



West Virginia GEAR UP

Year 1 Interim Evaluation Report

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Report Prepared By:

ICF International
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031
www.icfi.com

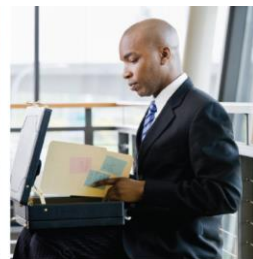


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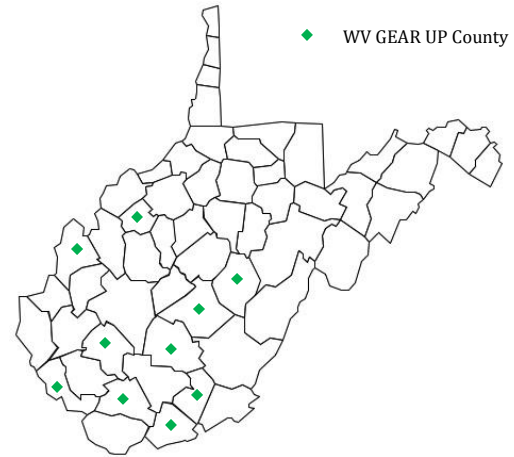
Introduction

West Virginia GEAR UP

West Virginia GEAR UP is a federally funded program that helps students in 50 high-poverty middle and high schools situated in ten counties¹ across the state prepare to succeed in education and training beyond high school. “GEAR UP” stands for “Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs,” and the program’s goal is to help more students pursue their dreams of earning a college diploma or skillset certificate.

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) manages West Virginia (WV) GEAR UP, in collaboration with the West Virginia Community and Technical College System, the West Virginia Department of Education, the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts, and many other community partners. The GEAR UP program operates on seven-year cycles. The Commission is administering its second consecutive GEAR UP grant, which began in 2014 and will conclude in 2021.

Exhibit 1. Ten WV Counties Participating in GEAR UP



GEAR UP Evaluation Design

ICF International (ICF) is conducting the external program evaluation of WV GEAR UP. The evaluation framework includes a program implementation study to assist the Commission in determining the fidelity with which program activities were delivered, which outputs from the WV GEAR UP logic model were accomplished, and to inform the Commission of any facilitators or barriers to implementation. ICF is also conducting a summative outcomes study to ascertain the extent to which data-informed benchmarks, identified in concert with the Commission, are achieved. ICF plans an impact study with a quasi-experimental design to address selected program outcomes and impacts. Finally, the evaluation framework includes a sustainability study to inform the Commission about how the GEAR UP program could continue to have an impact after the grant ends.

Purpose

The primary objective of this report is to describe baseline survey results gathered during Year 1 of the WV GEAR UP program. Student and parent/guardian surveys are a critical element of the evaluation, to be conducted once a year, every year.

1. ICF will survey the class of 2020 and their parents every year for seven years because the class of 2020 (7th graders in the 2014-2015 academic year) is the focus of the most intensive WV GEAR UP services. These students are referred to as the “cohort” group.

¹ Boone, Fayette, Mason, Mercer, Mingo, Nicholas, Summers, Webster, Wirt, Wyoming

2. ICF will survey seniors every other year, beginning in 2016, because they receive “just in time” services from GEAR UP. These students are referred to as the “priority” group. ICF will survey parents of seniors in Year 5, Year 6, and Year 7 of the evaluation.
3. Lastly, ICF will survey the class of 2019 and the class of 2021 and their parents every two years. These two classes serve as comparison groups; they do not receive GEAR UP services. ICF will also survey the class of 2019 in Year 6 when they enter college.

In 2015, ICF surveyed the class of 2020 (Cohort), the class of 2019 (Comparison), and the class of 2015 (Priority).

There are several reasons for conducting annual surveys of students and parents. First, the Federal government requires surveys with adequate response rates to demonstrate progress in implementing GEAR UP. Second, surveys yield findings that indicate how GEAR UP is working and how to improve its capacity to prepare middle and high school students for college or other education after high school. The data gathered through the surveys will also enable important comparisons between students who do and do not take part in GEAR UP, and identify ways to make GEAR UP programs more effective.

Data Sources

In November 2014, in collaboration with the Commission, ICF developed a series of Year 1 Student and Parent/Guardian surveys, associated informed consent documents, and a detailed administration protocol. The Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student Survey included 23 items organized across four sections. All surveys included nine demographic items designed to gather background information about respondents and their families, four items measuring students’ perceived academic ability and educational goals, and seven items measuring students’ knowledge about college entrance requirements, the cost of attending college, and financial aid options. An additional three items measuring students’ completion status for several important college preparation activities were also included on the Grade 12 version of the survey. Appendix A includes a reproduction of the Grade 12 version of the survey.

The Year 1 WV GEAR UP Parent Survey included 19 items organized across three sections. All surveys included nine demographic items designed to gather background information about respondents and their children, three items measuring parents’ perceptions of their child’s educational goals, and seven items measuring parents’ knowledge about college entrance requirements, the cost of attending college, and financial aid options. Appendix A includes a reproduction of the parent version of the survey.

Methods

ICF began data collection for the annual surveys by first securing informed consent from all eligible respondents, using an opt-out consent procedure, as requested by the Commission. Specifically, ICF staff trained GEAR UP site coordinators to administer the opt-out consent procedure in December 2014. Site coordinators provided all students in grades 7, 8, and 12 with an informed consent letter explaining the purpose and details of the surveys (see Appendix A), and instructed them to take the form home to their parent/guardian. The form gave all parents/guardians a chance to opt out of participating in data collection by returning a signed version of the consent form to their child’s school.

Ultimately, a total of 67 opt-out forms were received from parents/guardians of eligible students. In addition, 77 eligible students whose parents *did not* opt out of data collection elected not to provide responses to the student survey when offered the opportunity.² After removing those students and parents/guardians who opted out from the pool of potential survey respondents, evaluators administered surveys to all remaining students and parents/guardians in participating schools. This included 2,892 Grade 7 students and their parents/guardians, 2,866 Grade 8 students and their parents/guardians and 1,866 Grade 12 students (N = 7,624).

The survey administration window opened on December 3, 2014, and was formally closed on January 23, 2015. ICF used a blend of online and paper-and-pencil survey administration modes. Student surveys were administered online to all Grade 7, Grade 8, and Grade 12 students enrolled in participating schools during the 2014-2015 school year. Depending on the needs of individual schools, different settings were utilized for survey administration. Some students completed surveys on their home computers and others on school computers or mobile devices. Survey links were made available in materials sent home to parents as well as publicized on the WV GEAR UP website. Paper-and-pencil versions of surveys were offered as an accommodation for students who could not access content using a computer and for any students whose parent/ guardian explicitly requested that the student not be allowed to access a computer. Spanish language versions of each survey and consent form were also made available upon request. Ultimately, 6,320 students completed the survey (i.e., 2,525 in grade 7, 2,486 in grade 8, and 1,309 in grade 12).

Parent/guardian surveys were administered primarily by way of paper and pencil to parents/guardians of all Grade 7 and Grade 8 students in participating schools. The ICF evaluation team provided copies of the parent/guardian surveys to each site coordinator, who sent the surveys home with students at the same time as the informed consent document. An online option was available to parents/guardians, and was utilized by 51 individuals. The total number of valid parent/guardian surveys returned was 2,545 (1,383 for grade 7 and 1,162 for grade 8).

