



---

# West Virginia **GEARUP** Evaluation

Year 3 School Personnel Survey:  
Summary of Results

July 15, 2011

*Updated November 2011*

**EDVANTIA**<sup>®</sup>  
Partners in education. Focused on results.

Since 1966, Edvantia has been in the business of developing knowledge, resources, and professional services to improve education. A not-for-profit corporation with primary offices in Tennessee and West Virginia, Edvantia offers comprehensive services grounded in research and best practice that help educators meet the needs of all students. Edvantia's national expertise is focused in the following specialty areas: program evaluation, applied research, data analytics, school coaching, district performance improvement, and state education agency capacity building. Edvantia's clients and funders include federal agencies, state and local education agencies, professional associations, foundations, education product vendors, and others committed to improving education.

For information about Edvantia research, products, or services, contact



P.O. Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325 • 304.347.0400 • 800.624.9120 • fax 304.347.0487

One Vantage Way, Suite C-200, Nashville, TN 37228 • 615.565.0101 • fax 615.565.0112

[info@edvantia.org](mailto:info@edvantia.org) • [www.edvantia.org](http://www.edvantia.org)

© 2011 by Edvantia

Reproduction of this document is permitted with Edvantia cited as the source.

This publication is based on work sponsored wholly or in part by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC). Its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of HEPC or its staff.

Edvantia is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

# Contents

- School Personnel Survey..... 1
- Methods..... 1
- Major Findings ..... 3
  - Reach of Services.....3
  - Professional Development .....5
  - Quality, Relevance, and Usefulness of Services ..... 10
  - Impact of GEAR UP Project..... 10
  - Implementation of West Virginia GEAR UP ..... 15
  - Challenges and Solutions ..... 16
  - Alignment of Project Goals ..... 17
- Conclusions and Recommendations.....20

## List of Tables

Table 1.	Number of Participants by School.....	1
Table 2.	Frequencies of Participation in GEAR UP Activities Percentages by Year .....	4
Table 3.	Use of Communication Strategies for Sharing GEAR UP Information with Students, Parents, or School Personnel .....	5
Table 4.	Percentage of Respondents Receiving Professional Development from Different Sources.....	7
Table 5.	Respondents’ Ratings of the Extent to which GEAR UP Professional Development Prepared Them .....	8
Table 6.	Comparison of Mean Professional Development Preparation Ratings (Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3) .....	9
Table 7.	Respondents Reporting Good or Very Good Quality, Relevance, and Usefulness of GEAR UP Services.....	10

## List of Figures

Figure 1.	Respondents reporting changes in student interest in Years 1-3.....	11
Figure 2.	Respondents reporting changes in student involvement in Years 1-3.....	11
Figure 3.	Respondents reporting changes in students’ career awareness in Years 1-3.....	12
Figure 4.	Respondents reporting changes in students’ career interest in Years 1-3.....	13
Figure 5.	Respondents reporting changes in students’ college awareness in Years 1-3.....	13
Figure 6.	Respondents reporting changes in parents’ school interest and involvement in Year 3.....	14
Figure 7.	Respondents reporting positive impact of GEAR UP in Years 1-3.....	15
Figure 8.	Respondents’ perception of West Virginia GEAR UP project implementation.....	15
Figure 9.	Respondents’ perceptions of West Virginia GEAR UP activity sustainability beyond the end of the grant.....	16
Figure 10.	Respondents reporting the extent to which the GEAR UP program goals are aligned with their school or county goals or mission.....	18
Figure 11.	Respondents’ familiarity with GEAR UP program goals prior to 2011 survey.....	19

## School Personnel Survey

For the third year, the West Virginia Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (West Virginia GEAR UP) evaluation team at Edvantia surveyed the personnel at GEAR UP schools to gather information about their perceptions of the implementation and impact of the services and resources offered during the year through the GEAR UP program. The purpose of gathering this information was to provide formative input to GEAR UP program staff that will allow them to make any adjustments they deem necessary. This summary report highlights the major findings from the data collected during Year 3 of the project (2010-2011) and presents recommendations to facilitate discussion about programmatic adjustments.

### Methods

The survey instrument created in Year 1 (2009) and revised in Year 2 (2009-2010) was again revised slightly for use in Year 3 (2010-2011). Edvantia evaluation staff incorporated feedback and suggestions from GEAR UP staff at the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) to add items related to GEAR UP goals and to ensure that items incorporated key aspects and features of the project. The 34-item questionnaire was designed to capture the perceptions of school administrators, teachers, and counselors on the implementation and impact of the GEAR UP program in their schools. School personnel were asked about the quality of various GEAR UP services and resources; whether GEAR UP provided necessary, relevant, and useful professional development; their perceptions of student academic development, and college and career awareness; and their perceptions about GEAR UP implementation and goals.

The evaluation team administered the web-based survey in May through June of 2011 to West Virginia GEAR UP school personnel via direct e-mails to personnel at each school. The e-mail messages explained the purpose of and procedures for the survey and contained the web link to take personnel (administrators, teachers, and counselors) to the instrument. Reminder e-mails were sent to site coordinators and school personnel periodically throughout the survey period. Updates about the number of respondents by school were also sent to HEPC personnel and site coordinators (and in one instance, school personnel) to motivate and encourage increased participation in the survey. A total of 372 out of approximately 646 staff members working at the 17 GEAR UP high schools completed the School Personnel Survey in Year 3. The 58% response rate compares favorably to the 22% and 36% response rates achieved in Years 1 and 2, respectively. Table 1 lists the number of survey respondents from each West Virginia GEAR UP school in all years.

**Table 1. Number of Participants by School**

School <sup>a</sup>	County	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Madison Middle School	Boone	6	11	—
Scott High School	Boone	—	—	40
Sherman High School	Boone	32	13	21
Sherman Junior High School	Boone	10	7	—
Clay High School	Clay	2	21	17
Clay Middle School	Clay	28	29	—
Duval PK-8 School	Lincoln	2	5	—
Guyan Valley Middle School	Lincoln	13	14	—
Hamlin PK-8 School	Lincoln	2	6	—
Harts Intermediate School	Lincoln	2	6	—

School <sup>a</sup>	County	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Lincoln County High School	Lincoln	6	16	17
Big Creek High School	McDowell	1	4	—
laeger High School	McDowell	4	5	—
Mount View High School	McDowell	4	2	25
Mount View Middle School	McDowell	—	1	—
River View High School <sup>b</sup>	McDowell	—	—	16
Sandy River Middle School	McDowell	12	15	—
Southside K-8 School	McDowell	2	10	—
Burch High School	Mingo	8	5	8
Gilbert High School	Mingo	0	6	11
Kermit Area School	Mingo	0	2	—
Lenore K-8 School	Mingo	2	5	—
Matewan High School	Mingo	0	8	5
Matewan Middle School	Mingo	0	3	—
Mingo Career and Tech Center	Mingo	—	1	0
Tug Valley High School	Mingo	1	2	11
Williamson High School	Mingo	1	6	13
Williamson Middle School	Mingo	12	19	—
Geary Elementary/Middle School	Roane	1	6	—
Roane County High School	Roane	1	20	18
Spencer Middle School	Roane	10	10	—
Walton Elementary/Middle School	Roane	4	6	—
Summers High School	Summers	0	24	24
Summers Middle School	Summers	19	15	—
Diana Elementary School	Webster	1	1	—
Glade Middle School	Webster	4	6	—
Hacker Valley Elementary School	Webster	0	1	—
Webster County High School	Webster	5	16	33
Webster Springs Elementary School	Webster	1	2	—
Wirt County Middle School	Wirt	6	13	—
Wirt High School	Wirt	4	2	35
Baileysville Elementary/Middle School	Wyoming	0	1	—
Glen Fork Elementary/Middle School	Wyoming	1	1	—
Herndon Consolidated School	Wyoming	1	5	—
Huff Consolidated School	Wyoming	9	1	—
Mullens Middle School	Wyoming	1	13	—
Oceana Middle School	Wyoming	7	6	—
Pineville Middle School	Wyoming	0	2	—
Road Branch Elementary/Middle School	Wyoming	5	4	—
Westside High School	Wyoming	11	29	39
Wyoming County Career and Tech Center	Wyoming	—	1	0
Wyoming County East High School	Wyoming	22	20	39
<b>Total Respondents</b>		<b>264</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>372</b>
<b>Response Rate</b>		<b>22.2%</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>57.6%</b>

a. In Year 3, the West Virginia GEAR UP program transitioned from serving both middle and high schools to serving high schools only. The Year 3 School Personnel Survey was administered only in high schools. Schools not receiving the survey in a year are indicated with a dash (—).

b. The 2010-2011 school year marked the first year of operation for River View High School, created from the consolidation of Big Creek and laeger High Schools.

