	38.0%	18.8%	13.4%	28.1%	6.5%	6.3%
School I	259	13	76.1%	61.5%	47.9%	38.5%	15.8%	38.5%	8.1%	0.0%
School J	148	1	64.9%	100.0%	28.4%	100.0%	35.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
School K	413	75	72.6%	57.3%	62.0%	49.3%	23.0%	38.7%	4.4%	4.0%
School L	98	7	98.0%	85.7%	92.9%	85.7%	2.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%
School M	251	10	76.5%	90.0%	53.8%	80.0%	23.1%	10.0%	0.4%	0.0%
Overall	1490	138	76.4%	63.8%	51.7%	45.7%	19.5%	32.6%	4.1%	3.6%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentages of students were significantly different across schools in these categories: Percentage of Total students who completed pre-AP/AP course: $\chi^2(5) = 89.3, p < 0.001$; Percentage of total students who completed AP course: $\chi^2(5) = 142.3, p < 0.001$; Percentage of LEP students who completed AP course: $\chi^2(5) = 20.5, p < 0.01$.

Table E.27. Dual Credit Course Enrollment and Completion Rate by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Completed Dual Credit Course*	Did Not Complete	Missing
School H	321	8.4%	80.7%	10.9%
School I	259	9.7%	77.6%	12.7%
School J	148	4.7%	95.3%	0.0%
School K	413	7.5%	86.4%	6.1%
School L	98	48.0%	52.0%	0.0%
School M	251	25.5%	74.1%	0.4%
Overall	1490	13.5%	80.2%	6.3%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of dual credit course enrollment and completion was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 146.9, p < 0.001$.

E.14. Endorsements, Year 6

Table E.28. Percentages of Students by Endorsements and by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

Grade and Content Area	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M	Total
<i>n</i>	321	259	148	413	98	251	1490
Arts and Humanities	22.7%	18.1%	8.8%	9.2%	2.0%	7.6%	12.9%
Business and Industry	14.6%	34.4%	25.0%	40.7%	23.5%	42.2%	31.5%
Multidisciplinary Studies	1.9%	0.8%	25.0%	9.2%	0.0%	0.8%	5.7%
Public Service	28.0%	41.3%	31.1%	29.3%	1.0%	16.7%	27.3%
STEM	19.3%	0.0%	6.1%	1.0%	72.4%	32.7%	15.3%
Not on Foundation	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
No Endorsements	10.6%	5.0%	4.1%	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%	3.8%
Missing	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	10.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of students with endorsements in Grade 12 was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(35) = 867.7, p < 0.001$.

Table E.29. Algebra II Completion Rate for Students with Endorsement by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Completed Algebra II *	Not Completed	Missing data
School H	321	75.1%	18.7%	6.2%
School I	259	80.3%	13.5%	6.2%
School J	148	48.0%	52.0%	0.0%
School K	413	66.6%	28.8%	4.6%
School L	98	92.9%	7.1%	0.0%
School M	251	86.1%	13.5%	0.4%
Overall	1490	74.0%	22.3%	3.8%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of Algebra II completion was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 119.51, p < 0.001$.

E.15.SAT and ACT Completion and Mean Scores

Table E.30. Percentage of Students That Took the SAT or ACT in Grade 11

School	<i>n</i>	Took SAT in Grade 11	Took ACT in Grade 11	Took SAT or ACT in Grade 11*
School H	356	70.2%	0.0%	70.2%
School I	338	64.5%	.3%	64.5%
School J	184	71.7%	27.7%	72.8%
School K	467	22.1%	2.6%	22.3%
School L	112	46.4%	7.1%	46.4%
School M	307	70.0%	6.5%	70.0%
Overall	1764	55.0%	5.2%	55.2%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of SAT or ACT participation in Grade 11 was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 303.0, p < 0.001$.

Table E.31. Percentage of Students That Took the SAT or ACT in Grade 12

School	<i>n</i>	Took SAT in Grade 12	Took ACT in Grade 12)	Took SAT or ACT in Grade 12*
School H	321	74.1%	0.0%	74.1%
School I	259	74.1%	0.0%	74.1%
School J	148	18.9%	12.8%	25.0%
School K	413	75.3%	8.7%	75.3%
School L	98	90.8%	0.0%	90.8%
School M	251	78.5%	4.8%	78.5%
Overall	1490	70.8%	4.5%	71.4%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of SAT or ACT participation in Gr12 was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 185.5, p < 0.001$.

Table E.32. SAT Scores of Students: Mean Scores and Percentage that Met Criterion by School, Year 5 (Grade 11) and Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	#Took SAT in Year 5 (Grade 11) or Year 6 (Grade 12)	% Took SAT in Year 5 (Grade 11) or Year 6 (Grade 12)*	Math Test: Mean Scores	Reading Test: Mean Scores	Writing and Language Test: Mean Scores	SAT Total: Mean Scores*	#Took ACT in Year 5 (Grade 11) or Year 6 (Grade 12)	% Took ACT in Year 5 (Grade 11) or Year 6 (Grade 12)	ACT Math Test: Mean Scores	ACT English Test: Mean Scores	ACT Total Mean Scores	Met Criterion for SAT or ACT Test
School H	321	271	84.4%	440	440	3	873	0	0.0%	-	-	-	8.1%
School I	259	220	84.9%	433	430	3	857	0	0.0%	-	-	-	5.8%
School J	148	121	81.8%	429	420	7	846	59	41.0%	17	14	16	7.4%
School K	413	321	77.7%	443	438	4	879	49	34.0%	17	17	18	9.0%
School L	98	93	94.9%	516	500	5	1012	8	5.6%	22	21	22	30.6%
School M	251	226	90.0%	465	471	4	929	28	19.4%	22	19	21	17.5%
Overall	1490	1252	84.0%	449	446	4	890	144	9.7%	18	16	18	10.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Notes: TEA determined the criterion for the SAT (a total score of 1180) and ACT (a total score of 24). Scores presented include the highest scores across Years 5 and 6 for SAT and ACT.

*Percentage of SAT participation was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 53.35, p < 0.001$.

**Average SAT total score was significantly different across schools: $F(5, 1,246) = 22.6, p < 0.001$.

E.16. TSIA Participation and Completion

Table E.33. TSIA Participation and Scores of Students by School, Year 3 (Grade 9), Year 4 (Grade 10), Year 5 (Grade 11), or Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	% Took TSIA: Reading*	# Took TSIA: Reading	Passed TSIA: Reading (>/=351)	% Took TSIA: Mathematics**	# Took TSIA: Math	Passed TSIA: Mathematics (>/=350)
School H	321	75.4%	242	38.0%	76.3%	245	24.5%
School I	259	64.5%	167	28.7%	65.6%	170	19.4%
School J	148	68.9%	102	23.5%	71.6%	106	17.0%
School K	413	58.6%	242	39.3%	57.6%	238	26.1%
School L	98	89.8%	88	63.6%	90.8%	89	38.2%
School M	251	47.0%	118	50.8%	45.8%	115	25.2%
Overall	1490	64.4%	959	39.1%	64.6%	963	24.5%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

*Percentage of TSIA Reading participation was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 84.9$, $p < 0.001$.

**Percentage of TSIA Mathematics participation between Grade 9 and Grade 12 was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 99.6$, $p < 0.001$.

E.17. Academic Preparedness for Postsecondary Education

Table E.34. Students on Track to Graduate College Ready, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	% Grade 12 Students on Track to Graduate College Ready in Math and English
School H	321	16.8%
School I	259	10.0%
School J	148	12.2%
School K	413	16.5%
School L	98	37.8%
School M	251	19.1%
Total	1490	16.8%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Note: Students were determined to have been on-track to graduating college ready in math and English if they met criterion on the SAT, ACT, or TSIA (through February 28, 2018). Note the state's college ready criterion are as follows: TSIA: ELA score ≥ 351 , Mathematics ≥ 350 ; ACT: English score ≥ 19 , Composite ≥ 23 , Math score ≥ 19 , Composite ≥ 23 , SAT in Grade 12: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 480, Math: 530; SAT in Grade 11: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 460, Math: 510.

Table E.35. Students' Academic Preparedness for Postsecondary Education, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	% Met
School H	356	65.4%
School I	338	65.7%
School J	184	49.5%
School K	467	49.9%
School L	112	77.7%
School M	307	62.2%
Total	1764	59.9%

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018.

Note: The criteria used in selecting students who are considered knowledgeable and academically prepared for college are based on the student participating in one "in-person" college visit and one of the following: 1) Met or exceeded the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) criteria in both English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics on the TSI assessment (ELA score \geq 351, Mathematics \geq 350), 2) Completed one or more math courses beyond Algebra II, 3) Enrolled in a coherent sequence of CTE courses as part of a four-year plan of study, and 4) at the end of the 5th year, students' personal graduation plan (PSP) includes the FHSP with a multidisciplinary endorsement.

E.18. Implementation Overview

Table E.36. Overview of Texas GEAR UP SG Implementation Strategies by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
Implementation Strategies						
Student Support Services: Tutoring	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Support Services: Mentoring	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Support Services: Counseling/Advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Financial Aid Counseling	X	X	X	X	X	X
Educational Field Trips						X
College Visits		X	X	X		X
Job Site Visits/Job Shadowing	X	X	X	X	X	X
Summer Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student Workshops/Events	X	X	X	X	X	X
Parent Events		X	X	X		X
Parent Counseling/Advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teacher Professional Development	X	X	X	X		X
College Credit Completion	X	X	X	X	X	X
SAT/ACT Participation	X	X	X	X	X	X
TSIA Participation	X	X	X	X	X	X
College Application Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
FAFSA Completion Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Number of Strategies Implemented (Out of 17)						
	14	16	16	16	13	17

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018; fall 2017 and spring 2018 site visit data.

Note: An "X" indicates that a school reported implementing the strategy, although it does not capture the level of implementation (such as the number of students served) for each strategy.

Table E.37. School Progress Meeting Project Objectives, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Project Objectives	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
1.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Program plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average. ²⁸	X	X	X	X	X	X
2.3: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.						
3.1: All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL.		X		X		X
3.2: Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.						
4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.			X		X	X
4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.	X	X	X		X	X
4.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.					X	
5.1: By the end of the project's fourth year, all cohort students will complete the ACT Aspire or the PSAT. By the end of the project's fifth year, all cohort students will complete the SAT or ACT.						
5.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.3: The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.5: More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.			X			
7.3: Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.						
7.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.						
	Statewide Completion					
9.1: Annually increase the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Texas Gateway and face-to-face trainings.	ND					
9.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD.	X					

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018; fall 2017 and spring 2018 site visits; and Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: An "X" indicates that a school is making reasonable progress toward an objective, although it does not capture the completion or attainment of an objective. An "ND" indicates that the evaluation team did not receive data to measure progress toward the objective. AP = advanced placement.

²⁸ For additional information on the Foundation High School Program and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see <http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx>.