Figure 1 illustrates the formula used by ICF to calculate student and parent/guardian response rates. To arrive at the denominator for our calculations, we first calculated the total student enrollment by grade level based on second month enrollment estimates for the 2014-15 school year provided by the West Virginia Department of Education. Next, we subtracted, from each grade level, the number of students whose parents/guardians opted-out of data collection during the informed consent process. This yielded the response rate denominator for each grade. We then divided the total number of returned surveys in each grade by this value to arrive at the response rate. Table 1 provides an overview of the response rates that were achieved for all surveys during Year 1.

Figure 1. Response rate formula for student and parent surveys

$$\frac{\text{\#surveys returned}}{(\text{2nd month enrollment} - \text{opt outs received})}$$

² For the purposes of calculating response rates, these 77 students were counted as having completed surveys. That is, selecting "I refuse to participate" is considered a valid response.

TABLE 1: YEAR 1 SURVEY RESPONSE RATES BY GROUP

Group	Surveys Returned	Response Rate Denominator	Response Rate
<i>Student Surveys</i>			
Grade 7 (Cohort)	2525	2892	87.3%
Grade 8 (Comparison)	2486	2866	86.7%
Grade 12 (Priority)	1309	1866	70.1%
<i>Parent/Guardian Surveys</i>			
Grade 7 (Cohort)	1383	2892	47.8%
Grade 8 (Comparison)	1162	2866	40.5%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

The response rates in Table 1 are inclusive of all paper/pencil and online surveys collected as of January 23, 2015. The WV GEAR UP program is required to achieve an 80% response rate for student surveys and a 50% response rate for parent surveys. These targets are applied to the student groups served by the grant. Notably the response rate target was exceeded for grade 7 and grade 8, but not for grade 12. Combining the grade 7 and grade 12 returned surveys as is required for Annual Performance Reporting (APR) yielded an overall student survey response rate of approximately 81%, thus the program met its Year 1 goal. However, the 50% parent/guardian response rate requirement for APR was not met for grade 7 or grade 8, although grade 7 nearly met this requirement with 47.8% of parents/guardians responding.

Analysis

Since most survey items include categorical response options, we primarily calculated measures of frequency (i.e., number and percentage of respondents). However, some survey items employ Likert-type response scales. When appropriate, we calculated mean scores and standard deviations. Finally, in several cases we conducted additional inferential analyses (e.g., T-test, Chi-Square) to examine the relationships among pairs of items (e.g., gender and educational aspirations or expectations). Specifically, we sought to examine the relationships among hypothesized predictor variables such as family income, parents' educational attainment, gender, and grade level and relevant student outcomes such as students' plans to continue their education after college and their perceived academic ability, education expectations, and aspirations. We also analyzed parent results in this manner. Finally, we constructed a dataset consisting of matched student and parent survey records to determine the relationship between selected parent predictor variables and student outcomes.

Results

Results are presented below, beginning with demographics, by survey question topic. Items common to both the student and parent/guardian versions of the survey are presented together. However, for questions unique to either version of the survey, data are presented separately. It should also be noted that, in this report, we summarize results for the Grade 7 (Cohort) and Grade

12 (Priority) student groups and results for the Grade 7 (Cohort) parent/guardian group, as these are the groups eligible for services through WV GEAR UP during Year 1. The Year 2 report³ will present results for the Grade 8 comparison group.

³ In Year 2 the Cohort student group will be in Grade 8, making a comparison to the Year 1 Grade 8 results valid.

Demographics

Student gender. We asked student respondents to choose their gender by selecting “male,” “female,” or “other.” Approximately half of all respondents indicated they were male, and half were female. The percentage of self-identified male students was slightly smaller than the percentage of females in Grade 12, and this trend was reversed among Grade 7 students.

Parent/guardian relationship. We asked adult guardians to identify their relationship to the child who brought home the survey. We found that approximately 91% of respondents identified themselves as a “parent/guardian.” The second most common response was “grandparent,” at 6%. The remaining respondents chose “step or foster parent” or “other.”

Race/ethnicity and primary language. Students and parents were also asked to report their race and ethnicity (see Table 2). Not surprisingly, given West Virginia’s relatively homogeneous population, we found that approximately 90% of students and 96% of parents identified themselves as White. Virtually all students, regardless of grade level, indicated their primary home language was English (99.6%).

TABLE 2: RACE/ETHNICITY BY GRADE

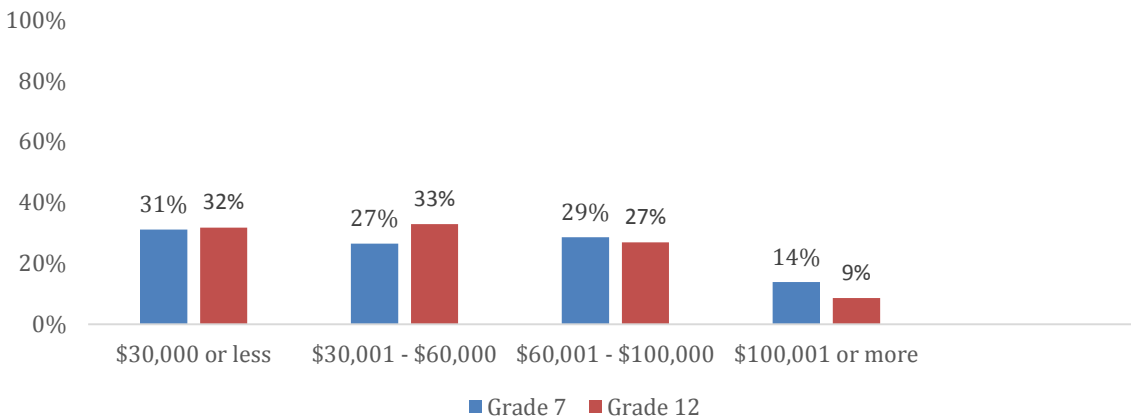
Grade	White	Black or African American	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Hispanic
Grade 7 (Cohort)	2258 90.6%	86 3.5%	<10 0.3%	22 0.9%	--	117 4.7%	62 2.6%
Grade 12 (Priority)	1164 90.8%	67 5.2%	<10 0.1%	<10 0.4%	<10 0.3%	41 3.2%	25 1.9%
Grade 7 (Parents)	1324 96.4%	19 1.4%	<10 0.2%	22 0.4%	<10 0.1	22 1.6%	32 2.4%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

Family income. We next asked students and parents to estimate their family income. Notably, nearly two-thirds of all Grade 7 students chose the response option: “Don’t know or I’d rather not say” (64.4%). Slightly more than a third of Grade 12 students selected this option (35.2%). Figure 2 provides the breakdown of responses for students who selected a response other than “Don’t know or I’d rather not say.”