## Major Findings

The major findings of the School Personnel Survey are presented in the following sections and are organized by the various foci of the survey:

- reach of services
- professional development
- quality, relevance, and utility of services
- impact of the program on students and parents (e.g., involvement in school, college and career awareness, academic development)
- implementation of the project (e.g., use of resources, information dissemination)
- challenges and solutions
- alignment of project goals with local goals

Data from Years 1 and 2 are presented with Year 3 data to allow for comparisons over time, where appropriate. When examining data across years, however, it is important to remember that although there is some overlap in personnel from year to year, the composition of the survey sample differed slightly over time.

### Reach of Services

The survey asked participants to use a 5-point scale to report how often they had been involved in GEAR UP activities during the 2010-2011 school year:

- 1: *Never*
- 2: *Only 1-2 times*
- 3: *Quarterly*
- 4: *Monthly*
- 5: *Weekly or more often*

Table 2 presents the level of participation in each GEAR UP activity. Overall, respondents' self-reported involvement in GEAR UP activities remained stable in each of the three years. The level or frequency of involvement in college visits and/or college student shadowing, dual credit, financial aid counseling or advising, and job site visits and/or job shadowing appears to have increased slightly across the three years, while the level of reported involvement in computer-assisted labs, mentoring, and professional development for teachers seems to have decreased slightly over the three years. When asked what other activities they have been involved in during the school year, respondents listed activities such as ACT preparation, credit recovery, coaching, College Summit, homebound instruction, and parent spirit week luncheons.

**Table 2. Frequencies of Participation in GEAR UP Activities Percentages by Year**

Activities	Never			Only 1-2 times			Quarterly			Monthly			Weekly or more often		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
College application week, College Goal Sunday	--	--	48%	--	--	39%	--	--	4%	--	--	2%	--	--	1%
College visit and/or college student shadowing	50%	47%	48%	35%	42%	35%	7%	4%	9%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Computer-assisted lab	20%	22%	28%	15%	15%	19%	8%	9%	10%	16%	15%	14%	36%	32%	23%
Counseling, advising, academic planning, and/or career counseling	31%	23%	23%	19%	23%	23%	7%	7%	11%	13%	17%	14%	22%	23%	21%
Cultural events or activities	32%	20%	22%	38%	41%	41%	13%	15%	15%	8%	14%	10%	3%	2%	4%
Curriculum development	--	30%	31%	--	24%	31%	--	13%	12%	--	14%	11%	--	12%	8%
Dual credit	--	73%	64%	--	9%	12%	--	4%	5%	--	1%	3%	--	6%	11%
Educational field trips	32%	29%	35%	51%	47%	43%	10%	15%	14%	2%	3%	2%	1%	0%	1%
Family events or activities	30%	26%	29%	35%	35%	36%	19%	20%	18%	7%	6%	7%	3%	7%	3%
Financial aid counseling or advising	--	60%	54%	--	19%	20%	--	7%	9%	--	4%	6%	--	3%	6%
Job site visits and/or job shadowing	72%	70%	64%	17%	17%	19%	2%	4%	5%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Mentoring	42%	46%	61%	13%	17%	11%	4%	6%	4%	10%	6%	8%	22%	17%	10%
Summer programs	74%	69%	68%	16%	13%	16%	0%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Teacher professional development	6%	11%	13%	18%	27%	24%	30%	29%	32%	33%	19%	18%	8%	7%	4%
Tutoring, homework assistance, and/or academic enrichment	22%	22%	21%	16%	17%	17%	6%	7%	11%	5%	11%	13%	47%	34%	30%
Workshops on college planning and/or financial aid	64%	58%	54%	24%	21%	25%	4%	8%	9%	3%	2%	4%	0%	1%	1%

When asked how information about GEAR UP was shared with students, parents, or school personnel (Table 3), most respondents reported that GEAR UP information was shared through school announcements (75%); literature such as brochures, pamphlets, flyers, letters, e-newsletters, and so on for students (72%); and word of mouth (67%). This varies slightly from Years 1 and 2, when the predominant communication strategy that school personnel observed was literature for parents. Similar to Years 1 and 2, respondents were less likely to see GEAR UP information being shared with students, parents, or school personnel via media outreach (16%), automated calling (20%), and newsletters (26%). More respondents reported seeing GEAR UP information shared via literature for teachers in Year 3 than in either of the previous years (62% versus 56% in Year 1 and 52% in Year 2).

**Table 3. Use of Communication Strategies for Sharing GEAR UP Information with Students, Parents, or School Personnel**

Communication Resource Shared	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
	%	n	%	n	%	n
Advertisements (TV, radio, newspaper)	11%	30	13%	54	23%	84
Automated calling service	15%	40	17%	71	20%	76
Literature (brochures, pamphlets, flyers, letters, e-newsletters, and so on) for teachers	56%	148	53%	227	62%	230
Literature for parents	66%	175	64%	273	60%	223
Literature for students	74%	196	70%	299	72%	268
Media outreach (TV interview, radio interview, news release, Facebook, Twitter)	--	--	9%	40	16%	60
Newsletters	34%	90	31%	133	26%	98
Promotional items (flash drives, t-shirts, and so on)	--	--	53%	228	61%	226
School and regional or community events	45%	118	57%	243	60%	225
School announcements	--	--	69%	296	75%	280
Website announcements (wvgearup.org, county website)	24%	64	28%	119	35%	132
Word of mouth	--	--	63%	269	67%	250
Other (e.g., banners, announcements during assemblies, bulletin boards)	6%	17	2%	10	3%	11

## Professional Development

Participants were asked to indicate whether they received professional development in different areas and the resources sponsoring those offerings (see Table 4 for a summary of participants' responses). The percentage of respondents who reported receiving professional development through GEAR UP remained fairly stable from Year 2 to Year 3; however, the focus of the professional development offerings seemed to shift. Respondents reported a decrease in professional development related to their academic content areas, instructional technology, and technology integration. Respondents also reported an increase in professional development related to 21st century skills, tutoring/mentoring, and test preparation. The Year 3 survey added two new topic areas for professional development: college access and transitions into high school (9th grade academies). About 27% of the Year 3 respondents received professional development in college access and 10% in transitions through GEAR UP resources. The percentage of respondents who received professional development through other resources (grant, school, district, or personal) or unknown resources remained stable or decreased over the three years. Overall, the percentage of respondents reporting that they did not

participate in professional development offerings increased in most of the topic areas in Year 3. However, a modest increase was noted for the following areas: project-based learning, assessment strategies, tutoring/mentoring for students, study skills for students, and parent engagement. When asked to specify other professional development that they received in Year 3, the only respondent to comment indicated training on dropout prevention.