Table E.38. Summary Comparison of Year 3 (Grade 9), Year 5 (Grade 11), and Year 6 (Grade 12) Implementation Data

Implementation Area	Year 3	Year 5	Year 6
Level and Mix of Implementation	District 3 continued to implement a broad range (and have high percentages of student participation) but additional districts also demonstrated successful mix of implementation.	Districts 1, 3, and 4 implemented and engaged students in the broadest range of services, but the overall level and mix of services across districts continued to be successful.	School M implemented and engaged students in the broadest range of services, but the overall level and mix of services across districts continued to be successful at Schools I, J, and K.
Student Participation in Texas GEAR UP SG Student Support Services	81% of students participated.	93% of students participated.	94% of students participated.
Student Participation in Any Texas GEAR UP SG Activities	95% of students participated.	97% of students participated.	96% of students participated
Number of Advanced Courses	24% of students were enrolled in four or more advanced courses.	14% of students were enrolled in four or more advanced courses.	7% of students were enrolled in four or more advanced courses.
Enrollment in an Advanced Mathematics Course	45% of students were enrolled in advanced mathematics, including Pre-AP Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry.	33% of students were enrolled in advanced mathematics, including courses that were taken at the honors, pre-AP or AP level (e.g., pre-AP Algebra II) or courses that were taken ahead of schedule (e.g., Calculus),	32% of students were enrolled in advanced mathematics, including courses that were taken at the honors, pre-AP or AP level (e.g., pre-AP Algebra II) or courses that were taken ahead of schedule (e.g., Calculus),
Enrollment in Other Advanced Courses^a	39% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 38% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 35% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies. All high schools had at least 19% enrollment in each content area.	38% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 41% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 36% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies. All high schools had at least 16% enrollment in each content area.	27% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 18% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 23% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.
Student Knowledge of and Academic Preparation for College	85% of surveyed students plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	55% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	47% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.
Endorsement Selection	Most students (82%) selected one endorsement while 8% selected two or more endorsements. 71% of surveyed students understand how their endorsement will help them prepare for college.	96% of student had chosen an endorsement and 62% reported that they are on track to graduate with an endorsement.	64% of students reported that they expected to graduate with an endorsement
Parental Attendance at Three or More Texas GEAR UP SG Events^b	3% of parents attended three or more events; 49% of parents attended at least one event.	17% of parents attended three or more events; 21% of parents attended in one to two events.	13% of parents attended three or more events; 24% of parents attended one to two events.
Teacher Professional Development and Vertical Teaming	Two high schools held five days of vertical teaming events.	One high school held at least five days of vertical teaming events.	No high school held at least five days of vertical teaming.

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2018; Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Implementation in Year 3, Year 4, and Year 5 occurred in six high schools within the same four districts.

^a ELA refers to English Language Arts.

^b Parental attendance is defined as any adult household member attending an event associated with the given student.

APPENDIX F: Student and Parent Outcomes Analyses Technical Detail

F.1. Survey Administration, 2017-18

Table F.1. Skip Logic Questions Responsible for Determining Survey Pathways

Skip Logic Question	Survey
Has participating in GEAR UP activities at your school helped you to decide to go to college after high school graduation?	Student
How prepared do you feel for postsecondary education?	Student
Please indicate the level of progress you have made in completing the FAFSA? <i>(Select all that apply)</i>	Student
What types of postsecondary schools have you been applying to this year?	Student
Have you been accepted to any postsecondary schools yet?	Student
How confident are you that you will be accepted to the college you wish to attend next year?	Student
Do you anticipate graduating with college credit?	Student
Have you decided which postsecondary school to enroll in next year?	Student
Have you taken the SAT or plan to take the SAT in the 2017-18 school year?	Student
Have you tried to increase your score on the SAT by taking it multiple times?	Student
Have you taken the ACT or plan to take the ACT in the 2017-18 school year?	Student
Have you tried to increase your score on the ACT by taking it multiple times?	Student
Did you take the entire TSI/TSIA?	Student
Have you ever retaken a section of the TSIA to increase your score?	Student
Have you met with the College Preparation Advisor at your school in the 2017–18 school year?	Student
Based on the classes you have taken in high school between fall 2014 and spring 2018, are you on track to graduate with an endorsement?	Student
Do you currently have a child in Grade 12? Please complete the survey thinking about this child.	Parent
If no, in what grade do you have a child participating in GEAR UP for whom you would like to complete this survey?	Parent
Is your child planning to enroll in postsecondary education in the fall?	Parent
Has your child submitted one or more college applications in the 2017-18 school year?	Parent
Have you met with the GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor at your child's school in the 2017–18 school year?	Parent

Table F.2. Excluded Student Surveys, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Reason for Exclusion	Number of Student Surveys Excluded
Dissented to take the survey or did not answer to consent item	103
Declared that they already took surveys in the other format (online or paper) or did not answer	304
Completed less than 50% of survey (50% of survey items missing)	155
Total Excluded	562
Total Received	1,309
Total Remaining for Analysis	747

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.3. Excluded Parent Surveys, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Reason for Exclusion	Number of Parent Surveys Excluded
Dissented to take the survey or did not answer to consent item	100
Declared that they already took surveys in the other format (online or paper) or did not answer	29
Completed less than 50% of survey (50% of survey items missing)	85
Total Excluded	214
Total Received	463
Total Remaining for Analysis	249

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

F.2. Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Table F.4. Student Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)

	Year 1 (n=1,385)	Year 2 (n=1,295)	Year 3 (n=1,333)	Year 4 (n=1,132)	Year 5 (n=922)	Year 6 (n=747)
Ethnicity/Race						
Asian	<1%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%
Black or African American	11%	7%	8%	10%	8%	14%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	79%	81%	67%	70%	82%	75%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	1%
White	4%	3%	8%	6%	4%	6%
Two or more races	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	1%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	2%	4%	12%	2%	2%	2%
Gender						
Female	49%	48%	49%	49%	51%	56%
Male	51%	52%	51%	51%	49%	44%
Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch Participation*						
Yes	62%	67%	66%	--	--	--
No	17%	18%	20%	--	--	--
Not sure	22%	19%	14%	--	--	--
Language Spoken at Home						
English	66%	56%	55%	61%	68%	59%
Spanish	27%	13%	13%	12%	2%	14%
Both English and Spanish	7%	30%	31%	26%	28%	25%
Other or Multiple	<1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Language Spoken with Friends						
English	90%	78%	78%	80%	50%	69%
Spanish	3%	3%	3%	1%	9%	4%
Both English and Spanish	6%	19%	18%	19%	39%	26%
Other	<1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018). Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; The total *N* represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of students who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question.

*Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch Participation item not included in the Year 4, Year 5, and Year 6 surveys.

Table F.5. Parent Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)

	Year 1 (n=401)	Year 2 (n=471)	Year 4 (n=741)	Year 5 (n=352)	Year 6 (n=249)
Ethnicity/Race					
Asian	0%	<1%	2%	<1%	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	<1%	<1%	0%	1%
Black or African American	3%	5%	13%	14%	19%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	88%	86%	71%	72%	69%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
White	6%	5%	12%	6%	11%
Two or more races	<1%	<1%	1%	2%	0%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	2%	3%	22%	6%	0%
Child Gender					
Female	58%	56%	50%	56%	52%
Male	42%	44%	50%	44%	48%
Parent Gender*					
Female	86%	85%	--	--	--
Male	14%	15%	--	--	--
Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch Participation					
Yes	86%	85%	75%	82%	72%
No	11%	8%	17%	16%	22%
Not sure	3%	6%	9%	3%	6%
Language Spoken at Home					
English	--	56%	66%	68%	74%
Spanish	--	21%	14%	14%	10%
Both English and Spanish	--	23%	20%	18%	16%
Other or Multiple	--	0%	<1%	<1%	1%
Parent's Highest Level of Education					
Less than high school	57%	14%	10%	10%	9%
High school		36%	31%	38%	28%
Some college	26%	29%	26%	26%	29%
2-year college	7%	9%	10%	10%	11%
4-year college	8%	8%	8%	8%	11%
More than a 4-year college	3%	4%	4%	6%	9%
I do not wish to answer this question	--	--	12%	3%	3%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Notes: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; the total *n* represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of parents who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question.

*Parent gender item not included in the Fall 2015, Spring 2017, nor Spring 2008 surveys; language spoken at home not included in the Fall 2013 parent survey; the option "I do not wish to answer this question" when asking parent's highest level of education is only available in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 survey. Given the low parent response rate in Year 3, parent survey results are not reported. In fall 2015 of Year 4, parent surveys were administered again due to low response rates in spring 2015.

F.3. Participation and Perceptions of Texas GEAR UP Events and Activities

Table F.6. Student Differences by School: Participation in Select GEAR UP Activities, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M	Overall
Tutoring, Any Subject*	58.4%	59.7%	49.5%	41.0%	26.4%	41.0%	48.2%
	n=173	n=119	n=99	n=156	n=53	n=134	n=734
Tutoring, Mathematics*	33.3%	51.7%	45.5%	28.2%	26.4%	34.3%	36.5%
	n=171	n=118	n=99	n=156	n=53	n=134	n=731
Tutoring, English/Language Arts*	41.9%	31.1%	38.1%	24.5%	7.5%	26.1%	30.5%
	n=172	n=119	n=97	n=155	n=53	n=134	n=730
Tutoring, Science*	32.2%	25.2%	23.5%	16.8%	11.5%	27.6%	24.3%
	n=171	n=119	n=98	n=155	n=52	n=134	n=729
Tutoring, Social Studies*	32.0%	31.4%	18.8%	11.6%	9.6%	24.1%	22.7%
	n=172	n=118	n=96	n=155	n=52	n=133	n=726
Mentoring*	39.0%	25.2%	55.6%	18.1%	11.5%	28.2%	30.6%
	n=172	n=119	n=99	n=155	n=52	n=131	n=728
College Preparation Advisor*	56.4%	62.4%	70.8%	27.1%	40.9%	72.0%	54.9%
	n=156	n=109	n=89	n=144	n=44	n=125	n=667
GEAR UP Summer Program*	31.8%	28.6%	27.8%	18.6%	15.4%	30.1%	26.4%
	n=173	n=119	n=97	n=156	n=52	n=133	n=730
Academic or Career Counseling/Advising*	34.7%	33.9%	48.5%	27.9%	23.1%	47.3%	36.4%
	n=173	n=118	n=97	n=154	n=52	n=129	n=723
Job Site Visiting/Shadowing*	37.4%	26.7%	34.7%	18.6%	13.2%	60.2%	33.7%
	n=171	n=116	n=95	n=156	n=53	n=133	n=724
College Visits/College Student Shadowing*	55.8%	55.5%	69.1%	49.4%	48.1%	80.5%	60.1%
	n=172	n=119	n=97	n=156	n=52	n=133	n=729
Educational Field Trips*	57.6%	48.7%	70.1%	44.2%	42.3%	77.4%	57.5%
	n=172	n=119	n=97	n=156	n=52	n=133	n=729
Financial Aid Counseling/Advising*	57.3%	52.5%	62.9%	36.5%	34.6%	65.4%	52.7%
	n=171	n=118	n=97	n=156	n=52	n=133	n=727
Family Cultural Events (Students' participation)*	22.1%	23.5%	32.7%	17.3%	11.5%	30.1%	23.4%
	n=172	n=119	n=98	n=156	n=52	n=133	n=730
Family Cultural Events (Parents' participation)*	21.5%	23.5%	28.4%	11.0%	9.8%	27.5%	20.7%
	n=172	n=119	n=95	n=155	n=51	n=131	n=723
Other School Workshops about Benefits/Options of College*	34.3%	34.7%	40.6%	21.8%	21.2%	41.7%	32.9%
	n=172	n=118	n=96	n=156	n=52	n=132	n=726

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Notes: Percentages include those who responded yes to the following item: "Have you participated in this activity in this school year (2016–2017)?" Students had four separate items, each item asking about a topic of tutoring (Math, ELA, Science, and Social Studies). The category *Tutoring, Any Subject* merges these variables. Students were asked if they have ever met with their College Preparation Advisor with the response options *Yes*, *No*, and *I don't know/I did not know*

my school had a College Preparation Advisor.