Figure 2. Estimated family income as reported by students

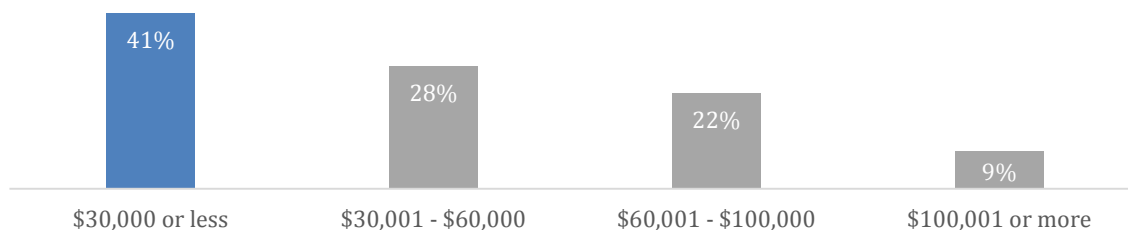
Of those students who were able to estimate their family income, **approximately one-third indicated their family income to be \$30,000 or less.** More than half indicated family incomes between \$30,000 and \$100,000.



Considering that students might not be able to provide reliable estimates of family income, we asked the same question of the Grade 7 parents/guardians. Approximately 20% chose the response option: “Don’t know or I’d rather not say.” Figure 3 offers an overview of parent/guardian income estimates for those individuals who provided a response.

Figure 3. Estimated family income as reported by parents/guardians of Grade 7 students

Of those parents/guardians who answered the question, more than **40% estimated their family income to be less than \$30,000 per year.**



Parent education levels. Research has illustrated that parent education levels influence student achievement. For this reason, we asked both students and parents to indicate the highest level of education obtained by the mother or female guardian and father or male guardian in the home.

Nearly 40% of Grade 7 students indicated they did not know their father's or male guardian's education level. (The corresponding percentage for Grade 12 was much lower—approximately 12%). Of the remaining 1,501 Grade 7 students, approximately 17% indicated their father or male guardian had achieved a four-year college degree or higher; the percentage for Grade 12 students was approximately 15%. For both grades, “a high school diploma or GED” was the most frequent response.

Overall, students and parents report higher education levels for their mothers or female guardians than for fathers or male guardians. However, between approximately one-third and one-half of all students surveyed reported their parents/guardians' highest level of education to be a high school diploma/GED or less.

Nearly one-third of Grade 7 students (32%) indicated they did not know their mother's or female guardian's education level. (Among Grade 12 students, the corresponding percentage was again much lower—approximately 7%.) Of the remaining 1,696 Grade 7 students, approximately 28% indicated their mother or female guardian had achieved a four-year college degree or higher; the percentage for Grade 12 students was approximately 21%. As was the case with the father or male guardian, “a high school diploma or GED” was the most frequent response for Grade 7 and Grade 12 students. Table 3 provides a breakdown of responses for students who selected a response other than “Don't know.”

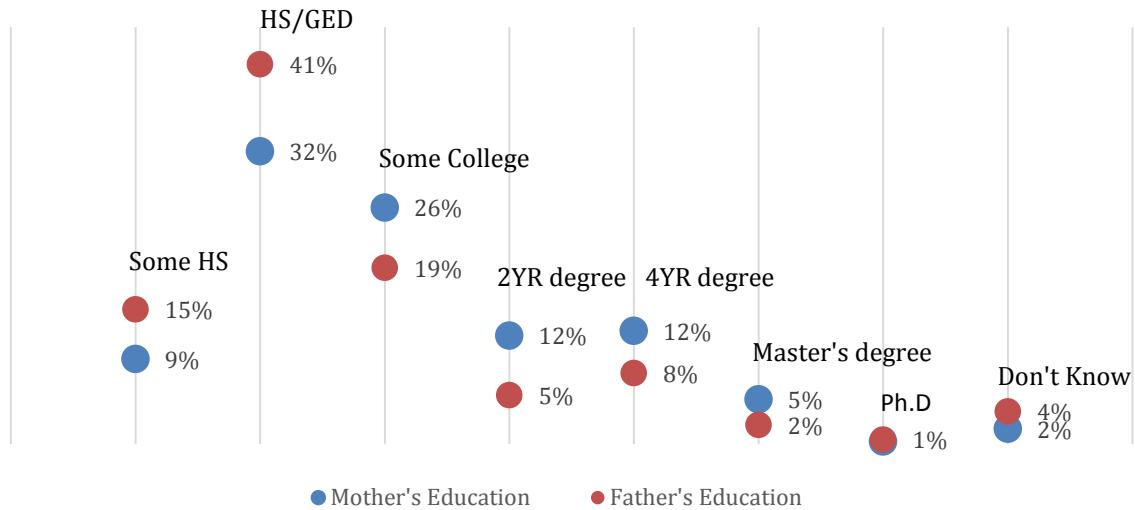
TABLE 3: ESTIMATES BY STUDENTS OF THEIR PARENTS/GUARDIANS' EDUCATION

	Some HS	HS Diploma or GED	Some College	2YR Associate's Degree	4YR Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Ph.D. or Higher
Grade 7 (Cohort)							
Male	295	674	173	96	155	85	23
Guardian	19.6%	44.9%	11.5%	6.3%	10.3%	5.6%	1.5%
Female	212	558	296	147	270	178	35
Guardian	12.5%	32.9%	17.4%	8.6%	15.9%	10.0%	2.0%
Grade 12 (Priority)							
Male	147	592	133	82	127	35	12
Guardian	13.0%	52.4%	11.7%	7.2%	11.2%	3.1%	1.0%
Female	118	467	214	134	175	79	<10
Guardian	9.9%	39.2%	17.9%	11.2%	14.7%	6.6%	0.0%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student Survey

When parents/guardians of Grade 7 students were asked to respond to the same questions, their responses mirrored those of the students. That is, a higher percentage of mothers or female guardians appear to have achieved some college, two- or four-year degrees, and master's degrees, compared with fathers or male guardians. (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Difference in male and female guardian education levels as reported by parents/guardians of Grade 7 students



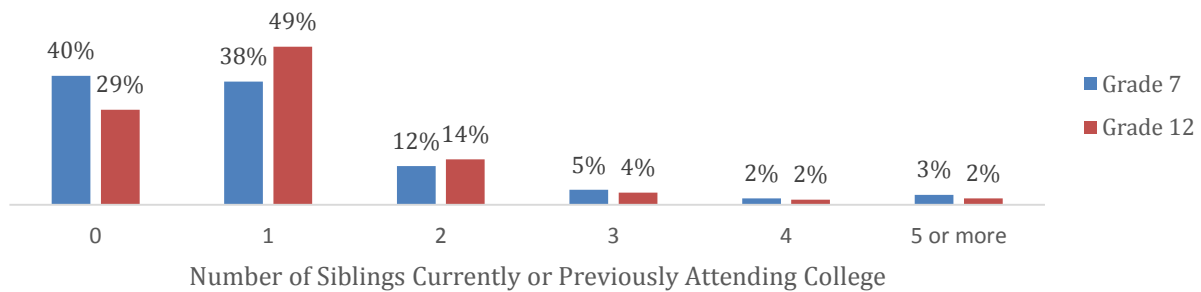
Siblings or other children in college. In the final demographic survey item we asked respondents to indicate the number of siblings (in the case of students) or other children (in the case of parents/guardians) who either currently or previously attended college. Notably, the response format for this item omitted an option for respondents to indicate zero siblings (or other children) who currently or previously attended college. Because of this omission, we observed a large percentage of missing data. In consultation with Commission staff, we determined it was most likely that respondents who did not respond to this item were attempting to indicate they had siblings/other children, but none had attended college. Thus, for this item we recoded missing responses to a response of zero.⁴

We found almost half of all Grade 7 students (45%) and a third of all Grade 12 students (32%) indicated they did not have siblings. Of the remaining 1,376 Grade 7 students, nearly 40% did not respond, indicating they likely had other siblings, none of whom had attended college. The corresponding percentage for Grade 12 students was 29%. Between 60% and 70% of students with siblings reported that one or more attended or currently attend college. Figure 5 provides the breakdown of responses by grade level.