Using a 4-point scale from *not at all* to *a great deal*, participants were asked to report the extent to which West Virginia GEAR UP professional development had prepared them to engage in various instructional and student support activities. The percentage of respondents answering *not at all* continued to decrease in Year 3 while the percentage of respondents who answered *a great deal* increased for all but three activities (using technology, integrating 21st century skills, and integrating instructional technology into classroom instruction) in Year 3 (see Table 5 for frequencies of each response). The one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), excluding the respondents who did not participate in those professional development areas, revealed that Year 3 respondents rated the training significantly better in terms of preparing them than did Year 1 respondents in most areas common across the three years. Year 2 respondents rated their preparedness significantly better than Year 1 respondents on all common areas. There were no significant differences between Year 2 and Year 3 respondents (Table 6 displays the statistical summary).

The survey then asked the participants to indicate what additional professional development activities would be most beneficial to them. Of the Year 3 respondents, 30 (about 8%) answered the question (compared to 15% of respondents in Year 1 and 16% in Year 2). In Year 3, respondents indicated that technology integration and training on how to motivate students would be the most beneficial professional development. The other professional development activities or topics that Year 3 respondents believed would be most beneficial were specific content area training, capacity building, mentoring, parent engagement, test preparation, and classroom management.

**Table 4. Percentage of Respondents Receiving Professional Development from Different Sources**

Professional Development (PD) Topic	Yes, through GEAR UP resources			Yes, through other grant, school, district, or personal resources			Yes, but I do not know what resources were used to provide the PD			No, I have not received that kind of PD this year		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Your academic content area(s)	8%	17%	10%	47%	36%	32%	25%	23%	22%	19%	26%	31%
21st century learning skills	9%	15%	19%	56%	41%	37%	31%	30%	31%	5%	11%	13%
Assessment strategies	4%	7%	9%	45%	36%	35%	31%	27%	27%	16%	25%	22%
Classroom management	3%	4%	4%	34%	22%	22%	20%	17%	15%	37%	48%	48%
College access (CFWV.com)	--	--	27%	--	--	9%	--	--	7%	--	--	48%
Curriculum alignment	3%	5%	7%	43%	29%	24%	24%	22%	21%	26%	36%	38%
Hands-on instructional strategies	7%	13%	12%	45%	33%	26%	28%	26%	22%	17%	26%	32%
Instructional technology (equipment)	18%	26%	18%	52%	35%	30%	27%	24%	26%	8%	17%	19%
P-20 initiatives	--	9%	8%	--	9%	7%	--	4%	8%	--	62%	62%
Parent engagement	--	14%	19%	--	19%	13%	--	11%	11%	--	49%	46%
Project-based learning (PBL)	5%	10%	12%	44%	33%	30%	28%	26%	26%	19%	27%	25%
Study skills (for students)	5%	9%	10%	25%	17%	14%	13%	11%	14%	50%	53%	52%
Technology integration	15%	24%	18%	51%	35%	32%	29%	26%	27%	9%	16%	18%
Test preparation	5%	7%	13%	41%	29%	25%	26%	25%	23%	26%	31%	33%
Transitions (9th grade academies)	--	--	10%	--	--	11%	--	--	8%	--	--	60%
Tutoring or mentoring (for students)	10%	12%	18%	24%	18%	16%	13%	12%	10%	49%	59%	47%
Other (e.g., College Summit, National Board renewal)	2%	1%	2%	9%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	13%	29%	30%

**Table 5. Respondents' Ratings of the Extent to which GEAR UP Professional Development Prepared Them**

Target of Preparation	Not At All			A Little			Somewhat			A Great Deal			N/A did not participate		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
College access	--	15%	14%	--	13%	9%	--	23%	23%	--	26%	31%	--	24%	23%
Hands-on instruction	20%	16%	16%	13%	15%	14%	20%	23%	27%	13%	20%	20%	35%	23%	23%
Integrating 21st century learning skills	17%	12%	10%	8%	9%	13%	20%	24%	31%	23%	34%	27%	32%	19%	19%
Integrating instructional technology in classroom instruction	17%	13%	10%	7%	9%	14%	23%	25%	28%	21%	34%	30%	31%	18%	19%
Mentoring students	23%	19%	18%	11%	12%	12%	17%	25%	23%	12%	20%	23%	36%	24%	24%
Parent engagement	--	20%	20%	--	13%	13%	--	26%	23%	--	15%	19%	--	25%	25%
Transitions (9th grade academies)	--	--	25%	--	--	10%	--	--	18%	--	--	12%	--	--	35%
Tutoring	24%	21%	19%	11%	10%	11%	17%	26%	22%	11%	19%	24%	38%	25%	25%
Using technology	17%	13%	11%	6%	8%	10%	19%	24%	30%	27%	36%	30%	31%	19%	19%

**Table 6. Comparison of Mean Professional Development Preparation Ratings (Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3)**

Target of Preparation	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Differences			F	d f	Partial $\eta^2$
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	Y1 to Y2	Y2 to Y3	Y1 to Y3			
College access	--	--	--	298	2.78	1.11	264	2.92	1.11	--	0.14	--	--	--	--
Hands-on instruction	159	2.40	1.12	298	2.64	1.09	259	2.65	1.08	0.24*	0.01	0.25*	3.09	2	0.009
Tutoring	152	2.24	1.14	285	2.57	1.15	257	2.68	1.17	0.33*	0.11	0.44*	7.39	2	0.021
Mentoring students	155	2.30	1.15	290	2.60	1.14	259	2.66	1.14	0.30*	0.06	0.36*	5.17	2	0.015
Using technology	170	2.80	1.20	317	3.03	1.09	275	2.98	1.02	0.23*	-0.05	0.18	2.44	2	0.006
Integrating 21st century learning skills	169	2.74	1.17	314	3.00	1.07	279	2.93	0.99	0.26*	-0.07	0.19	3.40	2	0.009
Integrating instructional technology in classroom instruction	166	2.72	1.15	317	2.99	1.08	275	2.95	1.01	0.27*	-0.04	0.23*	3.71	2	0.100
Parent engagement	--	--	--	282	2.48	1.10	253	2.56	1.14	--	0.08	--	--	--	--
Transitions (9th grade academies)	--	--	--	--	--	--	222	2.27	1.16	--	--	--	--	--	--

\* p < 0.05

## Quality, Relevance, and Usefulness of Services

Using a 5-point scale ranging from *very poor* to *very good*, participants were asked to rate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of services they, their students, and parents received through the West Virginia GEAR UP grant. An option of not applicable (*NA*), *no service received* was also provided. As shown in Table 7, the percentage of respondents who assigned ratings of *good* or *very good* for the quality, relevance, and usefulness of services that students and school personnel received remained high in Year 3, although some of the figures were slightly smaller than those observed in Year 2.

**Table 7. Respondents Reporting Good or Very Good Quality, Relevance, and Usefulness of GEAR UP Services**

Items	"Good" or "Very good"		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Quality of services you have received	50%	68%	61%
Quality of services your students have received	71%	78%	76%
Quality of services parents have received	--	70%	66%
Relevance of services your students have received	72%	79%	74%
Relevance of services parents have received	--	69%	66%
Usefulness of services your students have received	70%	80%	73%
Usefulness of services parents have received	--	70%	65%

The majority of the respondents were aware that resources had been made available at their schools (80% in each of the three years). Slightly more than half of the Year 1 respondents (57%) reported that they had used these resources; although 71% of respondents in Year 2 reported using GEAR UP resources, the figure decreased to 60% in Year 3. Resources the Year 3 participants had used included computer technology, teacher training/professional development, student tutoring and mentoring, resources for college readiness, college trips/visits, and other technology equipment, among others.