*The degree to which average student responses differed across schools varied significantly: Tutoring, any subject: $\chi^2(5) = 29.5, p < .001$; Tutoring, Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 23.1, p < .001$; Tutoring, English/ Language Arts: $\chi^2(5) = 30.1, p < .001$; Tutoring, Science: $\chi^2(5) = 16.0, p < .01$; Tutoring, Social Studies: $\chi^2(5) = 30.3, p < .001$; Mentoring: $\chi^2(5) = 57.0, p < .001$; College Preparation Advisor: $\chi^2(10) = 82.1, p < .001$; GEAR UP Summer Program: $\chi^2(5) = 12.0, p < .05$; Academic or Career Counseling/Advising: $\chi^2(5) = 22.0, p < .001$; Job Site Visiting/Shadowing: $\chi^2(5) = 71.2, p < .001$; College Visits/College Student Shadowing: $\chi^2(5) = 39.2, p < .001$; Educational Field Trips: $\chi^2(5) = 47.8, p < .001$; Financial Aid Counseling/Advising: $\chi^2(5) = 37.3, p < .001$; Family Cultural Events (Students' Participation): $\chi^2(5) = 15.5, p < .01$; Family Cultural Events (Parents' Participation): $\chi^2(5) = 20.4, p < .01$; Other School Workshops about Benefits/Options of College: $\chi^2(5) = 19.5, p < .01$.

Table F.7. Percentage of Students Who Reported Engaging in Discussions with GEAR UP Staff about Financial Aid, By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Yes
High School H	172	89.5%
High School I	118	91.5%
High School J	100	92.0%
High School K	157	82.8%
High School L	54	90.7%
High School M	134	88.8%
Overall	735	88.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Data are responses to the following question: "Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?"

Table F.8. Student Participation in Summer 2017 Programs, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Where was/were the summer program(s) you attended offered? (Select ALL that apply)		
	<i>n</i>	%
A community college or university in Texas	85	50.3%
My local high school district (school I was attending in Grade 11 or 12)	65	38.5%
In a state other than Texas	44	26.0%
A business or community organization in Texas	9	5.3%
Another school district in Texas	8	4.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Fall 2017).

Note: Total *N*=169.

**Table F.9. Student Participation in Different Types of Summer Programs,
Year 6 (Grade 12)**

What type(s) of summer program(s) did you participate in? (Select ALL that apply)		
	<i>n</i>	%
A college readiness program designed to help me learn more about what I would need to do to apply to college successfully	97	57.4%
A college readiness program designed to help me learn more about financial aid for college	60	35.5%
A program to learn more about careers I might be interested in	48	28.4%
An academic enrichment program designed to help me be better prepared to take AP or pre-AP courses	23	13.6%
A job shadowing program or internship	17	10.1%
A tutoring program	13	7.7%
A credit recovery program	7	4.1%
Other	33	19.5%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Fall 2017).

Note. Total $N=169$.

Table F.10. Students' Level of Agreement about the Summer 2017 Programs, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the summer 2017 program(s) you attended.						
	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
I attended the summer program(s) for the majority of days it was offered.*	98	9.2%	1.0%	30.6%	59.2%	--
I enjoyed the activities offered during the summer program(s) I attended.*	98	9.2%	2.0%	29.6%	59.2%	--
Based on my experiences with the summer 2017 program(s) I attended, I am planning on attending a summer 2018 program(s) if possible.	98	2.0%	3.1%	43.9%	46.9%	4.1%
I would recommend the summer program(s) I attended to other students at my school.	98	2.0%	0%	44.9%	53.1%	0%
I have a better understanding of the benefits of college after attending the summer program(s).	99	2.0%	2.0%	46.5%	46.5%	3.0%
The summer program(s) provided me with skills to help me in my high school classes (for example, time management skills, and organizational skills).	99	4.0%	3.0%	55.6%	33.3%	4.0%
I have a better understanding of a specific career/job after attending the summer program(s).	99	2.0%	6.1%	48.5%	38.4%	5.1%
I have a better understanding of careers I might be interested in after attending the summer program(s).	99	2.0%	5.1%	46.5%	43.4%	3.0%
The summer program(s) prepared me academically for taking one or more of my high school classes.	99	5.1%	6.1%	50.5%	30.3%	8.1%
I have a better understanding of college entrance requirements after attending the summer program(s).	99	2.0%	2.0%	42.4%	49.5%	4.0%
I feel more prepared to take Advanced Placement [AP], pre-AP, or college credit courses after attending the summer program(s).	99	4.0%	8.1%	43.4%	30.3%	14.1%
I have a better understanding of financial aid for college after attending the summer program(s).	99	1.0%	3.0%	50.5%	38.4%	7.1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Fall 2017).

Notes. (1) Total $N=99$; (2) students who did not participate in a Texas GEAR UP SG-sponsored 2017 summer program were excluded from the results reported in this table.

*Not Applicable was not an option for these items.

Table F.11. Student Differences by School: Average Perceptions of Effectiveness of Select GEAR UP Activities, Year 6 (Grade 12)

GEAR UP Activity	<i>n</i> and Rating of Effectiveness	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M	Overall
Tutoring, Any Subject	<i>n</i>	61	55	25	31	10	45	227
	Not Effective	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
	Slightly Effective	31.1%	25.5%	20.0%	29.0%	40.0%	8.9%	24.2%
	Mostly Effective	34.4%	47.3%	52.0%	48.4%	50.0%	66.7%	48.5%
	Very Effective	34.4%	23.6%	28.0%	22.6%	10.0%	24.4%	26.4%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.03	2.91	3.08	2.94	2.70	3.16	3.00
Tutoring, Mathematics	<i>n</i>	38	50	22	22	9	37	178
	Not Effective	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
	Slightly Effective	34.2%	28.0%	27.3%	27.3%	44.4%	10.8%	26.4%
	Mostly Effective	36.8%	40.0%	36.4%	50.0%	44.4%	54.1%	43.3%
	Very Effective	28.9%	24.0%	36.4%	18.2%	11.1%	35.1%	27.5%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.95	2.80	3.09	2.82	2.67	3.24	2.96
Tutoring, English/Language Arts	<i>n</i>	41	28	16	17	3	25	130
	Not Effective	4.9%	0.0%	6.3%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%
	Slightly Effective	34.1%	32.1%	12.5%	29.4%	33.3%	12.0%	26.2%
	Mostly Effective	31.7%	39.3%	37.5%	41.2%	66.7%	60.0%	41.5%
	Very Effective	29.3%	28.6%	43.8%	23.5%	0.0%	28.0%	29.2%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.85	2.96	3.19	2.82	2.67	3.16	2.97
Tutoring, Science	<i>n</i>	33	20	10	8	4	28	103
	Not Effective	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	0.0%	1.9%
	Slightly Effective	36.4%	40.0%	30.0%	25.0%	50.0%	21.4%	32.0%
	Mostly Effective	30.3%	30.0%	50.0%	37.5%	25.0%	46.4%	36.9%
	Very Effective	33.3%	30.0%	20.0%	25.0%	0.0%	32.1%	29.1%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.97	2.90	2.90	2.75	2.00	3.11	2.93
Tutoring, Social Studies	<i>n</i>	33	27	7	9	3	23	102
	Not Effective	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
	Slightly Effective	24.2%	22.2%	0.0%	22.2%	33.3%	8.7%	18.6%
	Mostly Effective	30.3%	59.3%	42.9%	33.3%	33.3%	56.5%	45.1%
	Very Effective	42.4%	18.5%	57.1%	33.3%	33.3%	34.8%	34.3%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.12	2.96	3.57	2.89	3.00	3.26	3.12
Mentoring	<i>n</i>	40	20	30	15	5	26	136
	Not Effective	12.5%	0.0%	6.7%	13.3%	0.0%	3.8%	7.4%
	Slightly Effective	22.5%	15.0%	23.3%	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	16.2%
	Mostly Effective	42.5%	60.0%	26.7%	33.3%	60.0%	50.0%	42.6%
	Very Effective	22.5%	25.0%	43.3%	53.3%	40.0%	34.6%	33.8%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.75	3.10	3.07	3.27	3.40	3.15	3.03
GEAR UP Summer Program	<i>n</i>	37	26	13	15	3	30	124
	Not Effective	0.0%	3.8%	7.7%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
	Slightly Effective	18.9%	11.5%	15.4%	26.7%	0.0%	10.0%	15.3%
	Mostly Effective	27.0%	42.3%	30.8%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	32.3%
	Very Effective	54.1%	42.3%	46.2%	26.7%	100.0%	56.7%	49.2%