⁴ This approach may overestimate the percentage of students with zero siblings who have attended college. We have revised surveys to correct this issue for Year 2 administration.

Figure 5. For students with siblings, the number of those siblings who attend or previously attended college

Between 60% and 70% of students with siblings reported one or more have attended or currently attend college. **Between 29% and 40% are estimated to have siblings who have never attended college.**



Educational Goals and Aspirations, and Academic Confidence

In the next section of the survey, we asked students and their parents/guardians to respond to a variety of questions about the educational goals, aspirations, and academic confidence of participating students.

Plans to continue education after high school. We first asked students to indicate whether or not they planned to continue their education after high school. The great majority of students indicated they did. However, Grade 7 students were more likely than Grade 12 students to respond affirmatively (94% vs. 90%, respectively).

Of the 146 Grade 7 students who indicated they did not plan to continue their education after high school, the most frequently selected reasons were that they planned to enlist in the military (27.4%) or wanted to work (26%). However, it is notable that approximately 20% indicated cost or poor grades to be a major barrier. Of the 122 Grade 12 students who did not plan to continue their education, the most common response was that they wanted to work (55%). A substantial proportion of students also indicated they needed to work (37%), and nearly a quarter indicated cost of postsecondary education to be a barrier. About one-fifth indicated they planned to enlist in the military.

Of Grade 7 students who indicated they did not plan to continue their education after high school, just over one-fourth stated they planned to enlist in the military. Grade 12 students most frequently reported a desire to work. The perceived cost of postsecondary education was a substantial barrier to both groups of students.

Additional Analyses

Student gender as a predictor of plans to continue education... Gender was significantly related to students' self-reported plans to continue their education after high school. Regardless of grade level, male students were far more likely than female students to indicate they did not have plans to continue their education (11.2% vs. 3.0%). ($X^2 = 93.2, p < .001$).

Parent education as a predictor of plans to continue education... Grade 7 students who reported their mother or female guardian had attained a college degree (Associate's or higher) were more likely than those whose mothers had not to have plans to continue education after high school (98% vs. 93%). ($X^2 = 16.5, p < .001$).

Grade 12 students who reported their mother or female guardian had attained a college degree were significantly more likely than those whose mothers had not to have plans to continue their education after high school (94% vs 90%). ($X^2 = 16.4, p < .05$).

Grade 12 students whose fathers or male guardians had attained a degree were also more likely than those whose fathers had not to respond affirmatively to this question (96% vs. 90%). ($X^2 = 8.1, p < .05$)

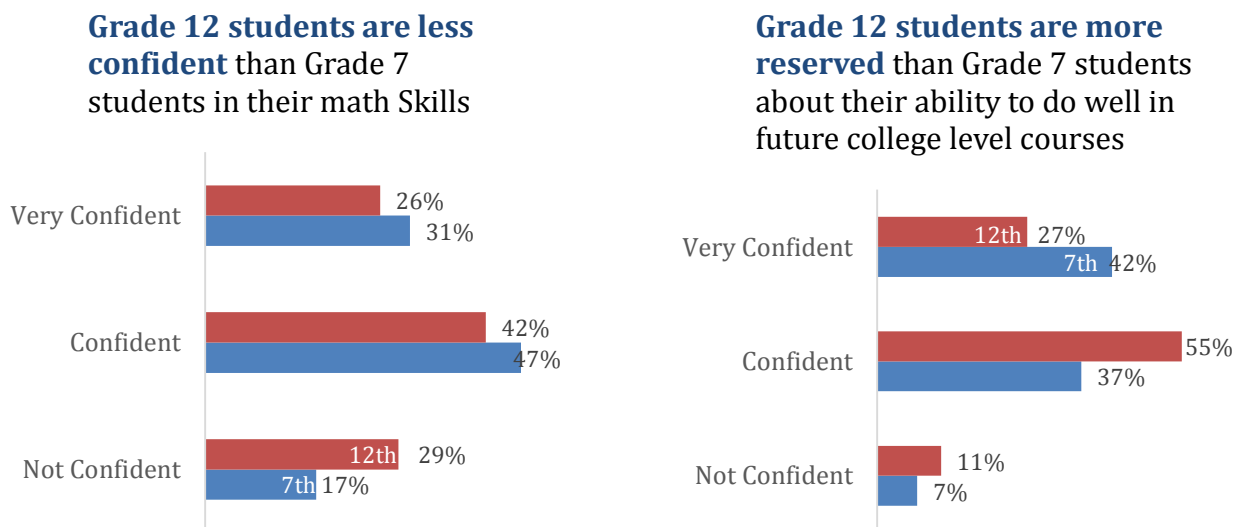
Confidence in academic ability. As a proxy measure of academic ability, we asked students to respond to a single multi-part survey item measuring the degree of confidence they had in their English/language arts (ELA), science, math, and study skills; their ability to pass end-of-year tests; and their ability to do well in future college courses. Both grade level and gender were considered in our analysis.

Overall, Grade 7 students appeared to be relatively confident in their skills and abilities. More than three-quarters indicated they were either confident or very confident for each area assessed. They were most confident in their ELA skills and their ability to pass end-of-year tests, but reported the least confidence in their math, study, and science skills. Not surprisingly, a substantial percentage of Grade 7 students indicated “don’t know” about their ability to do well in future college courses.

Grade 12 students also reported high degrees of confidence in their abilities in all areas. As was the case with Grade 7 students, they reported the most confidence in their ELA skills and the least in their math, science, and study skills. Slightly more than one-quarter of Grade 12 students reported they were very confident about their ability to do well in college courses (27%). Figure 6 contains additional detail.

Both Grade 7 and 12 students feel most confident about their ability to do well in English/Language Arts and least confident about their ability in math.

Figure 6. Degrees of confidence students report in their math skills and ability to do well in college courses in the future



Regarding gender, we found male students to be significantly more confident than females about their math and science skills as well as their ability to do well on end-of-year tests. Female students, however, indicated greater confidence in their ELA skills. No significant gender differences were observed in students’ perceived study skills or ability to do well in college level courses in the future.

Additional Analyses

Grade level as a predictor... Next, we conducted further analysis to determine whether differences in perceived academic skill/ability among Grade 7 and Grade 12 students were statistically significant. An overview of statistically significant findings is presented below in order of the magnitude of the differences observed.

Ability to do well in college courses: Grade 12 students were far less likely than Grade 7 students to report they were “very confident” in their ability to do well in college courses in the future (26.9% vs. 42.1%) ($X^2=81.85, p<.004$). Instead, they were much more likely to report feeling only “confident” in this area (54.7% vs. 36.6%) ($X^2=109.8, p<.004$). Importantly though, Grade 12 students were also less likely to report they “don’t know” in this area (6.9% vs. 14.1%) ($X^2 = 40.80, p<.004$).