## Impact of GEAR UP Project

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which student interest and involvement in school had been different this year than in the previous year on a 5-point scale from *much worse* to *much better*. Figures 1 and 2 present the percentages of respondents reporting changes in student interest and involvement in school. Most respondents in Year 3 (62%) reported that student interest in school was better than it had been in previous years. See Figure 1 for respondents' perceptions of student interest. The percentage of respondents who answered that student interest was *somewhat* or *much better* increased by about 2% from Year 2 to Year 3. The percentage of respondents answering *no change* in student interest increased from 29% in Year 1 to 35% in Year 2, and then decreased to 33% in Year 3. The percentage of respondents who selected *somewhat worse* or *much worse* remained fairly stable from Year 2 to Year 3 (5.5% and 4.9%, respectively).

As with student interest, most Year 3 respondents (63%) reported that student involvement in school was better than it had been in previous years. See Figure 2 for respondents' perceptions of student involvement. The percentage of school personnel who answered that student involvement was *somewhat better* increased slightly from Year 2 to Year 3 (by about 2%), while the percentage of respondents selecting *much better* decreased slightly (by 1%). The percentage of respondents who answered *no change* in student involvement increased from Year 1 to Year 2, but decreased in Year 3.

However, the percentage of respondents who answered *somewhat* or *much worse* increased by about 3% from Year 2 to Year 3.

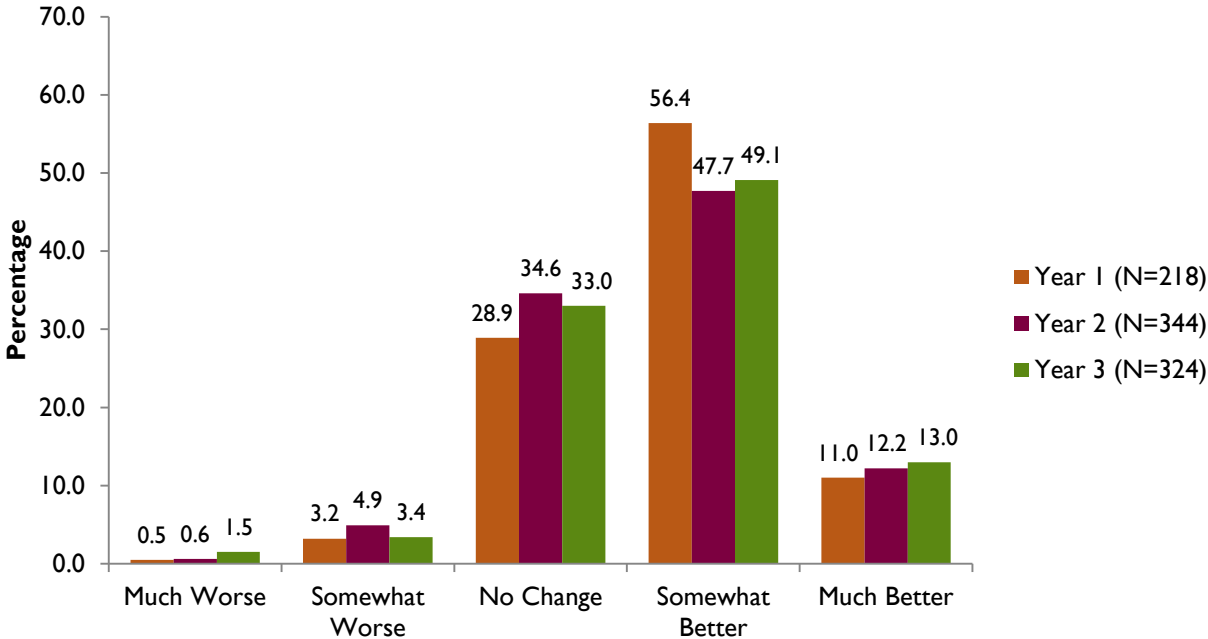


Figure 1. Respondents reporting changes in student interest in Years 1-3.

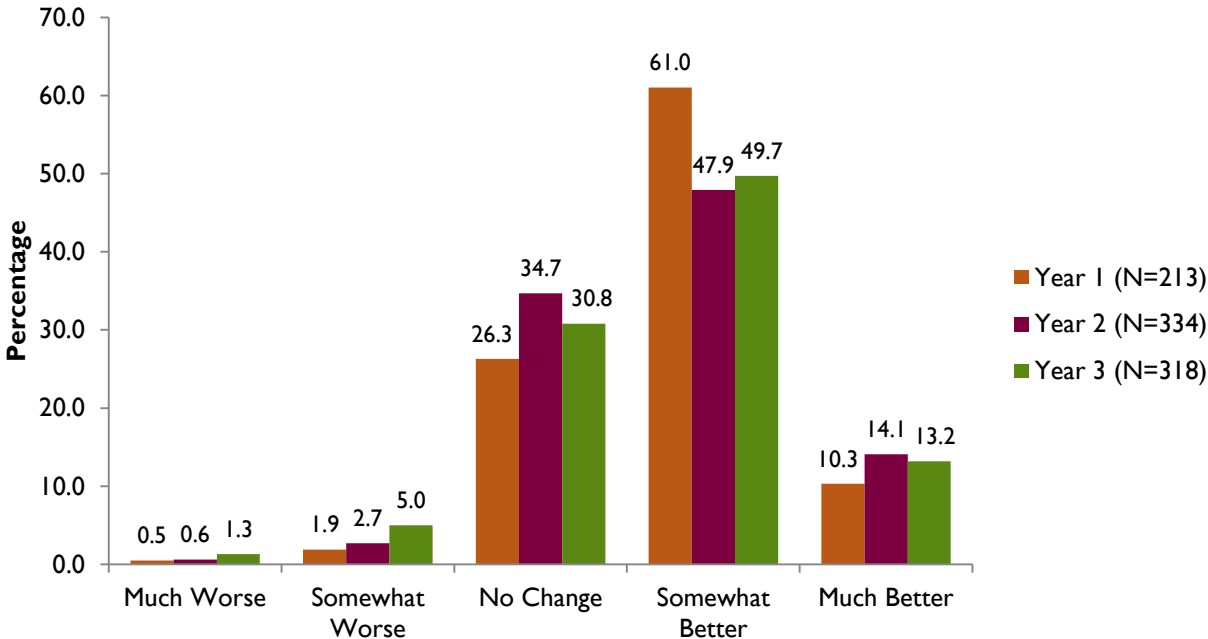
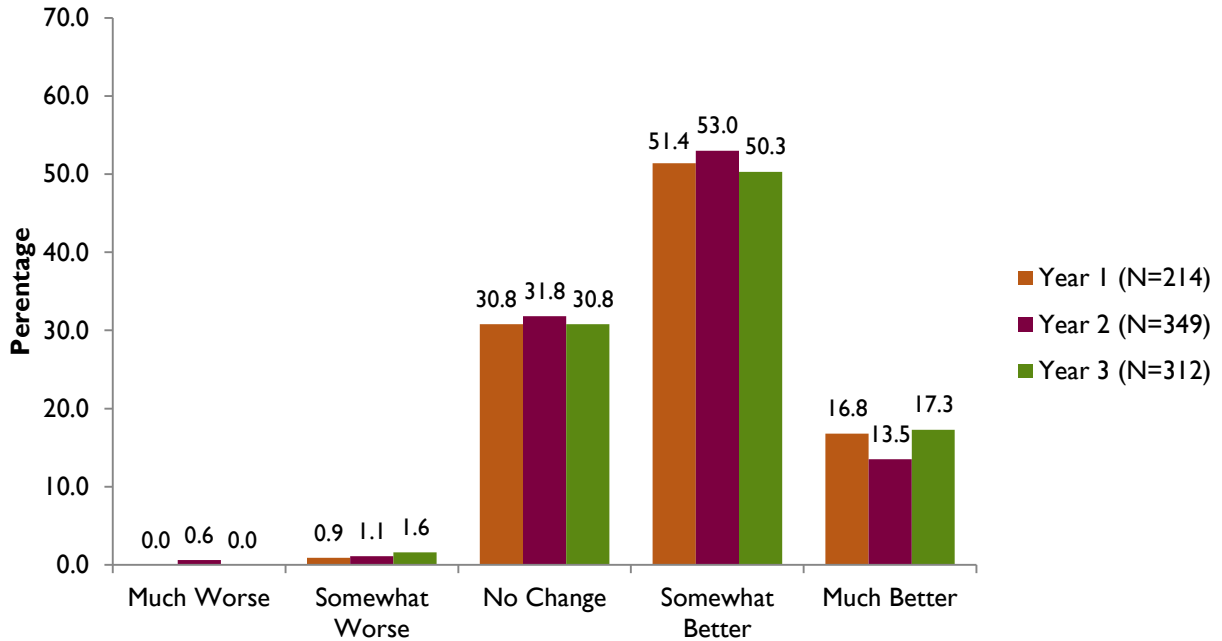