GEAR UP Activity	n and Rating of Effectiveness	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M	Overall
	Mean Effectiveness	3.35	3.23	3.15	2.73	4.00	3.47	3.27
Academic or Career Counseling/Advising	n	35	27	27	22	9	49	169
	Not Effective	5.7%	7.4%	3.7%	4.5%	11.1%	2.0%	4.7%
	Slightly Effective	22.9%	18.5%	14.8%	36.4%	33.3%	18.4%	21.9%
	Mostly Effective	28.6%	40.7%	37.0%	31.8%	22.2%	44.9%	36.7%
	Very Effective	42.9%	33.3%	44.4%	27.3%	33.3%	34.7%	36.7%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.09	3.00	3.22	2.82	2.78	3.12	3.05
Job Site Visiting/Shadowing	n	33	20	16	9	4	55	137
	Not Effective	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	11.1%	0.0%	5.5%	3.6%
	Slightly Effective	21.2%	30.0%	12.5%	33.3%	0.0%	18.2%	20.4%
	Mostly Effective	30.3%	40.0%	31.3%	44.4%	50.0%	41.8%	38.0%
	Very Effective	48.5%	30.0%	50.0%	11.1%	50.0%	34.5%	38.0%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.27	3.00	3.25	2.56	3.50	3.05	3.10
College Visits/College Student Shadowing	n	56	46	36	35	15	82	270
	Not Effective	1.8%	6.5%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%	1.2%	2.2%
	Slightly Effective	10.7%	15.2%	16.7%	31.4%	33.3%	14.6%	17.4%
	Mostly Effective	35.7%	50.0%	38.9%	37.1%	40.0%	47.6%	42.6%
	Very Effective	51.8%	28.3%	44.4%	28.6%	26.7%	36.6%	37.8%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.38	3.00	3.28	2.91	2.93	3.20	3.16
Educational Field Trips	n	54	43	41	32	15	73	258
	Not Effective	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	6.3%	6.7%	2.7%	3.1%
	Slightly Effective	16.7%	20.9%	22.0%	28.1%	40.0%	20.5%	22.1%
	Mostly Effective	37.0%	46.5%	41.5%	46.9%	33.3%	46.6%	43.0%
	Very Effective	46.3%	25.6%	36.6%	18.8%	20.0%	30.1%	31.8%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.30	2.91	3.15	2.78	2.67	3.04	3.03
Financial Aid Counseling/Advising	n	60	44	35	24	13	64	240
	Not Effective	1.7%	6.8%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	4.7%	3.8%
	Slightly Effective	26.7%	20.5%	17.1%	20.8%	30.8%	7.8%	18.8%
	Mostly Effective	28.3%	43.2%	40.0%	45.8%	61.5%	53.1%	42.9%
	Very Effective	43.3%	29.5%	42.9%	25.0%	7.7%	34.4%	34.6%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.13	2.95	3.26	2.88	2.77	3.17	3.08
Family Cultural Events (Students' participation)	n	22	19	14	8	4	30	97
	Not Effective	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	3.3%	4.1%
	Slightly Effective	27.3%	5.3%	21.4%	12.5%	50.0%	26.7%	21.6%
	Mostly Effective	40.9%	57.9%	35.7%	25.0%	25.0%	40.0%	41.2%
	Very Effective	31.8%	31.6%	42.9%	37.5%	25.0%	30.0%	33.0%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.05	3.16	3.21	2.75	2.75	2.97	3.03
Family Cultural Events (Parents' participation)	n	20	17	13	6	4	28	88
	Not Effective	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	25.0%	3.6%	3.4%
	Slightly Effective	20.0%	23.5%	15.4%	33.3%	25.0%	17.9%	20.5%
	Mostly Effective	45.0%	35.3%	30.8%	50.0%	0.0%	46.4%	39.8%
	Very Effective	35.0%	41.2%	53.8%	0.0%	50.0%	32.1%	36.4%

GEAR UP Activity	<i>n</i> and Rating of Effectiveness	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M	Overall
	Mean Effectiveness	3.15	3.18	3.38	2.33	2.75	3.07	3.09
Other School Workshops about Benefits/Options of College	<i>n</i>	34	28	22	14	9	40	147
	Not Effective	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	14.3%	0.0%	5.0%	4.1%
	Slightly Effective	14.7%	25.0%	18.2%	21.4%	55.6%	15.0%	20.4%
	Mostly Effective	29.4%	50.0%	40.9%	42.9%	11.1%	40.0%	38.1%
	Very Effective	55.9%	25.0%	31.8%	21.4%	33.3%	40.0%	37.4%
	Mean Effectiveness	3.41	3.00	2.95	2.71	2.78	3.15	3.09
Taking a Pre-AP or AP Mathematics Course	<i>n</i>	65	54	30	38	26	50	263
	Not Effective	3.1%	7.4%	3.3%	7.9%	3.8%	0.0%	4.2%
	Slightly Effective	29.2%	29.6%	33.3%	34.2%	53.8%	24.0%	31.9%
	Mostly Effective	44.6%	50.0%	33.3%	39.5%	30.8%	42.0%	41.8%
	Very Effective	23.1%	13.0%	30.0%	18.4%	11.5%	34.0%	22.1%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.88	2.69	2.90	2.68	2.50	3.10	2.82
Taking an AP English/Language Arts Course	<i>n</i>	71	56	25	39	10	42	243
	Not Effective	5.6%	1.8%	0.0%	2.6%	10.0%	0.0%	2.9%
	Slightly Effective	26.8%	30.4%	8.0%	23.1%	30.0%	16.7%	23.5%
	Mostly Effective	52.1%	42.9%	44.0%	46.2%	30.0%	45.2%	46.1%
	Very Effective	15.5%	25.0%	48.0%	28.2%	30.0%	38.1%	27.6%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.77	2.91	3.40	3.00	2.80	3.21	2.98
Taking a Pre-AP or AP Science Course	<i>n</i>	56	36	12	12	7	44	167
	Not Effective	8.9%	2.8%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	4.5%	5.4%
	Slightly Effective	28.6%	41.7%	25.0%	58.3%	14.3%	18.2%	29.9%
	Mostly Effective	41.1%	36.1%	33.3%	16.7%	71.4%	40.9%	38.9%
	Very Effective	21.4%	19.4%	41.7%	16.7%	14.3%	36.4%	25.7%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.75	2.72	3.17	2.42	3.00	3.09	2.85
Taking an AP Social Studies Course	<i>n</i>	51	52	18	18	5	48	192
	Not Effective	7.8%	5.8%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%	4.2%	7.8%
	Slightly Effective	31.4%	30.8%	22.2%	44.4%	20.0%	25.0%	29.7%
	Mostly Effective	33.3%	40.4%	33.3%	11.1%	80.0%	31.3%	33.9%
	Very Effective	27.5%	23.1%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	39.6%	28.6%
	Mean Effectiveness	2.80	2.81	2.89	2.33	2.80	3.06	2.83

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages and means are not reported when there were fewer than 5 respondents to protect respondents' privacy. Rather than effectiveness, students were asked about satisfaction with the relationship between them and their GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor. Response options were reversed compared to effectiveness, so lower numbers denote higher levels of satisfaction.

*Ratings of effectiveness were significantly different across schools for the following activities: Satisfaction with College Preparation Advisor: $\chi^2(15) = 25.1, p < .05$.

Table F.12. Student and Parent Reported Satisfaction with Texas GEAR UP SG and College Preparation Advisors, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	Student (n=638)	Parent (n=186)
<i>What is your level of satisfaction with Texas GEAR UP SG?</i>		
Very Satisfied	33.7%	55.9%
Satisfied	45.9%	32.8%
Dissatisfied	14.1%	7.0%
Very Dissatisfied	6.3%	4.3%
Mean	3.07	3.40
	Student (n=638)	Parent (n=116)
<i>What is your level of satisfaction with the Texas GEAR UP SG College Preparation Advisor?</i>		
Strongly/Very Satisfied*	36.8%	58.6%
Satisfied	54.9%	35.3%
Dissatisfied	5.5%	3.4%
Strongly/Very Dissatisfied*	2.7%	2.6%
Mean	3.26	3.17

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Students and parents were asked about their overall satisfaction with the GEAR UP Program at their school/their child's school and the relationship between them and the College Preparation Advisor at their school/their child's school.

*The student survey included the terms *Strongly Satisfied* and *Strongly Dissatisfied*; the parent survey included the terms *Very Satisfied* and *Very Dissatisfied*.

Table F.13. Parents' Overall Satisfaction with Texas GEAR UP SG: Percentages by Level of Satisfaction By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	n	Does Not Apply	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
High School H	43	9.3%	2.3%	2.3%	25.6%	60.5%
High School I	17	17.6%	0.0%	0.0%	47.1%	35.3%
High School J	25	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	80.0%
High School K	44	22.7%	4.5%	11.4%	25.0%	36.4%
High School L	16	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%
High School M	64	6.3%	4.7%	7.8%	31.3%	50.0%
Overall	209	11.0%	3.8%	6.2%	29.2%	49.8%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

*Ratings of satisfaction were significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(20) = 35.8, p < .05$.

F.4. Advanced Courses and College Credit

Table F.14. Students' Self-Reported Participation in Advanced Courses: Percentages by Participation Rate and Content Area, Comparisons Across Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)*

Have you participated in this activity during this school year?	Year	<i>n</i>	Yes	%	No	%
Taking a pre-AP or AP mathematics course	Year 1	1,364	1,085	79.5%	279	20.5%
	Year 2	1,237	194	15.7%	1,043	84.3%
	Year 3	1,126	590	52.4%	536	47.6%
	Year 4	1,080	593	54.9%	487	45.1%
	Year 5	874	432	49.4%	442	50.6%
	Year 6	736	304	41.3%	432	58.7%
Taking a pre-AP or AP English/language arts course	Year 1	1,362	1,063	78.0%	299	22.0%
	Year 2	1,256	464	36.9%	792	63.1%
	Year 3	1,170	755	64.5%	415	35.5%
	Year 4	1,078	664	61.6%	414	38.4%
	Year 5	873	418	47.9%	455	52.1%
	Year 6	732	290	39.6%	442	60.4%
Taking a pre-AP or AP science course	Year 1	1,355	1,041	76.8%	314	23.2%
	Year 2	1,255	440	35.1%	815	64.9%
	Year 3	1,168	666	57.0%	502	43.0%
	Year 4	1,070	583	54.5%	487	45.5%
	Year 5	860	398	46.3%	462	53.7%
	Year 6	730	209	28.6%	521	71.4%
Taking a pre-AP or AP social studies course	Year 1	-	-	-	-	-
	Year 2	1,264	601	47.5%	663	52.5%
	Year 3	1,155	644	55.8%	511	44.2%
	Year 4	1,074	531	49.4%	543	50.6%
	Year 5	866	393	45.4%	473	54.6%
	Year 6	727	234	32.2%	493	67.8%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages of those who responded with some level of agreement may not total exactly 100% due to rounding.

*Student responses differed across years (since Year 1, with the exception of social studies as the item was not asked until Year 2): Mathematics: $\chi^2(5) = 1,094.3$, $p < .001$; ELA: $\chi^2(5) = 606.4$, $p < .001$; Science: $\chi^2(5) = 664.3$, $p < .001$; Social studies: $\chi(4) = 103.1$, $p < .001$.