Math skills: Grade 12 students were far more likely than Grade 7 students to report they were “not confident” in their math skills (28.9% vs. 16.6%) ($X^2=77.54, p<.004$). But it should also be noted that Grade 7 students more often reported they “don’t know” about their math abilities (5.6% vs. 3.0%). ($X^2 = 12.76 p <.001$).

Study skills: Grade 12 students were more likely than Grade 7 students to report they were “not confident” in their study skills (20.3% vs. 14.0%), ($X^2=43.56, p<.004$). They were also less likely to report being “very confident” (21.8% vs. 26.7%) ($X^2=8.11, p<.004$) and less likely to report they “don’t know” in this area (3.7% vs. 9.8%) ($X^2 = 43.56.3, p<.004$).

Ability to do well on end-of-year tests: Grade 12 students were less likely than Grade 7 students to be “very confident” about their end-of-year test abilities (31.1% vs. 38.7%) ($X^2=21.16, p<.004$), and more likely to be “not confident” (11.8% vs. 8.8%) ($X^2=8.41, p<.004$). They were less likely to report they “don’t know” about their abilities in this area (5.4% vs 9.6%). ($X^2 = 18.49 p<.004$).

Science skills: Grade 12 students were more likely than Grade 7 students to report they were “not confident” in their science skills (17.9% vs 14.4%). They were also less likely to indicate they “don’t know” in this area (3.2% vs. 6.2%). ($X^2 = 15.2, p<.004$).

ELA skills: We found no meaningful differences in the levels of ELA confidence reported by students. However, Grade 7 students were significantly less likely to indicate they “don’t know” about their ELA skills (5.2% vs. 2.2%). ($X^2 = 18.49, p<.004$).

Gender as a predictor... We conducted further analysis to determine whether differences in perceived academic skill/ability by gender were statistically significant. An overview of statistically significant findings is presented below in order of the magnitude of the differences observed.

Math Skills: Male students were more likely than female students to report they were “very confident” in their math skills (33.8% vs. 24.5%). ($X^2 = 59.3$, $p < .001$).

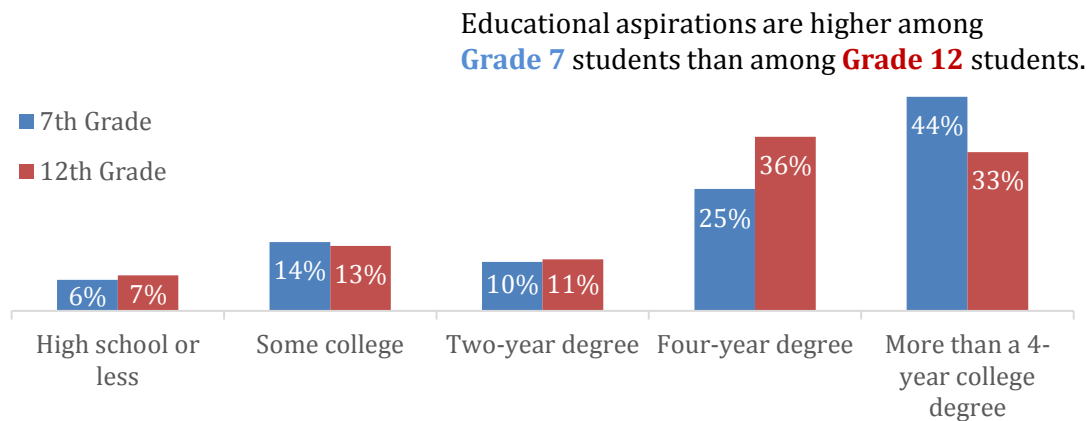
English skills: Female students were more likely than male students to report they were “very confident” in their English/Language Arts skills (38.0% vs 29.7%). They were also less likely to indicate they were “not confident” (7.4% vs. 10.6%) ($X^2 = 36.7$, $p < .001$).

Science skills: Male students were more likely than female students to report being “very confident” in their science skills (29.6% vs. 23.0%), and less likely to report being “not confident” in this area (13.3% vs. 17.9%) ($X^2 = 32.0$, $p < .001$).

Ability to do well on end-of-year tests: Male students were more likely than female students to report being “very confident in their ability to do well on end-of-year tests (39.2% vs. 32.9%) ($X^2 = 17.3$, $p < .001$).

Educational aspirations and expectations. We next asked students to report the highest level of education to which they aspired, and the level that they expected to actually achieve. Additionally, we asked parents/guardians to report their perceptions of their children's aspirations and expectations. Both Grade 7 and Grade 12 students most often indicated that they aspired to achieve *more than* a four-year bachelor's degree (44% for Grade 7 and 33% for Grade 12). Substantial proportions also reported aspiring to achieve a four-year bachelor's degree (25% for Grade 7 and 36% for Grade 12). Figure 7 illustrates educational aspirations by grade.

Figure 7. Educational aspirations of students by grade



Comparing aspirations to expectations. In general, students' educational expectations seemed slightly more reserved than their aspirations. This effect was more pronounced among Grade 7 students: the percentage of students *expecting* to obtain more than a four-year college degree decreased by 14 points compared to the percentage *aspiring* to achieve this level of education. Meanwhile, the percentage of students expecting to earn lower levels of education increased. The same trend was evident, although not as strong, among Grade 12 students, possibly owing to their more reserved aspirations. See Table 4 for additional details.

TABLE 4: DIFFERENCES IN ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS BY GRADE

	Grade 7			Grade 12		
	Aspire	Expect	Diff	Aspire	Expect	Diff
High school or less	159 6.4%	208 8.5%	+2.1	94 7.3%	121 9.4%	+2.1
Some college (less than two- or four-year degree, e.g., certificate or career/tech cert.)	352 14.2%	418 17.0%	+2.8	172 13.4%	176 13.7%	+.3
Two-year associate's college degree	251 10.1%	424 17.2%	+7.1	136 10.6%	164 12.8%	+2.2
Four-year bachelor's college degree	622 25.1%	672 27.3%	+2.2	459 35.9%	484 37.7%	+1.8
More than a four-year college degree	1,093 44.1%	738 30.0%	-14.1	419 32.7%	338 26.3%	-6.4

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student Survey

Do parents/guardians know their child's educational aspirations and expectations?

Using the student ID field from both surveys, we linked student and parent responses for approximately half of the Grade 7 students who completed the survey.⁵ Of these paired responses, we compared parent/guardian and student self-ratings of educational expectations and aspirations.

When comparing students' educational aspirations to their parents' perceptions of those aspirations, we found a moderate positive correlation ($r = .36, p < .001$). As evident in Table 5, parents/guardians considerably under- and overestimated their children's educational aspirations. The greatest agreement, highlighted in Table 5 below, was achieved for students who aspired to more than a four-year degree. Among these students, nearly 56% of parents/guardians correctly estimated their child's aspirations.