Figure 2. Respondents reporting changes in student involvement in Years 1-3.

Figures 3 and 4 present respondents' perceptions of changes in students' career awareness and interest; Figure 5 presents their perceptions of changes in students' college awareness. As shown in Figure 3, when asked to rate the extent to which career awareness had been different this year than in the previous year, most respondents (about 68%) reported it was better. The percentage of respondents who answered *somewhat better* decreased slightly (about 3%) and the percentage of those who answered *much better* increased slightly (about 4%) from Year 2 to Year 3.



**Figure 3. Respondents reporting changes in students' career awareness in Years 1-3.**

About 64% of the survey respondents also reported that student career interest was better than it had been in previous years (see Figure 4). The percentage of respondents reporting that student career interest was *much better* increased from approximately 12% in Year 2 to 18% in Year 3, while the percentage of respondents who answered *somewhat better* decreased by almost 7%.

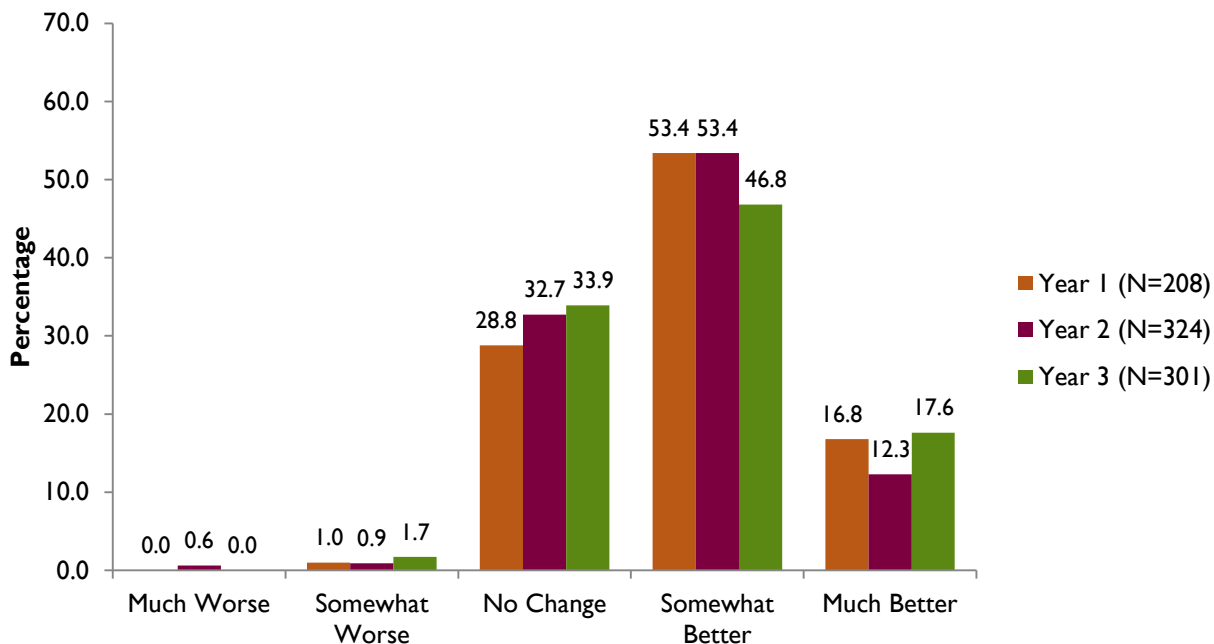


Figure 4. Respondents reporting changes in students' career interest in Years 1-3.

As shown in Figure 5, more than three fourths (79%) of respondents reported that students' college awareness was better during Year 3 than it had been in the past year. The percentage of respondents reporting students' college awareness was *much or somewhat better* increased (by about 5%) from Year 2 to Year 3.

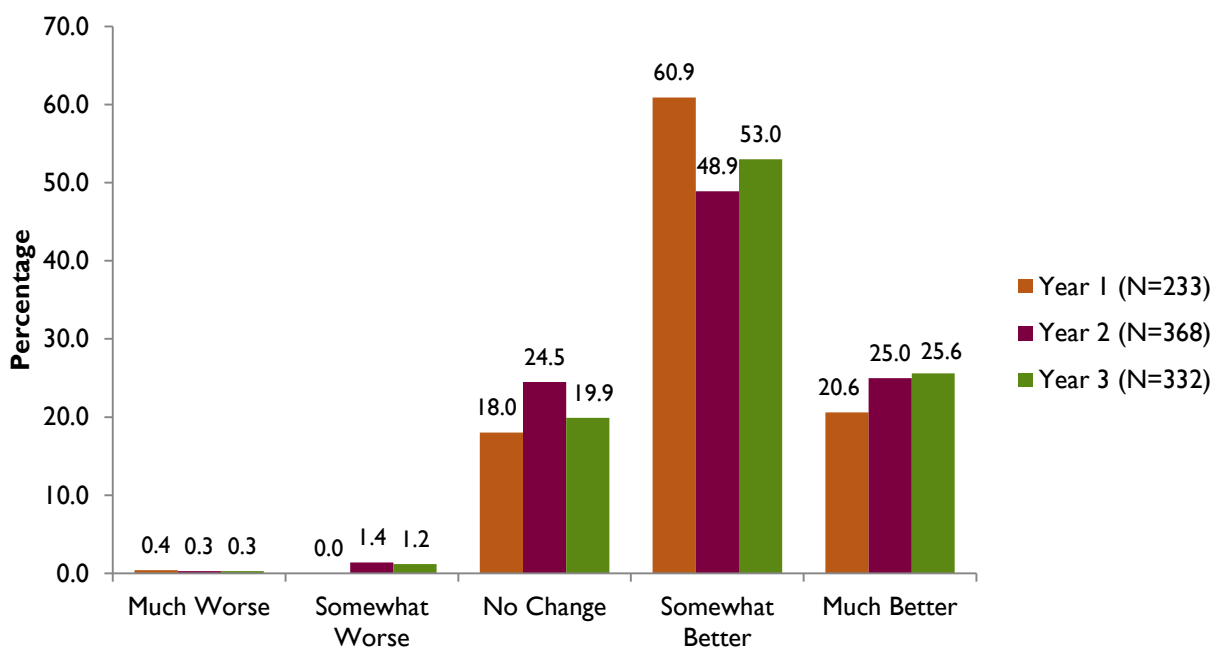
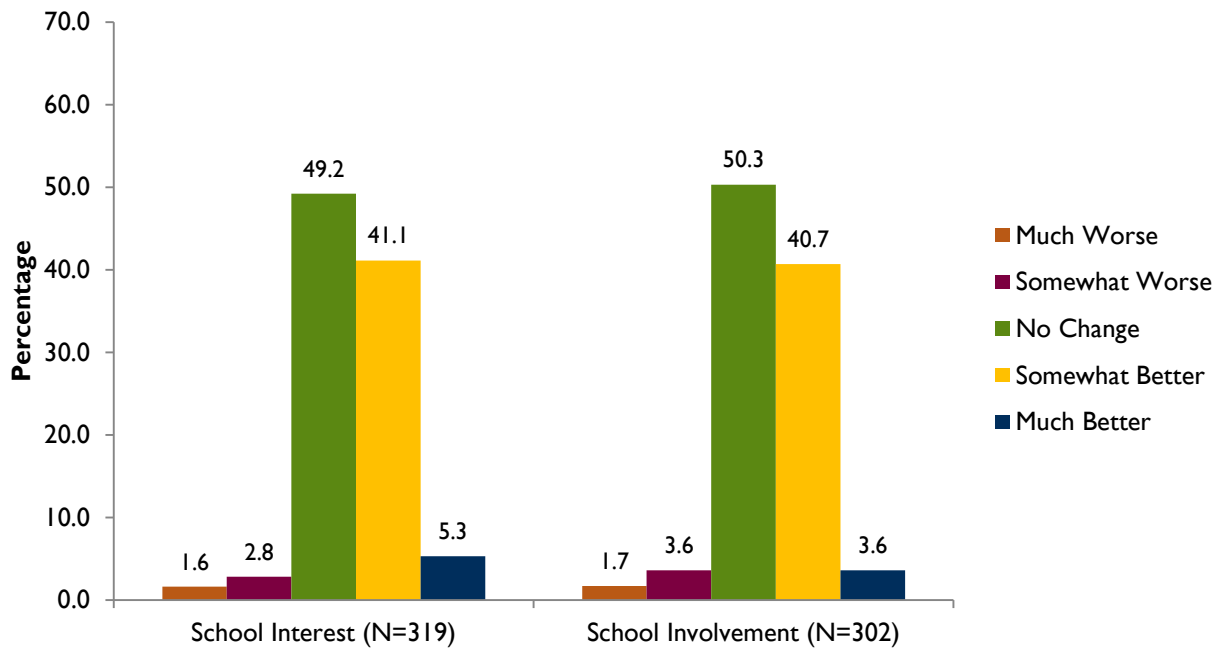