Table F.15. Student Reported Anticipations for Graduating with College Credit By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	<i>n</i>	Dual credit and AP exams	Dual credit only	AP exam only	No	Not sure
High School H	165	16.4%	15.8%	14.5%	26.7%	26.7%
High School I	110	7.3%	14.5%	22.7%	25.5%	30.0%
High School J	92	5.4%	10.9%	6.5%	45.7%	31.5%
High School K	147	6.8%	13.6%	13.6%	39.5%	26.5%
High School L	44	20.5%	29.5%	9.1%	22.7%	18.2%
High School M	131	27.5%	16.0%	10.7%	26.0%	19.8%
Overall	689	13.8%	15.4%	13.5%	31.3%	26.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

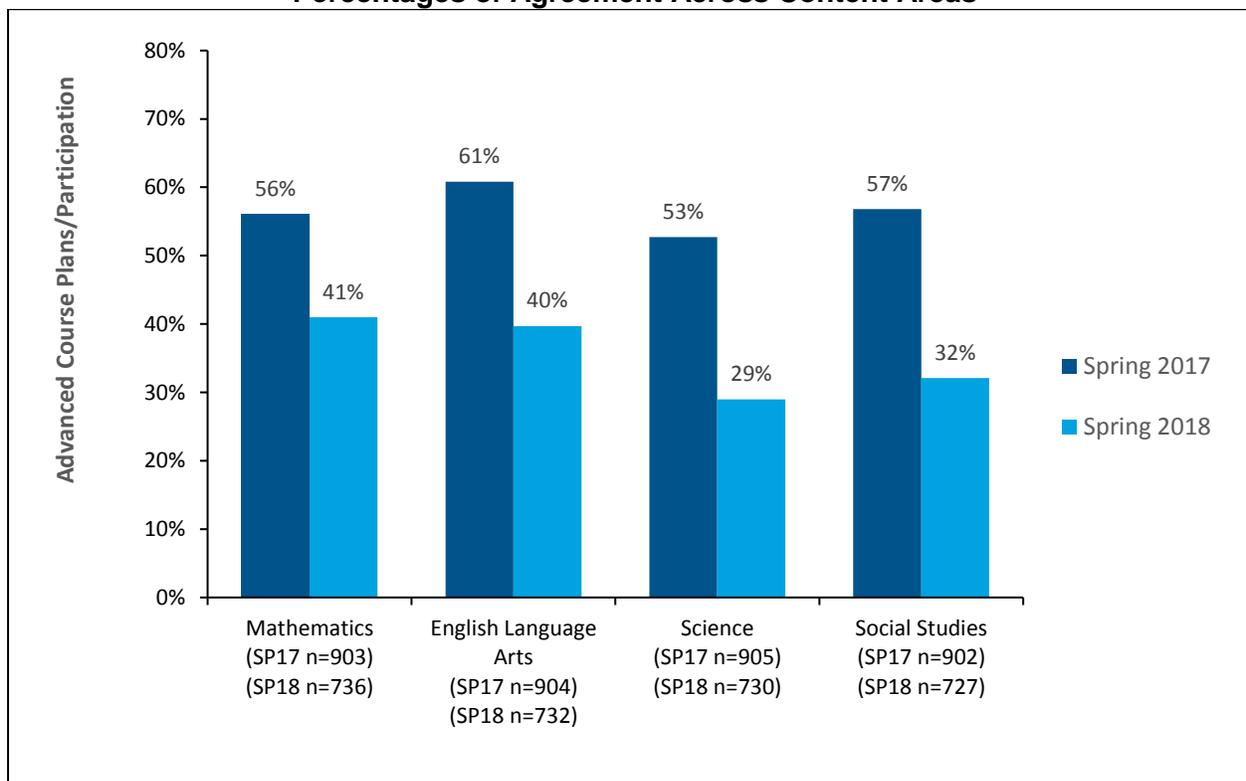
*Responses were significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(20) = 70.89$, $p < .001$.

Table F.16. Student Reported Number of Courses Taken to Earn College Credit Among Those Who Anticipate to Graduate With College Credit By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	n	1-2	3-4	5-6	More Than 6	Not Sure	N/A; I do not anticipate earning any college credits
High School H	77	33.8%	29.9%	22.1%	6.5%	6.5%	1.3%
High School I	49	14.3%	42.9%	14.3%	6.1%	18.4%	4.1%
High School J	21	47.6%	33.3%	9.5%	4.8%	4.8%	0.0%
High School K	50	34.0%	28.0%	14.0%	6.0%	18.0%	0.0%
High School L	23	47.8%	30.4%	13.0%	4.3%	4.3%	0.0%
High School M	71	25.4%	25.4%	18.3%	18.3%	9.9%	2.8%
Overall	291	30.6%	30.9%	16.8%	8.9%	11.0%	1.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Figure F.1. Comparing Students’ Plans to Take Advanced Courses in Year 5 (Grade 11) with Students’ Self-Reported Participation in Advanced Courses in Year 6 (Grade 12): Percentages of Agreement Across Content Areas



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2017 and Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages across those who responded with some level of agreement may not total exactly 100% due to rounding. Results for each response option are included in the full data presented in Table F.14, Appendix F.

F.5. Graduation Program Progress

Table F.17. Student Reported Confidence of High School Graduation by School: Percentages by Level of Confidence, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Very Confident	Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Confident
High School H	152	44.7%	29.6%	17.8%	7.9%
High School I	108	38.0%	22.2%	30.6%	9.3%
High School J	86	45.3%	31.4%	18.6%	4.7%
High School K	146	39.7%	26.7%	27.4%	6.2%
High School L	44	47.7%	29.5%	18.2%	4.5%
High School M	122	50.8%	32.8%	14.8%	1.6%
Overall	658	43.9%	28.6%	21.6%	5.9%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.18. Student-Reported Expectations to Graduate with an Endorsement, Foundation High School Diploma, and Distinguished Level of Achievement, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Are you expected to graduate with endorsement?	(<i>n</i>=653)
Yes, I am expecting to graduate with an endorsement	63.6%
No, I am not expecting to graduate with an endorsement	22.4%
I am not sure	14.1%
Did you drop your endorsement at any point in high school?	(<i>n</i>=238)
Yes, I dropped my endorsement	15.1%
No, I did not drop my endorsement	38.7%
I am not sure	46.2%
Are you expecting to graduate with a Foundation High School Diploma with a Distinguished Level of Achievement?	(<i>n</i>=654)
Yes, I am expecting to graduate with a Distinguished Level of Achievement	47.1%
No, I do not expect to graduate with a Distinguished Level of Achievement	17.4%
I am not sure	35.5%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

F.6. Knowledge about College

Table F.19. Students' Reported College Information Sources: Percentages by Source, Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)

Select the sources of information that have helped you to think about your future college education. (Select all that apply)	Year 1 (n=1,339)	Year 2 (n=1,146)	Year 3 (n=1,308)	Year 4 (n=1,119)	Year 5 (n=918)	Year 6 (n=747)
Research on GEAR UP website*	15.0%	14.7%	18.2%	22.2%	25.3%	27.7%
Information from GEAR UP staff/events*	28.8%	46.2%	33.6%	37.6%	40.0%	36.1%
Information from or discussions with parents/family members*	60.8%	48.7%	41.8%	44.8%	45.0%	39.5%
Information from or discussions with friends or other people my age*	33.2%	38.3%	39.7%	40.7%	47.7%	47.5%
Information from or discussions with teachers/school counselors*	50.3%	37.4%	35.9%	39.0%	46.0%	40.8%
Research that I have done on my own*	34.0%	29.2%	35.9%	39.6%	44.6%	46.7%
College visit or shadowing opportunity	--	--	51.7%	--	62.1%	46.9%
Job site visit or job shadowing opportunity	--	--	--	--	--	22.0%
College fair	--	--	26.2%	30.3%	47.6%	34.9%
Program other than GEAR UP (e.g., AVID, Breakthrough)	1.3%	21.6%	20.9%	23.0%	21.6%	20.9%
Watching sports	0.5%	21.1%	20.1%	20.0%	15.6%	9.0%
Television		21.0%	21.7%	23.1%	21.1%	11.4%
Information from a class activity or assignment	0.4%	45.1%	47.3%	38.5%	40.5%	37.5%
Other*	5.2%	1.8%	2.1%	4.2%	2.7%	2.1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

*There were significant differences across all time points for: Research on GEAR UP website: $\chi^2(5) = 90.0, p < .001$; Information from GEAR UP staff/events: $\chi^2(5) = 85.7, p < .001$; Information from or discussions with parents/family members: $\chi^2(5) = 168.1, p < .001$. Information from or discussions with friends or other people my age: $\chi^2(5) = 70.0, p < .001$; Information from or discussions with teachers/school counselors: $\chi^2(5) = 65.5, p < .001$; Research that I have done on my own: $\chi^2(5) = 94.2, p < .001$; Other reasons: $\chi^2(5) = 39.6, p < .001$.

Table F.20. Students' Reported College Information Sources by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	n	GEAR UP Website	Discussions with GEAR UP Staff/Information at GEAR UP Events
High School H	173	31.2%	38.2%
High School I	120	23.3%	35.0%
High School J	101	37.6%	48.5%
High School K	158	22.8%	22.8%
High School L	54	18.5%	25.9%
High School M	141	29.1%	44.7%
Overall	747	27.7%	36.1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Students' use of the Texas GEAR UP website and discussions with GEAR UP staff/information at GEAR UP events differed significantly across schools: GEAR UP website: $\chi^2(5) = 11.5, p < .05$; Discussions with GEAR UP staff/information at GEAR UP events: $\chi^2(5) = 26.2, p < .001$.

Table F.21. Students' Average Perceived Knowledge of College Terms and Concepts: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)

College Term/Concept	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Importance/Benefit of College*	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.0
General Requirements for College Acceptance*	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.8
ACT*	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.7
SAT*	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.8	3.0

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: Response options to the question “How much do you know about each of the following?” are scaled as follows: 1 – No Knowledge; 2 – Slightly Knowledgeable; 3 – Knowledgeable; 4 – Extremely Knowledgeable.

*Students' self-reported knowledge differed significantly across time points: SAT: $F(5, 6,797) = 190.4, p < 0.001$; ACT: $F(5, 6,687) = 136.3, p < 0.001$; General requirements for college acceptance: $F(5, 6,740) = 33.8, p < 0.001$; Importance/benefit of college: $F(5, 6,771) = 10.7, p < 0.001$.

Table F.22. Percentage of Parents Who Reported Engaging in Discussions with GEAR UP Staff about College Entrance Requirements By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	<i>n</i>	Yes
High School H	48	85.4%
High School I	19	89.5%
High School J	29	93.1%
High School K	56	44.6%
High School L	21	71.4%
High School M	75	82.7%
Overall	248	75.4%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Data are responses to the following question: “Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?”

*Parent responses differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 40.4, p < .001$.

Table F.23. Students' Perceived Knowledge of College Terms, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Response Option	n	SAT*	n	ACT*	n	General Requirements for College Entrance*	n	Importance / Benefit of College*
High School H	Not knowledgeable	171	7.0%	173	13.3%	171	8.8%	173	7.5%
	Slightly knowledgeable		25.1%		31.2%		28.7%		23.1%
	Knowledgeable		52.6%		45.1%		42.7%		46.2%
	Extremely knowledgeable		15.2%		10.4%		19.9%		23.1%
High School I	Not knowledgeable	118	8.5%	117	18.8%	119	12.6%	119	12.6%
	Slightly knowledgeable		12.7%		30.8%		14.3%		10.9%
	Knowledgeable		56.8%		40.2%		52.9%		48.7%
	Extremely knowledgeable		22.0%		10.3%		20.2%		27.7%
High School J	Not knowledgeable	99	6.1%	97	8.2%	99	7.1%	99	7.1%
	Slightly knowledgeable		9.1%		12.4%		9.1%		7.1%
	Knowledgeable		43.4%		39.2%		41.4%		36.4%
	Extremely knowledgeable		41.4%		40.2%		42.4%		49.5%
High School K	Not knowledgeable	157	4.5%	157	10.8%	157	7.1%	157	9.6%
	Slightly knowledgeable		25.5%		28.0%		9.1%		22.3%
	Knowledgeable		52.9%		47.1%		41.4%		47.1%
	Extremely knowledgeable		17.2%		14.0%		42.4%		21.0%
High School L	Not knowledgeable	54	1.9%	54	5.6%	54	10.2%	54	9.3%
	Slightly knowledgeable		13.0%		27.8%		30.6%		22.2%
	Knowledgeable		59.3%		46.3%		43.3%		44.4%
	Extremely knowledgeable		25.9%		20.4%		15.9%		24.1%
High School M	Not knowledgeable	137	5.1%	135	12.6%	138	7.4%	138	5.1%
	Slightly knowledgeable		9.5%		20.7%		27.8%		8.7%
	Knowledgeable		49.6%		48.9%		51.9%		42.0%
	Extremely knowledgeable		35.8%		17.8%		13.0%		44.2%
Overall	Not knowledgeable	736	5.8%	733	12.3%	738	9.3%	740	8.4%
	Slightly knowledgeable		17.3%		25.8%		21.1%		16.1%
	Knowledgeable		52.0%		44.7%		45.7%		44.6%
	Extremely knowledgeable		24.9%		17.2%		23.8%		30.9%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Students' self-reported knowledge differed significantly across schools for the following items: SAT: $\chi^2(15) = 54.5, p < .001$; ACT: $\chi^2(15) = 60.4, p < .001$; General Requirements for College Entrance: $\chi^2(15) = 57.8, p < .001$; Importance/Benefit of College: $\chi^2(15) = 58, p < .001$.