TABLE 5: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GRADE 7 STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS & THEIR PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THOSE ASPIRATIONS

		Parent believes student <u>aspires</u> to achieve...				
		HS or less	Some College	2YR Degree	4YR Degree	>4YR Degree
Student actually <u>aspires</u> to achieve...	HS or less	11 26.2%	14 33.3%	4 9.5%	5 11.9%	8 19.0%
	Some college	5 4.4%	46 40.4%	13 11.4%	32 28.1%	18 15.8%
	2YR degree	6 7.1%	15 17.9%	21 25.0%	28 33.3%	14 16.7%
	4YR degree	4 1.6%	24 9.3%	28 10.9%	121 47.1%	80 31.1%
	>4YR degree	7 1.9%	26 7.1%	8 2.2%	121 33.1%	204 55.7%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

Note: Light and dark blue shading indicates agreement among student and parent aspirations.

Parents/guardians' beliefs about their child's educational expectations were also moderately and positively correlated with their child's self-reported expectations ($r = .36, p < .001$). As evident in Table 6, parents/guardians again over- and underestimated their children's expectations. This time the greatest levels of agreement were observed for those students who actually expected to achieve a four-year degree. Among these students, nearly 50% of their parents/guardians correctly estimated their child's expectations.

⁵ The remaining half did not have parents/guardians who completed the survey.

TABLE 6: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GRADE 7 STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS & THEIR PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THOSE EXPECTATIONS

		Parent believes student <u>expects</u> to achieve...				
Student actually <u>expects</u> to achieve...	HS or less	HS or less	Some College	2YR Degree	4YR Degree	>4YR Degree
		15 24.6%	20 32.8%	6 9.8%	11 18.0%	9 14.8%
	Some college	13 7.4%	53 30.1%	22 12.5%	61 34.7%	27 15.3%
	2YR degree	11 5.9%	32 17.2%	33 17.7%	80 43.0%	30 16.1%
	4YR degree	6 1.7%	38 11.0%	42 12.1%	173 49.9%	88 25.4%
	>4YR degree	11 3.2%	27 7.9%	21 6.1%	113 33.0%	170 49.7%

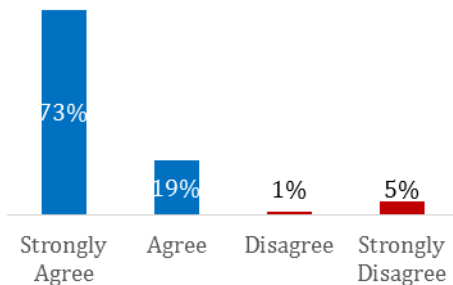
Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

Note: Light and dark blue shading indicates agreement among student and parent expectations.

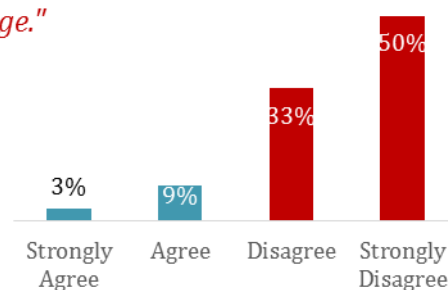
Parental views on college. We also asked parents/guardians whether they had talked to their child about college. Approximately 93% percent indicated they had. Next, we asked parents/guardians to indicate the extent to which they agreed with two statements designed to gauge their views about college: (1) *Attending college is important to my child's career goals and future*, and (2) *It is too early to talk to my child about college*. Approximately, 73% of parents indicated that they “strongly agreed” with the first statement. Additionally, a majority of parents/guardians either “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” with the second statement (83%). See Figure 8 for additional detail.

Figure 8. Views about college expressed by parents/guardians of Grade 7 students

92% of respondents agree that
"Attending college is important to my child's career goals and future."



83% of respondents disagree with the statement, "It's too early to think about my child going to college."



Additional analyses

Do parents/guardians' views relate to students' educational aspirations or expectations? Using a paired dataset consisting of Grade 7 parent/guardian- and student-level responses, we conducted additional analyses to determine whether parents/guardians' views about the importance and benefits of college were related to students' educational aspirations and expectations.

We found that parents/guardians' views about the importance of college for their child's career goals and future were not significantly related to either students' educational expectations or their aspirations. However, it should be noted that this finding is possibly attributable to the fact that the vast majority of parents reported that they understood the importance of college.

However, parents' views about whether or not it was too early to talk to their child about college were significantly and negatively related to students' educational expectations $t(145.77) = -4.13, p < .001$ and aspirations $t(143.50) = -4.79, p < .001$. That is, students whose parents/guardians agreed with the statement, "It is too early to talk to my child about college," exhibited lower educational aspirations and expectations than students whose parents/guardians disagreed with this statement. It should be noted that this analysis is not sufficient to determine that parent views are the cause of lowered student aspirations/expectations.

College Entrance Requirements, Cost, and Financial Aid

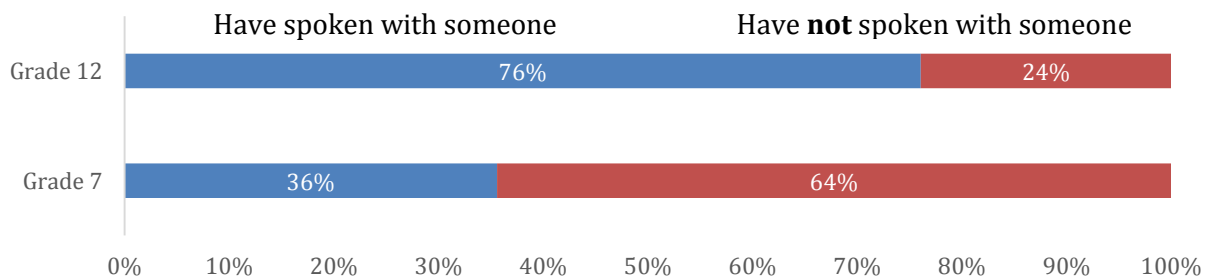
The next section of the survey asked students and parents to respond to a variety of items designed to gauge their knowledge about college entrance requirements, cost, and financial aid.

Interaction with school and/or WV GEAR UP staff. We first asked all students and parents/guardians whether they had yet spoken with any school or WV GEAR UP staff about financial aid or college entrance requirements.

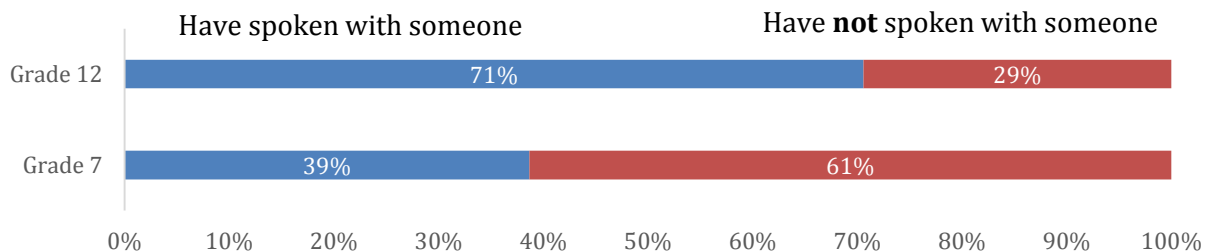
Nearly two-thirds of Grade 7 students and almost one-quarter of Grade 12 students indicated they had not yet spoken to anyone about financial aid requirements. We saw similar trends with respect to the percentages of students who had not yet talked to anyone about college entrance requirements. However, despite the higher percentage of Grade 12 students (compared to Grade 7) responding more affirmatively to the question about college requirements, nearly half of all Grade 12 students had not yet spoken to anyone about this topic. Figure 9 provides the results for both topics.