Figure 5. Respondents reporting changes in students' college awareness in Years 1-3.

Year 3 participants were also asked to rate the extent to which parent interest and involvement in school had been different this year than in the previous year. As displayed in Figure 6, almost half (46% and 44%) of respondents reported that parents' school interest and involvement, respectively, were *somewhat* or *much better* this year than last year. About half of the respondents reported that parents' school interest and involvement in school did not change over the past year. From 4-5% of the respondents reported that parents' interest and involvement were worse this year than the last year.



**Figure 6. Respondents reporting changes in parents' school interest and involvement in Year 3.**

When asked about the impact of the West Virginia GEAR UP project in their school, county, and/or community, the percentage of respondents who *strongly agree* that the program is having a positive impact has increased steadily throughout the three years, as shown in Figure 7. At the same time, the percentage of respondents who *agreed* with the statement steadily decreased. The percentages of respondents who reported *not sure*, *disagree*, or *strongly disagree* fluctuated slightly across the years but were fairly stable from Year 2 to Year 3.

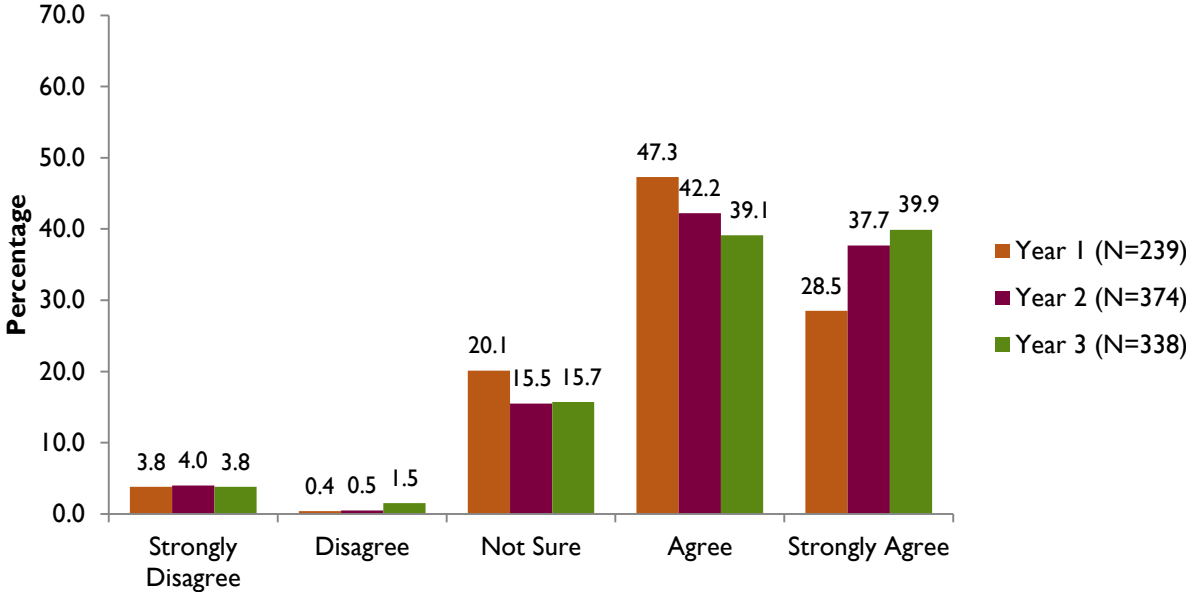


Figure 7. Respondents reporting positive impact of GEAR UP in Years 1-3.

**Implementation of West Virginia GEAR UP**

Participants were asked to report the extent to which they believe the GEAR UP project is currently implemented at their school. As shown in Figure 8, responses remained fairly stable from Year 2 to Year 3. Just more than half of the respondents reported full implementation, and one third reported partial implementation. Fewer respondents stated that they did not know enough about GEAR UP to respond to the question in Year 3 than any other year.

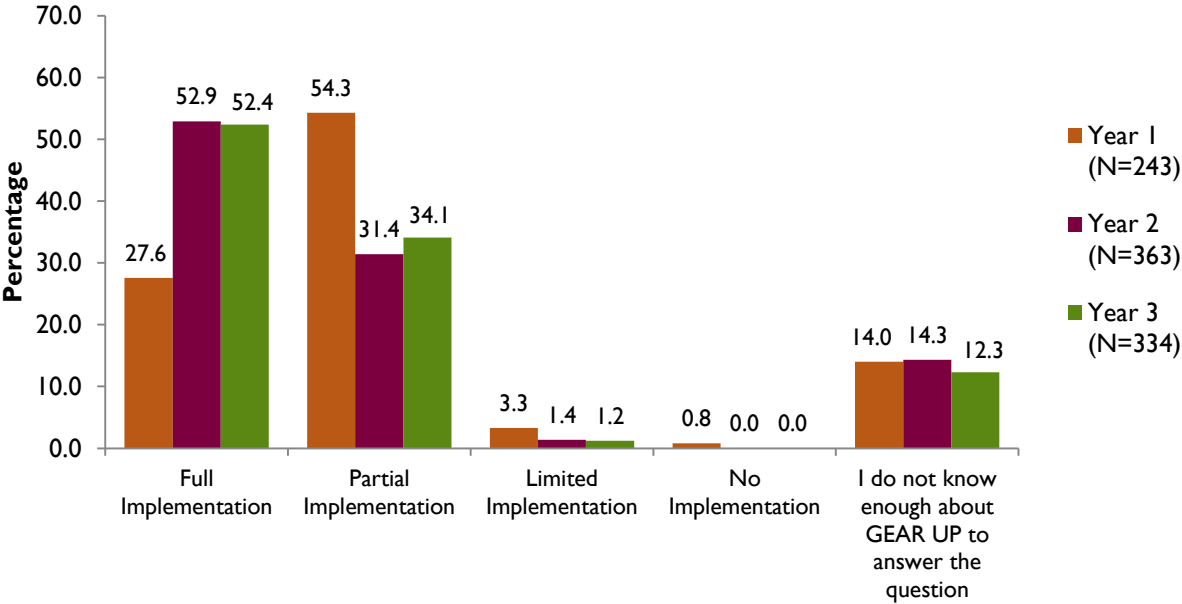


Figure 8. Respondents' perception of West Virginia GEAR UP project implementation.