Table F.24. Average Students' Perceived Knowledge of College Terms, By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	SAT*	<i>n</i>	ACT*	<i>n</i>	General Requirements for College Entrance*	<i>n</i>	Importance / Benefit of College*
High School H	171	2.8	173	2.5	171	2.7	173	2.9
High School I	118	2.9	117	2.4	119	2.8	119	2.9
High School J	99	3.2	97	3.1	99	3.2	99	3.3
High School K	157	2.8	157	2.6	157	2.7	157	2.8
High School L	54	3.1	54	2.8	54	2.7	54	2.8
High School M	137	3.2	135	2.7	138	3.0	138	3.3
Overall	736	3.0	733	2.7	738	2.8	740	3.0

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Students' self-reported knowledge differed significantly across schools each item: SAT: $F(5, 730) = 7.0, p < 0.001$;

ACT: $F(5, 727) = 8.2, p < 0.001$; General requirements for college acceptance: $F(5, 732) = 6.5, p < 0.001$;

Importance/benefit of college: $F(5, 734) = 7.6, p < 0.001$.

Table F.25. Average Parents' Perceived Knowledge of College Terms, By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Response Option	<i>n</i>	Financial Aid and the Costs/Benefits of Your Child Pursuing a Postsecondary Education*	<i>n</i>	General Requirements for College Entrance	<i>n</i>	Importance/Benefit of College
High School H	Not knowledgeable	48	8.3%	48	2.1%	48	2.1%
	Slightly knowledgeable		31.3%		33.3%		16.7%
	Knowledgeable		54.2%		45.8%		52.1%
	Extremely knowledgeable		6.3%		18.8%		29.2%
High School I	Not knowledgeable	17	0.0%	19	10.5%	19	5.3%
	Slightly knowledgeable		52.9%		26.3%		26.3%
	Knowledgeable		47.1%		57.9%		63.2%
	Extremely knowledgeable		0.0%		5.3%		5.3%
High School J	Not knowledgeable	29	3.4%	29	0.0%	29	0.0%
	Slightly knowledgeable		17.2%		24.1%		10.3%
	Knowledgeable		62.1%		55.2%		51.7%
	Extremely knowledgeable		17.2%		20.7%		37.9%
High School K	Not knowledgeable	52	15.4%	56	16.1%	56	12.5%
	Slightly knowledgeable		36.5%		25.0%		8.9%
	Knowledgeable		40.4%		42.9%		46.4%
	Extremely knowledgeable		7.7%		16.1%		32.1%
High School L	Not knowledgeable	20	0.0%	20	0.0%	21	0.0%
	Slightly knowledgeable		35.0%		15.0%		4.8%
	Knowledgeable		50.0%		60.0%		47.6%
	Extremely knowledgeable		15.0%		25.0%		47.6%
High School M	Not knowledgeable	69	7.2%	75	6.7%	75	4.0%
	Slightly knowledgeable		21.7%		22.7%		9.3%
	Knowledgeable		50.7%		54.7%		48.0%
	Extremely knowledgeable		20.3%		16.0%		38.7%
Overall	Not knowledgeable	235	7.7%	247	6.9%	248	4.8%
	Slightly knowledgeable		29.8%		25.1%		11.7%
	Knowledgeable		50.2%		51.0%		50.0%
	Extremely knowledgeable		12.3%		17.0%		33.5%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

*Parents' self-reported knowledge of financial aid and the cost/benefits of their child pursuing a postsecondary education differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(15) = 25.3, p < .05$.

F.7. Financial Aid Knowledge and Understanding

Table F.26. Students' Perceived Knowledge about Financial Aid Terms, Year 6 (Grade 12)

How much do you know about each of the following?	<i>n</i>	No Knowledge	Slightly Knowledgeable	Knowledgeable	Extremely Knowledgeable
FAFSA ^a	738	8.3%	20.7%	47.8%	23.2%
Federal Pell Grants	737	30.0%	32.8%	26.2%	11.0%
Federal student loans	740	11.8%	31.6%	43.1%	13.5%
Federal work-study	735	29.0%	29.1%	31.7%	10.2%
Scholarships	735	5.3%	17.8%	45.3%	31.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

^a FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. However, the survey items used only the acronym.

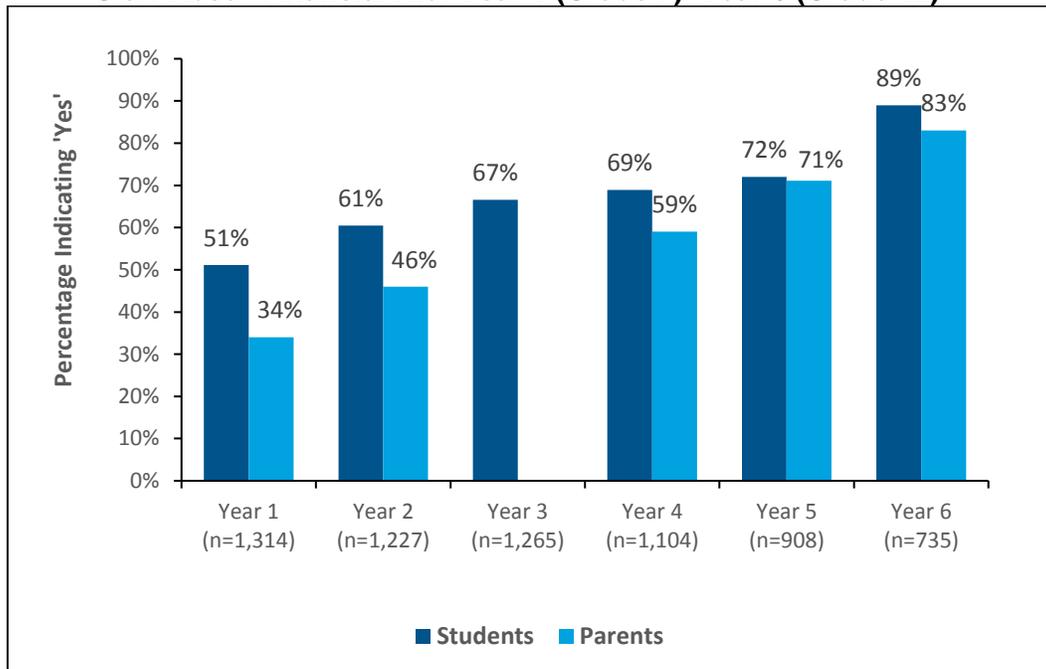
Table F.27. Students' Reported Beliefs That They Will Have Enough Financial Aid for Their Education, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Do you believe you will have enough financial aid to pay for the education you plan to pursue next year?	High School H (n=164)	High School I (n=116)	High School J (n=99)	High School K (n=150)	High School L (n=51)	High School M (n=134)	Overall (n=714)
Yes, I believe I will have adequate financial aid*	43.3%	25.0%	35.4%	26.0%	15.7%	32.1%	31.5%
I am not sure, I am still searching for additional financial aid	40.2%	44.0%	47.5%	53.3%	56.9%	46.3%	46.9%
No, I do not believe I will have adequate financial aid	17.1%	22.4%	19.2%	16.0%	23.5%	14.9%	18.1%
N/A I will not need financial aid for my education	4.3%	10.3%	4.0%	6.0%	13.7%	6.0%	6.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Student responses differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 21.6, p < .001$.

Figure F.2. Parents’ and Students’ Discussions with School or GEAR UP Staff About Financial Aid: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)



Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: This figure reflects respondents that answered the question, “Has anyone from your school or GEAR UP spoken with you about the availability of financial aid to help you pay for college?” The “n” provided is in reference to the student surveys; parent survey ns are as follows: Year 1=396, Year 2=457, Year 4=719, Year 5=346, Year 6=249. Parent survey data from Year 3 is not included due to low response.

Table F.28. Student Differences by School: Perceived Affordability of College, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Not Sure	Probably	Definitely
Community College						
High School H	162	4.3%	11.7%	27.2%	34.0%	22.8%
High School I	111	7.2%	12.6%	21.6%	30.6%	27.9%
High School J	96	9.4%	12.5%	19.8%	38.5%	19.8%
High School K	147	5.4%	16.3%	27.2%	36.1%	15.0%
High School L	50	10.0%	10.0%	26.0%	38.0%	16.0%
High School M	132	5.3%	6.8%	15.2%	31.1%	41.7%
Overall	698	6.3%	11.9%	22.9%	34.2%	24.6%
Four-Year College						
High School H	163	8.0%	18.4%	29.4%	33.7%	10.4%
High School I	112	12.5%	23.2%	28.6%	29.5%	6.3%
High School J	97	17.5%	13.4%	32.0%	24.7%	12.4%
High School K	147	7.5%	19.7%	37.4%	25.9%	9.5%
High School L	50	10.0%	14.0%	38.0%	26.0%	12.0%
High School M	128	7.0%	7.8%	25.8%	39.8%	19.5%
Overall	697	9.9%	16.5%	31.3%	30.7%	11.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

*Student-reported perceived affordability of college differed significantly across schools: Local community college: $\chi^2(20) = 42.1, p < .01$; Public 4-year college: $\chi^2(20) = 41.3, p < .01$.

Table F.29. Parents' and Students' Perceptions of Affordability, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Type of Postsecondary School	<i>n</i>	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Not Sure	Probably	Definitely
Student						
Local public community college	698	6.3%	11.9%	22.9%	34.2%	24.6%
Public 4-year college	697	9.9%	16.5%	31.3%	30.7%	11.6%
Parent						
Local public community college	234	3.8%	8.1%	--	43.6%	44.4%
Public 4-year college	236	6.8%	20.3%	--	41.9%	30.9%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018) and Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. *Not Sure* option not included in Parent Survey.