Figure 9. Percentages of students who have spoken to someone about financial aid and college entrance requirements

Grade 12 students were far more likely than Grade 7 students to indicate they had spoken to someone about financial aid requirements. However, nearly a quarter had not done so (24%).



Grade 12 students were also more likely than Grade 7 students to indicate they had spoken to someone about college entrance requirements, but nearly a third of Grade 12 students had not done so (29%).



We also asked this question of parents/guardians. According to the Grade 7 parent/guardian surveys, approximately 91% of respondents reported they had not yet spoken to anyone from their child's school or from WV GEAR UP about college entrance requirements or about the availability of financial aid.

Perceived knowledge of financial aid, costs/benefits of college. Next, we asked several questions about students and parents'/guardians' knowledge of financial aid and the cost and benefits of college. Overall, students and parents/guardians report being knowledgeable about these topics. Not surprisingly, self-reported knowledge seems to increase as students continue through their high school careers. Approximately 61% of Grade 7 students indicated familiarity with these topics compared with slightly more than three-quarters of Grade 12 students (76%). Examining parent/guardian responses, we found that Grade 7 students and their parents/guardians reported similar levels of awareness of these topics (approximately 58% for parents/guardians vs. 61% for students).

Perceptions of college affordability and cost. We next asked students and parents/guardians to respond to questions about (1) the affordability of three postsecondary options and (2) the total cost of tuition (excluding books, housing, and food) to attend a four-year public college in West Virginia or a public community/technical college in West Virginia.

Using a five-point Likert-type response scale with values ranging from 1 = definitely not to 5 = definitely, we first asked students to indicate whether or not they thought they could afford college. Perceptions about the affordability of a four-year public college education in West Virginia were very similar across Grade 7 and Grade 12 respondents, with approximately 59% of students in each grade believing that it was probably or definitely affordable for them to attend. Secondly, more than half of Grade 7 and 12 students responded that they probably or definitely could afford a two-year public community/technical college (57%). Thirdly, Grade 7 students indicated that attending a public career/technical center would be similarly affordable. Nearly 68% of Grade 12 students believed their families could either probably or definitely afford this option. See Table 7 for more details.

Approximately 64% of Grade 7 parents believed that it was probably or definitely affordable for their child to attend a four-year college in West Virginia, very similar to the perceptions reported by Grade 7 students. Parents reported slightly more confidence in the affordability of attending a two-year public community/technical college (74%) or a public career/technical center (75%). See Table 7 for more details.

TABLE 7 PERCEPTIONS OF THE AFFORDABILITY OF COLLEGE BY INSTITUTION TYPE AND GRADE

	Four-Year Public College			Public Comm/Tech College			Career/Tech		
	Grade 7	Grade 12	Grade 7 Parent	Grade 7	Grade 12	Grade 7 Parent	Grade 7	Grade 12	Grade 7 Parent
Definitely not	134 5.5%	101 8.0%	54 4.1%	127 5.3%	54 4.3%	17 1.3%	130 5.4%	53 4.3%	13 1.0%
Probably not	167 6.8%	112 8.8%	69 5.2%	167 7.0%	72 5.8%	41 3.2%	171 7.2%	75 6.1%	34 2.7%
Not sure	701 28.7%	311 24.5%	359 27.1%	744 31.1%	275 22.1%	271 21.3%	745 31.2%	276 22.3%	262 20.9%
Probably	997 39.5%	469 37.0%	481 36.3%	895 37.4%	466 37.5%	481 37.8%	869 36.4%	457 36.9%	450 35.9%
Definitely	442 17.5%	275 21.7%	362 27.3%	459 19.2%	376 30.2%	464 36.4%	471 19.7%	377 30.5%	496 39.5%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

Tuition estimates for public college options. Next, we asked students and parents to estimate the total cost of tuition for one year, providing these options: (1) up to \$4,000, (2) \$4,001 - \$8,000, (3) \$8,001 - \$11,000, (4) \$11,001 - \$16,000, (5) \$16,001 - \$21,000, (6) \$21,001 - \$26,000, and (7) more than \$26,000. The correct estimates were \$4,001 - \$8,000 and up to \$4,000 for four-year public college and two-year public community/technical college options, respectively.

Overall, Grade 12 students more correctly estimated four-year college costs (24% and 19%, respectively) and two-year college costs (22% and 17%, respectively) than did Grade 7 students. The majority in both grades overestimated these costs, with Grade 7 students more likely to drastically overestimate.

According to the Grade 7 parent survey, 20% of parents/guardians of Grade 7 students believe that the cost of one year of tuition at a four-year West Virginia college is between \$8,001 and \$11,000. Twenty-nine percent believe this cost to be somewhere between \$11,001 and \$21,000. Almost half of parents indicated that they believe a two-year West Virginia public community/technical college costs \$8,000 or below. Table 8 includes complete percentages for both four-year public and public community/technical colleges by respondent. In this table we have highlighted the percentage of correctly indicated responses.

TABLE 8: TUITION ESTIMATES BY INSTITUTION TYPE AND GRADE

	Four-Year Public College			Public Comm/Tech College		
	Grade 7	Grade 12	Grade 7 Parents	Grade 7	Grade 12	Grade 7 Parents
Up to \$4,000	310 12.6%	53 4.1%	46 3.6%	418 17.0%	275 21.6%	279 22.4
\$4,001-\$8000	470 19.1%	308 24.1%	261 20.2%	514 21.0%	362 28.4%	373 30.0%
\$8,001-\$11,000	499 20.2%	288 22.5%	271 21.0%	486 19.8%	274 21.5%	240 19.3%
\$11,001-\$16,000	379 15.4%	212 16.6%	224 17.4%	418 17.0%	183 14.4%	137 11.0%
\$16,001-\$21,000	335 13.6%	246 19.2%	178 13.8%	281 11.5%	94 7.4%	99 8.0%
\$21,001-\$26,000	219 8.9%	89 7.0%	114 8.8%	156 6.4%	41 3.2%	45 3.6%
More than \$26,000	255 10.3%	84 6.6%	197 15.3%	180 7.3%	45 3.5%	70 5.6%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

Additional Analyses

Parent/guardian education as a predictor of perceived tuition cost... Overall, parents/guardians of Grade 7 students tended to overestimate the cost of one year's tuition at both public college options presented on the survey. However, we found that, when compared to parents/guardians of students whose father or male guardian had not earned a college degree, parents/guardians of students whose father had earned any degree were:

- Less likely to drastically overestimate the cost of tuition at a four-year public college in WV to be more than \$26,000/year (7.6% vs. 16.8%) and more likely to report the cost of four-year public school to be between \$8,001 and \$11,000 (27.5% vs. 20.0%); and ($X^2 = 22.6, p < .001$).
- More likely to report the cost of public community/technical college to be between \$4,001 and \$8,000 (37.7% vs 28.7%) ($X^2 = 22.7, p < .001$).

We also found that, when compared to parents/guardians of students whose mother or female guardian had not earned a college degree, parents/guardians of students whose mothers had earned any degree were:

- Less likely to underestimate the cost of four-year public college to be up to \$4,000 per year (1.3% vs. 4.0%) and more likely to rate the cost of four-year public college tuition to be between \$8,001 and \$11,000 (25.7% vs. 19.3%); and ($X^2 = 18.9, p < .05$).
- More likely to report the cost of public community/technical college to be between \$4,001 and \$8,000 (37.0% vs 27.5%) ($X^2 = 16.9, p < 0.05$).