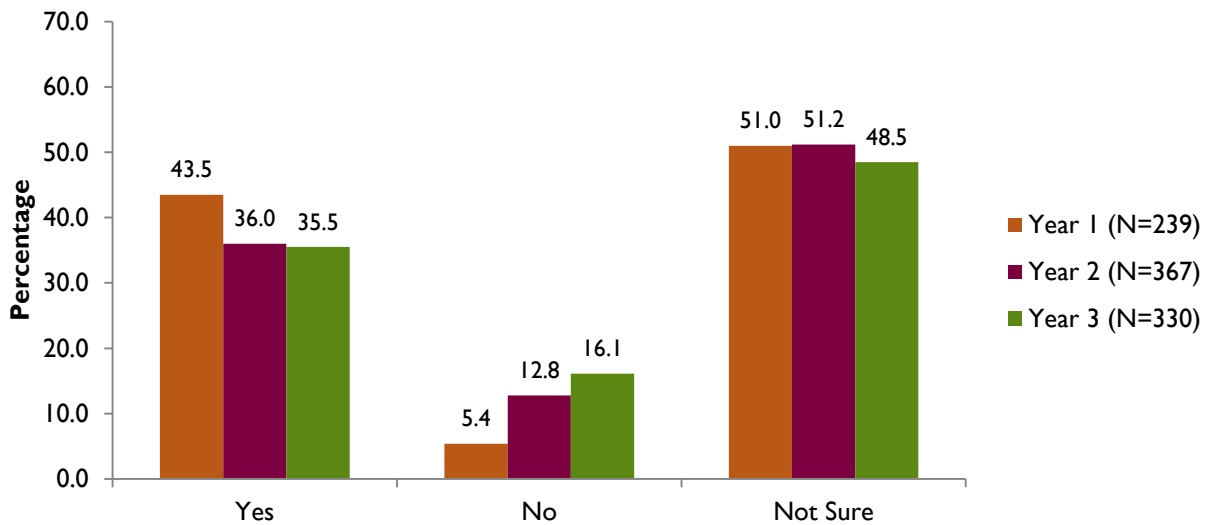
## Challenges and Solutions

When asked whether they noticed any challenges with regard to the West Virginia GEAR UP grant at their schools, 16% of the respondents in Year 3 answered “yes” (compared to 14% in Year 2 and 27% in Year 1). Respondents were then asked to give a brief description of the problems they had noticed. In all 42 respondents in Year 3 offered descriptions of challenges they had observed. The major challenges reported by Year 3 respondents included the following:

- student motivation and inclusion of students in the GEAR UP project ( $n = 11$  of the 42)
- time constraints ( $n = 8$ )
- parental involvement ( $n = 9$ )
- lack of involvement from teachers ( $n = 6$ )
- communication issues within the school or district ( $n = 5$ )
- lack of resources (including technology) ( $n = 2$ )
- lack of awareness about the GEAR UP project ( $n = 1$ )

Out of the respondents who reported challenges, nearly 30% of Year 3 respondents reported that the problems had not yet been resolved. About 31% of Year 3 respondents reported that problems had been resolved completely. Approximately 16% of Year 3 respondents thought the problems had been mostly resolved, and 24% of Year 3 respondents believed a few of the problems had been resolved. Respondents indicated that some problems were resolved after receiving assistance from school administrators and staff, by offering incentives to participating students and parents, and by providing more information to parents and students to raise awareness and garner support for the program.

When asked about the sustainability of the current West Virginia GEAR UP activities beyond the end of the grant, the percentage of respondents who answered yes (indicating that the activities were sustainable) remained stable from Year 2 to Year 3 while the percentage of respondents who answered no increased slightly, continuing an upward trend, as shown in Figure 9. However, the majority of respondents in all three years were not sure whether the activities were sustainable.



**Figure 9. Respondents’ perceptions of West Virginia GEAR UP activity sustainability beyond the end of the grant.**

Participants were given an opportunity to elaborate on their ideas of changes they would suggest for the West Virginia GEAR UP project. About one fourth ( $n = 93$ ) of Year 3 participants responded to this item. The most often noted change that respondents would make would be to include all students in the GEAR UP program ( $n = 14$ ). Respondents also indicated that they would include more and varied activities ( $n = 12$ ), more teacher involvement ( $n = 12$ ) and more information on GEAR UP (e.g., general, yearly program offerings, professional development offered to teachers) ( $n = 12$ ). A few respondents each noted that they would change the allocation of funds, allow for more time to work on GEAR UP activities for teachers and students, and do more to engage parents.

### Alignment of Project Goals

In Year 3, participants were asked the extent to which they believe the GEAR UP program goals are aligned with their school or county goals or mission. As shown in Figure 10, the majority of respondents indicated *full alignment* (59% to 64%) or *partial alignment* (21% to 24%) while fewer than 6% reported *limited* or *no alignment* with their school or county goals or mission. Between 10% and 12% of respondents reported that they did not know enough about their school or county goals to answer the question.