F.8. Expectations and Aspirations

Table F.30. Students' and Parents' Educational Aspirations and Expectations Over Time: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)

	<i>n</i>	High School or Less	Some College	Two-Year College Degree	Four-Year College Degree	More than a Four-Year College Degree
Parent Aspirations (Year 1)	373	2.4%	9.4%	8.8%	79.4%	
Parent Expectations (Year 1)	363	2.5%	9.9%	19.6%	68.0%	
Parent Aspirations (Year 2)	467	3.8%	6.4%	8.4%	36.8%	44.5%
Parent Expectations (Year 2)	466	4.7%	7.1%	14.2%	37.1%	36.9%
Parent Aspirations (Year 4)	729	4.8%	5.8%	13.6%	32.5%	43.3%
Parent Expectations (Year 4)	735	3.6%	5.6%	11.4%	37.6%	41.9%
Parent Aspirations (Year 5)	352	3.7%	4.0%	8.2%	37.8%	46.3%
Parent Expectations (Year 5)	350	2.6%	6.0%	10.9%	46.6%	34.0%
Parent Aspirations (Year 6)	247	5.3%	4.0%	10.5%	36.4%	43.7%
Parent Expectations (Year 6)	248	4.4%	5.6%	15.3%	44.0%	30.6%
Student Aspirations (Year 1)	1,269	5.9%	14.6%	17.0%	62.5%	
Student Expectations (Year 1)	1,156	6.7%	17.8%	30.0%	45.4%	
Student Aspirations (Year 2)	1,251	10.6%	7.5%	13.5%	31.5%	36.9%
Student Expectations (Year 2)	1,238	14.2%	10.2%	18.1%	34.5%	23.0%
Student Aspirations (Year 3)	1,326	9.0%	6.8%	12.4%	39.7%	32.1%
Student Expectations (Year 3)	1,324	11.3%	11.0%	18.7%	37.3%	21.6%
Student Aspirations (Year 4)	1,129	9.9%	6.6%	11.6%	41.5%	30.4%
Student Expectations (Year 4)	1,128	11.6%	9.2%	18.8%	41.6%	18.8%

	<i>n</i>	High School or Less	Some College	Two-Year College Degree	Four-Year College Degree	More than a Four-Year College Degree
Student Aspirations (Year 5)	920	12.7%	6.5%	11.2%	43.0%	26.5%
Student Expectations (Year 5)	917	11.8%	8.8%	22.0%	39.9%	17.4%
Student Aspirations (Year 6)	739	14.2%	4.6%	14.5%	45.2%	21.5%
Student Expectations (Year 6)	745	13.4%	6.2%	20.0%	46.3%	14.1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018); Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Spring 2018). Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Year 1 (Grade 7) surveys only asked about four-year degree or higher whereas all other years asked about four-year degree and more than a four-year degree separately. Given the low parent response rate in Year 3, parent survey results are not reported. In fall 2015 of Year 4, parent surveys were administered again due to low response rates in spring 2015. Additionally, low parent response rates in Years 1, 2, 4, and 5 warrant caution in interpreting the trend data included on parent surveys.

Table F.31. Students' Educational Aspirations by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	<i>n</i>	Some High School	High School	Some College	Two-Year College Degree	Four-Year College Degree	More than Four-Year College Degree
High School H	170	2.4%	13.5%	7.1%	14.1%	43.5%	19.4%
High School I	120	0.0%	13.3%	5.0%	16.7%	37.5%	27.5%
High School J	101	5.0%	13.9%	1.0%	10.9%	50.5%	18.8%
High School K	155	0.6%	12.9%	7.1%	20.0%	43.9%	15.5%
High School L	52	1.9%	3.8%	3.8%	15.4%	57.7%	17.3%
High School M	141	1.4%	12.1%	1.4%	9.2%	46.8%	29.1%
Overall	739	1.8%	12.4%	4.6%	14.5%	45.2%	21.5%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018)

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

*Students' educational aspirations differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(25) = 44.4, p < .01$.

Table F.32. Students' Educational Expectations by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Some High School	High School	Some College	Two-Year College Degree	Four-Year College Degree	More than Four-Year College Degree
High School H	173	0.6%	12.7%	6.9%	19.7%	47.4%	12.7%
High School I	120	0.0%	15.8%	6.7%	24.2%	35.8%	17.5%
High School J	101	1.0%	14.9%	5.0%	15.8%	51.5%	11.9%
High School K	157	0.6%	14.6%	8.3%	21.7%	44.6%	10.2%
High School L	54	3.7%	5.6%	1.9%	24.1%	48.1%	16.7%
High School M	140	0.0%	9.3%	5.0%	16.4%	51.4%	17.9%
Overall	745	0.7%	12.8%	6.2%	20.0%	46.3%	14.1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table F.33. Parents' Educational Aspirations by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Less than High School	High School	Some College	Two-Year College Degree	Four-Year College Degree	More than Four-Year College Degree
High School H	47	0.0%	4.3%	2.1%	14.9%	29.8%	48.9%
High School I	18	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	55.6%	22.2%
High School J	29	3.4%	6.9%	10.3%	17.2%	24.1%	37.9%
High School K	56	0.0%	1.8%	7.1%	5.4%	42.9%	42.9%
High School L	21	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	4.8%	23.8%	66.7%
High School M	76	0.0%	7.9%	1.3%	9.2%	39.5%	42.1%
Overall	247	0.8%	4.5%	4.0%	10.5%	36.4%	43.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table F.34. Parents' Educational Expectations by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	<i>n</i>	Less than High School	High School	Some College	Two-Year College Degree	Four-Year College Degree	More than Four-Year College Degree
High School H	47	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	25.5%	42.6%	29.8%
High School I	19	0.0%	10.5%	0.0%	26.3%	47.4%	15.8%
High School J	29	3.4%	3.4%	20.7%	10.3%	31.0%	31.0%
High School K	56	0.0%	5.4%	7.1%	8.9%	51.8%	26.8%
High School L	21	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%	42.9%	47.6%
High School M	76	0.0%	5.3%	3.9%	14.5%	43.4%	32.9%
Overall	248	0.4%	4.0%	5.6%	15.3%	44.0%	30.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

*Parents' educational expectations for their children differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(25) = 41.2, p < .05$.

Table F.35. Parents' Educational Aspirations by Expectations, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

	<i>n</i>	Expect Some High School	Expect High School	Expect Some College	Expect Two-Year College Degree	Expect Four-Year College Degree	Expect More than Four-Year College Degree
Aspire for Less than High School	2	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Aspire for High School or Less	10	0.0%	60.0%	20.0%	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Aspire for Some College	10	0.0%	10.0%	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%
Aspire for Two-Year College Degree	26	0.0%	0.0%	19.2%	69.2%	7.7%	3.8%
Aspire for Four-Year College Degree	90	0.0%	1.1%	2.2%	11.1%	73.3%	12.2%
Aspire for More than Four-Year College Degree	108	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	36.1%	57.4%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

*Parents' educational aspirations for their children differed significantly by their expectations: $\chi^2(25) = 299.5, p < .001$.

Table F.36. Students' Educational Aspirations by Expectations, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	<i>n</i>	Expect Some High School	Expect High School	Expect Some College	Expect Two-Year College Degree	Expect Four-Year College Degree	Expect More than Four-Year College Degree
Aspire for Some High School	13	7.7%	15.4%	23.1%	0.0%	30.8%	23.1%
Aspire for High School	91	0.0%	61.5%	5.5%	8.8%	17.6%	6.6%
Aspire for Some College	34	2.9%	26.5%	50.0%	11.8%	5.9%	2.9%
Aspire for Two-Year College Degree	107	0.0%	10.3%	15.9%	57.0%	15.9%	0.9%
Aspire for Four-Year College Degree	333	0.6%	3.9%	0.9%	20.1%	71.5%	3.0%
Aspire for More than Four-Year College Degree	159	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	4.4%	41.5%	52.8%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

F.9. Postsecondary Plans, College Applications, and Reasons for Attending College

Table F.37. Number of Postsecondary Schools Students Plan To and Have Already Applied To, By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	None	1-2	3-4	5 or More
What is the total number that you plan to apply to by the end of this school year (2017–18)?*					
High School H	142	4.9%	24.6%	41.5%	28.9%
High School I	97	7.2%	29.9%	39.2%	23.7%
High School J	80	10.0%	26.3%	30.0%	33.8%
High School K	128	11.7%	29.7%	44.5%	14.1%
High School L	36	2.8%	38.9%	44.4%	13.9%
High School M	115	9.6%	20.0%	34.8%	35.7%
Overall	598	8.2%	26.8%	39.1%	25.9%
How many postsecondary schools have you already applied to?					
High School H	138	10.9%	34.8%	36.2%	18.1%
High School I	97	9.3%	37.1%	35.1%	18.6%
High School J	83	9.6%	27.7%	39.8%	22.9%
High School K	124	12.9%	36.3%	41.9%	8.9%
High School L	35	2.9%	45.7%	34.3%	17.1%
High School M	119	13.4%	32.8%	26.9%	26.9%
Overall	596	10.9%	34.7%	35.7%	18.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*The number of postsecondary schools that students plan to apply to differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(15) = 30.1, p < .01$.

Table F.38. Types of Postsecondary Schools Students Have Applied to, By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	4-Year College	2-Year College	Technical School	Other	N/A; Do Not Plan to Apply
High School H	164	56.1%	56.1%	10.4%	2.4%	9.1%
High School I	116	58.6%	62.1%	6.9%	1.7%	9.5%
High School J	97	57.7%	62.9%	6.2%	3.1%	3.1%
High School K	150	44.0%	53.3%	13.3%	2.7%	10.0%
High School L	50	44.0%	50.0%	10.0%	0.0%	10.0%
High School M	133	62.4%	59.4%	7.5%	0.0%	3.8%
Overall	710	54.5%	57.6%	9.3%	1.8%	7.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018). Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Table F.39. Resources that Helped Students Prepare and Submit College Applications, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Who has been helping you prepare and submit your college applications (Select all that apply)?	(<i>n</i> =623)
GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor	66.9%
Other GEAR UP Staff	27.9%
School Counselors	27.0%
Teachers	33.2%
Administration and/or Faculty	9.3%
Program At Your School Other Than GEAR UP	13.8%
Parents or Family Members	30.0%
College Admission Counselors	13.6%
College Websites	16.5%
Texas GEAR UP Website	10.0%
Other	1.8%
I have not received support in completing and/or submitting college applications	6.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Table F.40. Parent-Reported Level of Helpfulness Regarding College Applications, by Assistance Resource, Year 6 (Grade 12)

How helpful were the following resources in completing and submitting your child's college application(s)?	Texas GU SG Staff Members (<i>n</i> =172)	School Counselors (<i>n</i> =172)	Other college Access Staff (<i>n</i> =172)
Not Helpful	8.1%	15.1%	11.6%
Slightly Helpful	7.6%	14.5%	10.5%
Helpful	26.2%	37.2%	43.0%
Extremely Helpful	54.7%	29.1%	23.8%
N/A, I do not know	3.5%	4.1%	11.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.41. Level of Difficulty When Completing ApplyTexas Application as Reported by Parents, Year 6 (Grade 12)

How challenging was it for you and/or your child to complete an application for ApplyTexas?	(n=171)
Extremely challenging	1.8%
Challenging	5.8%
A little challenging	31.0%
Not at all challenging	54.4%
N/A, I have not used ApplyTexas/my child does not need to use ApplyTexas/I am not aware of ApplyTexas	7.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.42. Student-Reported Confidence To Be Accepted To The College They Wish to Attend, Year 6 (Grade 12)

How confident are you that you will be accepted to the college you wish to attend next year?	(n=186)
Very Confident	13.4%
Mostly Confident	17.7%
Somewhat confident	40.9%
Not at all confident	21.5%
N/A I did not complete the SAT or ACT	3.2%
N/A I do not plan on pursuing a degree	3.2%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.43. Parent-Reported College Application Submission Rates, by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	Yes	No	Not Sure
High School H	14	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
High School I	33	90.9%	6.1%	3.0%
High School J	17	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
High School K	40	90.0%	7.5%	2.5%
High School L	19	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
High School M	59	94.9%	1.7%	3.4%
Overall	182	94.5%	3.3%	2.2%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

F.10. Postsecondary Financial Aid and Enrollment Plans

Table F.44. Student-Reported Level of Progress Made in Completing the FAFSA By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	High School H (n=148)	High School I (n=105)	High School J (n=88)	High School K (n=137)	High School L (n=46)	High School M (n=121)	Overall (n=645)
I have not yet started	6.8%	2.9%	8.0%	16.1%	6.5%	13.2%	9.5%
I have started, but I have not yet submitted	10.8%	6.7%	12.5%	19.7%	10.9%	5.8%	11.3%
I have submitted my FAFSA	70.3%	73.3%	75.0%	53.3%	69.6%	72.7%	68.2%
N/A I will not be submitting FAFSA	6.8%	5.7%	2.3%	6.6%	10.9%	4.1%	5.7%
N/A I do not know what FAFSA is	5.4%	11.4%	2.3%	4.4%	2.2%	4.1%	5.3%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Student responses differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(20) = 50.0, p < .001$.

Table F.45. Student-Reported Reasons for Not Submitting a FAFSA, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Reason	(n=37)
I do not have enough time to apply to financial aid because of school work and/or extracurricular activities	5.4%
I do not know who to talk to	8.1%
I am not eligible for federal student aid (federal loans or a Pell Grant)	27.0%
My parents and/or I do not feel comfortable providing personal information on financial aid applications	21.6%
Other	5.4%
I do not plan on applying for financial aid	37.8%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.46. Student- and Parent-Reported Types of Financial Aid To Be Used, Year 6 (Grade 12)

Type (Select all that apply)	Student (n=714)	Parent (n=170)
Federal Pell Grant	32.9%	50.0%
Federal Student Loans	31.5%	55.3%
Federal Work Study	25.6%	34.1%
Scholarships	66.4%	70.6%
Other Grants	25.2%	24.1%
Texas-Provided Aid (from TASFA)	20.6%	15.3%
Other	5.5%	6.5%
N/A I do not plan to use financial aid to pay for postsecondary education next year	9.2%	4.1%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018) and Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Table F.47. Percentage of Students Who Have Been Accepted to Postsecondary Schools By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	Have you been accepted to any postsecondary schools yet?*
High School H	142	66.9%
High School I	96	69.8%
High School J	87	85.1%
High School K	128	53.1%
High School L	36	61.1%
High School M	120	80.8%
Overall	609	69.5%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Student acceptances differed significantly by school: $\chi^2(5) = 35.0$, $p < .001$.

Table F.48. Types of Postsecondary Schools Students Have Been Accepted to, By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	<i>n</i>	4-Year College	2-Year College	Technical School	Other
High School H	93	61.3%	65.6%	5.4%	0.0%
High School I	65	72.3%	66.2%	1.5%	0.0%
High School J	73	61.6%	72.6%	2.7%	0.0%
High School K	68	60.3%	48.5%	10.3%	0.0%
High School L	22	59.1%	50.0%	4.5%	0.0%
High School M	96	68.8%	63.5%	6.3%	0.0%
Overall	417	64.5%	62.8%	5.3%	0.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*The percentage of students who reported they had been accepted by a four-year college differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 13.6, p < .05$.

Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Table F.49. Percentage of Students Who Have Decided Which School to Enroll In By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	Have you decided which postsecondary school to enroll in next year?
High School H	91	70.3%
High School I	63	74.6%
High School J	73	76.7%
High School K	67	71.6%
High School L	21	81.0%
High School M	95	66.3%
Overall	410	72.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.50. Types of Postsecondary Schools Students Plan to Enroll In By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	<i>n</i>	4-Year College	2-Year College	Technical School	Other
High School H	63	50.8%	42.9%	4.8%	1.6%
High School I	47	51.1%	46.8%	0.0%	2.1%
High School J	56	46.4%	51.8%	1.8%	0.0%
High School K	48	50.0%	47.9%	2.1%	0.0%
High School L	17	52.9%	41.2%	5.9%	0.0%
High School M	62	59.7%	38.7%	1.6%	0.0%
Overall	293	51.9%	45.1%	2.4%	0.7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.51. Parent-Reported Expectations for Child to Enroll in Postsecondary Education By School: Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	Yes	No	Not Sure
High School H	19	73.7%	5.3%	21.1%
High School I	48	68.8%	6.3%	25.0%
High School J	29	58.6%	0.0%	41.4%
High School K	56	71.4%	5.4%	23.2%
High School L	21	90.5%	0.0%	9.5%
High School M	76	77.6%	5.3%	17.1%
Overall	249	73.1%	4.4%	22.5%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Parent Survey (Spring 2018).

Table F.52. Student-Reported Factors to Influence College Planning to Attend, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	n	%
The college offers the type of degree I plan to pursue (Certificate, Associate, Bachelor's, etc.)	713	82.2%
The school has a good reputation for the subject I want to major in	717	80.5%
The college has a high graduation/completion rate for students like me	710	73.9%
The size of the college is a good fit for me	715	72.4%
I like the average class size at this college; it is a good fit for me	714	71.8%
I will receive financial aid from the college if I attend	711	69.1%
There will be other students who are like me	712	67.4%
The distance of the college to my home/family	710	62.5%
The college will accept my dual credits and/or AP credits	708	59.6%
I was referred to the college by a family member	712	45.8%
I was referred to the college by a GEAR UP staff member	715	41.5%
I was referred to the college by a school staff member or counselor	713	39.0%
It is close to my current job	718	35.7%
My friends are going to this college	716	28.9%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

Table F.53. Student-Reported Preparedness for Postsecondary Education By School, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	n	Not At All Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Mostly Prepared	Very Prepared	I Do Not Plan To Attend College
High School H	173	11.0%	40.5%	35.8%	9.8%	2.9%
High School I	119	15.1%	37.8%	31.9%	12.6%	2.5%
High School J	99	5.1%	47.5%	35.4%	11.1%	1.0%
High School K	158	12.7%	48.7%	28.5%	7.6%	2.5%
High School L	52	15.4%	28.8%	48.1%	5.8%	1.9%
High School M	135	5.9%	32.6%	37.8%	20.0%	3.7%
Overall	736	10.6%	40.5%	34.8%	11.5%	2.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

*Student reported level of preparedness differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(20) = 37.1, p < .01$.

Table F.54. Students' Reported Reasons For Not Planning on Continuing Education After High School: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 6 (Grade 12)

If you do not continue your education after high school, what would be the reason(s)? (Select all that apply)	Year 1 (n=680)	Year 2 (n=689)	Year 3 (n=810)	Year 4 (n=27)	Year 5 (n=67)	Year 6 (n=64)
Family commitments	16.0% n=109	15.8% n=109	16.8% n=136	11.1% n=3	13.4% n=9	17.2% n=11
I need to work after HS*	17.8% n=121	21.8% n=150	22.0% n=178	37.0% n=10	43.3% n=29	32.8% n=21
I want to work after HS*	33.4% n=227	37.9% n=261	30.0% n=243	55.6% n=15	58.2% n=39	53.1% n=34
I will not need more than HS to succeed*	6.0% n=41	6.2% n=43	4.4% n=36	14.8% n=4	25.4% n=17	23.4% n=15
I want to join the military service after HS*	23.1% n=157	18.1% n=125	18.3% n=148	22.2% n=6	11.9% n=8	14.1% n=9
It costs too much/I cannot afford it*	47.5% n=323	38.9% n=268	45.6% n=369	40.7% n=11	34.3% n=23	42.2% n=27
My grades are not good enough*	21.8% n=148	19.3% n=133	24.0% n=194	37.0% n=19	38.8% n=26	28.1% n=18
My performance on college entrance exams	-- --	-- --	-- --	22.0% n=6	22.4% n=15	18.8% n=12
Other	7.4% n=50	5.2% n=36	6.4% n=52	22.0% n=6	10.4% n=7	10.9% n=7

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Due to the skip logic used in the student survey, a small percentage of students were presented with this question. As a result, the number of students who answered these items was significantly lower for Year 4 (Grade 10) and Year 5 (Grade 11) than in previous years.

*Student responses differed significantly across time for the following reasons: I need to work after high school: $\chi^2(5) = 210.4, p < .001$; I want to work after high school: $\chi^2(5) = 8962.8, p < .001$; I will not need more than high school to succeed: $\chi^2(5) = 88.8, p < .001$; I want to join the military service after high school: $\chi^2(5) = 15.6, p < .01$; It costs too much/ I can't afford it: $\chi^2(5) = 42.7, p < .001$; and My grades aren't good enough: $\chi^2(5) = 18.5, p < .01$.

Table F.55. Students' Thinking About Not Attending Postsecondary Education by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	In prior years, I expected to continue my education after high school, but I no longer expect to do so.	I have never expected to continue my education after high school.
High School H	19	36.8%	63.2%
High School I	13	69.2%	30.8%
High School J	3	33.3%	66.7%
High School K	14	57.1%	42.9%
High School L	6	66.7%	33.3%
High School M	8	50.0%	50.0%
Overall	63	52.4%	47.6%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Respondents to this question were those who indicated that they do not plan to pursue postsecondary education.

F.11. Texas GEAR UP Importance in Postsecondary Plans

Table F.56. Percentages of Students Who Do and Do Not Credit Texas GEAR UP SG in Helping Them Determine Their Postsecondary Plans, Year 6 (Grade 12)*

School	<i>n</i>	Yes, I will be going in fall 2018	Yes, but sometime after fall 2018	No, I was already planning on going to college	No, I still don't plan to go to college	Does not apply; I am not aware I have participated in GEAR UP at my school but I do plan to go to college	Does not apply; I am not aware I have participated in GEAR UP at my school and I do not plan to go to college
High School H	173	55.5%	16.2%	9.8%	6.9%	7.5%	4.0%
High School I	120	50.0%	15.0%	13.3%	8.3%	10.8%	2.5%
High School J	101	64.4%	16.8%	13.9%	3.0%	2.0%	0.0%
High School K	157	33.8%	22.9%	27.4%	7.6%	7.0%	1.3%
High School L	54	27.8%	11.1%	44.4%	7.4%	3.7%	5.6%
High School M	141	65.2%	10.6%	16.3%	4.3%	2.1%	1.4%
Overall	746	51.1%	16.1%	18.4%	6.3%	5.9%	2.3%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Student Survey (Spring 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Due to anonymity, responses are not linked to an individual respondent, thus comparisons over time are based on aggregate responses.

*Student responses differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(25) = 94.8, p < .001$.