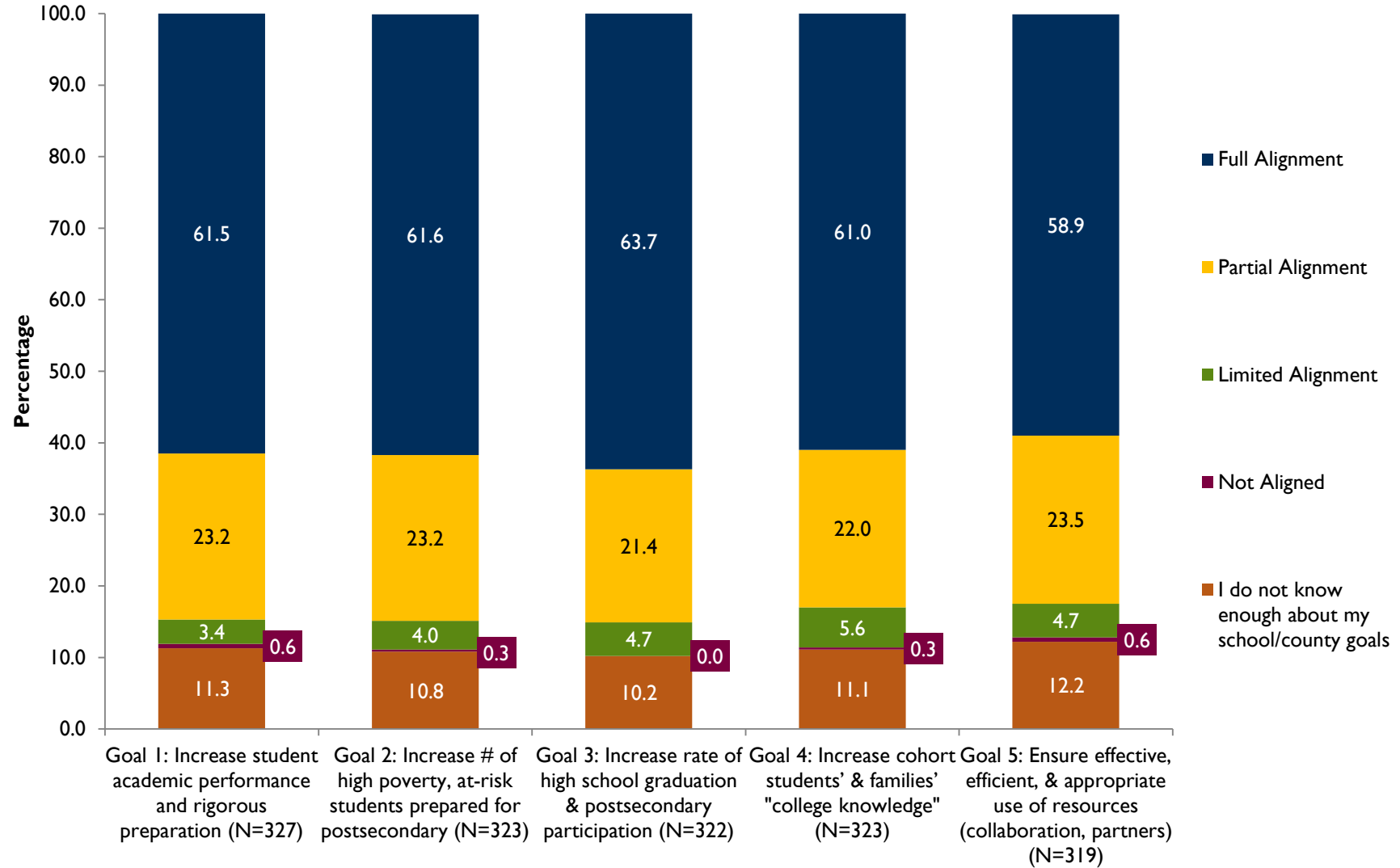


Figure 10. Respondents reporting the extent to which the GEAR UP program goals are aligned with their school or county goals or mission.

The survey also asked school personnel how familiar they were with the goals of the GEAR UP program prior to taking the survey. The question was asked in this way because it immediately followed the list of goals. Participants could indicate that they were very familiar, somewhat familiar, or not at all familiar with the GEAR UP goals prior to taking the 2011 school personnel survey. Of the 326 participants who responded to the question, the majority (56%) indicated they were somewhat familiar with the program’s goals. About 28% said that they were very familiar with the goals; this number (91 respondents) includes the 22 site coordinators who responded to the survey. Figure 11 displays the distribution of respondents’ familiarity with GEAR UP goals.

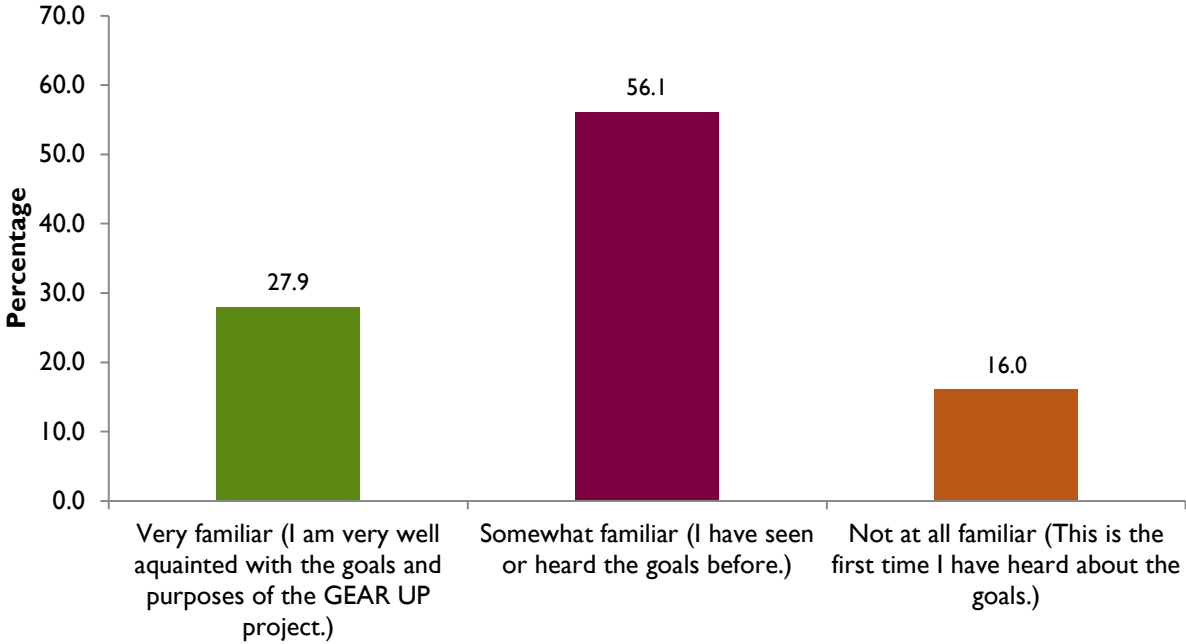


Figure 11. Respondents’ familiarity with GEAR UP program goals prior to 2011 survey.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings from the School Personnel Survey indicated that the West Virginia GEAR UP program experienced a successful implementation and made improvements in many areas in the third year. Highlights of the successful implementation and improvements include the following:

- West Virginia GEAR UP resources were distributed in schools and were being used by school personnel. School personnel continued participating in various GEAR UP activities. Throughout the three years, respondents reported fairly similar involvement in GEAR UP activities.
- Between Year 2 and 3, school personnel reported similar levels of professional development from Year 2 to Year 3, with a slight shift in the focus of those activities.
- School personnel reported that the services provided for themselves, their students, and parents were useful, relevant, and of high quality.
- Student involvement and interest in school seemed to be improving over Year 2. Students were perceived as being more aware of college and career opportunities. School personnel also believed that parent involvement and interest in school was improved.
- In the third year, more school personnel perceived the West Virginia GEAR UP program to be having a positive impact in their school, county, and/or community.
- The majority of the participants reported that West Virginia GEAR UP had been implemented fully or partially in their school and was running smoothly. About the same percentage of participants thought that West Virginia GEAR UP was fully implemented in their schools in Year 3 compared with Year 2.

The survey results also revealed some challenges to implementation within the schools. Although school personnel seemed to participate in mentoring and professional development activities as frequently in Year 3 as they did in Year 2, there continued to be a sizeable piece of the respondent sample (typically 20% to 25%) who reported not participating in GEAR UP-sponsored professional development. School personnel believe that additional professional development in technology integration and how to motivate students would be most beneficial in the future. Some school personnel suggested that the GEAR UP program should cover all grades in their schools. Survey respondents seemed to be less optimistic about the sustainability of the GEAR UP program after the third year.

The evaluation team makes the following recommendations (if the budget permits) to West Virginia GEAR UP staff based on the results of the School Personnel Survey:

- Continue to invest in intensive efforts to help school staff understand the purpose of the project as well as the rationale for the grades served, activities offered, and how the funds could be used.
- Coordinate with colleges to make sure that the college trips/visits are as useful as possible to students.
- Find ways to motivate students and teachers to be involved in GEAR UP-sponsored activities. For instance, staff could work with site coordinators to identify the primary reasons some students do not attend the afterschool tutoring program and brainstorm

ways to improve the attendance rates. Using activity evaluations to understand both the successful and unsuccessful aspects of events, a strategy employed at schools such as Summers County High School, may be one way in which site coordinators can use data to adapt future events to achieve increased attendance and participation.

- Continue to provide relevant professional development to school personnel, especially in topics such as technology integration, student motivation, parent involvement, and specific content knowledge.