Awareness and importance of postsecondary education-related topics. The student survey included two multi-part items designed to ascertain student: (1) level of awareness related to 11 postsecondary education topics (high school graduation requirements, FAFSA, scholarships, etc.) and (2) perceptions of the importance of 16 resources in helping them to better understand their postsecondary options (college websites, television, e-mail, family members, etc.).

Awareness of postsecondary education topics. The top three topics of which Grade 7 students indicated they were either moderately or extremely aware were: (1) high school graduation requirements (61%), (2) the importance/benefit of a college education (60%), and (3) scholarships (59%). Of note, almost 60% of Grade 7 students reported being “not at all” aware of FAFSA and Federal Pell Grants.

Almost 60% of Grade 7 students indicated they were “not at all” aware of FAFSA or Federal Pell grants. Grade 12 students were least aware of college savings plans/529 and Federal work study options. Interestingly, Grade 7 students reported being more aware of college savings plans than Grade 12 students.

Unsurprisingly, Grade 12 students reported more awareness than Grade 7 students of almost all postsecondary education topics. One exception was college savings plans/529. Slightly less than one-third of Grade 7 students reported awareness of this topic compared with only 28% of Grade 12 students. For Grade 12, the top three topics of which students indicated either moderate or extreme awareness were: (1) high school graduation requirements (85%), (2) ACT/SAT (83%), and (3) the importance/benefit of a college education (78%). Approximately 44% of these students reported they were “not at all” aware of college savings plans/529, and 33% were “not at all” aware of Federal work study options. Table 9 illustrates the differences in mean awareness ratings for each topic by grade level. In this table we have highlighted those topics that approached or exceed a mean rating of approximately 3.0. This corresponds to a rating of “moderately” aware.

TABLE 9: MEAN STUDENT AWARENESS RATINGS OF 11 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TOPICS BY GRADE

	Grade 7			Grade 12			Difference
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
FAFSA	2421	1.62	.85	1245	2.66	.91	1.04
College savings plan/529	2402	2.02	.99	1235	1.90	.95	-0.12
ACT/SAT	2396	2.07	1.03	1245	3.26	.84	1.19
WV Higher Ed Grant	2404	1.96	.97	1246	2.20	.97	0.23
Federal Pell grants	2404	1.65	.87	1241	2.17	.96	0.52
Federal student loans	2406	2.19	.99	1242	2.45	.95	0.26
Federal work study	2392	1.89	.98	1239	2.12	.98	0.23
Scholarships	2402	2.72	1.06	1241	2.97	.90	0.25
Requirements for college acceptance	2395	2.46	1.04	1239	2.93	.94	0.46
Importance/benefit of a college education	2401	2.76	1.11	1239	3.20	.94	0.43
High school graduation requirements	2412	2.77	1.07	1245	3.37	.86	0.60

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student Survey

Note: Mean rating of 3.0 equates to “moderately aware”

Parents/guardians of Grade 7 students were most aware of the importance/benefit of a college education (~54% were extremely aware). Similar to students, approximately 47% of parents reported they were “*not at all*” aware of college savings plans/529, and 48% were “*not at all*” aware of Federal work study options. Table 10 illustrates parent results for this item.

TABLE 10: GRADE 7 PARENT/GUARDIAN AWARENESS RATINGS FOR 11 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TOPICS

	N	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Extremely
FAFSA	1352	31.6%	23.4%	25.2%	19.8%
College savings plan/529	1344	46.7%	26.0%	19.7%	7.6%
ACT/SAT	1342	17.8%	21.6%	35.2%	25.3%
WV Higher Ed Grant	1339	44.1%	24.0%	19.5%	12.4%
Federal Pell grants	1338	29.9%	27.5%	25.7%	16.9%
Federal student loans	1343	24.3%	27.3%	28.7%	19.7%
Federal work study	1341	48.5%	22.4%	18.7%	10.4%
Scholarships	1344	26.1%	30.2%	26.6%	17.0%
Requirements for college acceptance	1340	26.6%	28.6%	29.2%	15.6%
Importance/benefit of a college education	1342	13.1%	10.3%	22.7%	53.9%
High school graduation requirements	1343	11.5%	16.2%	35.3%	37.0%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Parent/Guardian Survey

Importance of resources in gathering information about postsecondary options. The top three resources that Grade 7 students indicated were either moderately or extremely important in helping them gather information about postsecondary options were: (1) family members (61%), (2) television (46%), and (3) college/university websites (44%). Of note, nearly one-third of Grade 7 students reported that text messages⁶ and GEAR UP staff were “*not at all*” important in helping them gather information about postsecondary options.

Grade 12 students reported all but two information sources (i.e., television and signs, posters, and billboards) as more important than Grade 7 students did. Among Grade 12 students, the top three most important resources were: (1) college/university websites (66%), (2) family members (64%), and (3) school counselors (62%). Almost 40% of these students reported that radio and text messages were “*not at all*” important in helping them gather information about postsecondary options. Note, Grade 12 students who opted to receive text messages had not yet received their first messages at the time of the survey. Table 11 illustrates the differences in mean importance ratings for each topic by grade level. Again, we have highlighted those areas where the mean rating approached or exceeded 3.0, a level corresponding to a rating of “*moderately*” important.

Parents/guardians of Grade 7 students found the following top three resources to be moderately or extremely important: (1) family members (48.4%), (2) college or university websites (40%), and (3) brochures and pamphlets (29.3%). Text messages were least important. Table 12 illustrates parent results for this item. Of note, no resources received a mean rating approaching 3.0, a level corresponding to “*moderately*” important.

⁶ Grade 7 students do not received text messages as part of WV GEAR UP.

TABLE 11: MEAN STUDENT IMPORTANCE RATINGS FOR 16 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION INFORMATION-GATHERING RESOURCES BY GRADE

	Grade 7			Grade 12			Difference
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
College or university websites	2426	2.31	1.05	1271	2.84	0.95	0.52
CFWV.com	2409	2.05	1.05	1265	2.61	1.00	0.55
Other college planning websites	2397	2.08	1.02	1262	2.41	1.00	0.33
College fairs	2400	2.03	1.04	1266	2.65	0.95	0.62
Television	2421	2.43	1.03	1266	2.27	1.01	-0.15
Radio	2411	2.14	1.05	1266	2.06	1.03	-0.07
Direct mail	2404	2.04	1.07	1268	2.64	1.00	0.60
E-mail	2404	2.04	1.07	1268	2.64	1.00	0.60
Brochures/pamphlets	2397	2.18	1.03	1264	2.62	0.92	0.44
Magazines/newspapers	2396	2.14	1.03	1263	2.19	1.01	0.04
Signs, posters, and billboards	2396	2.30	1.04	1264	2.23	0.99	-0.07
Text messages	2408	1.99	1.10	1263	2.11	1.07	0.12
School counselor	2409	2.25	1.09	1264	2.73	1.00	0.47
Family members	2400	2.79	1.08	1262	2.78	0.98	-0.01
GEAR UP staff	2397	1.97	1.05	1261	2.16	1.07	0.19
College admissions representatives	2390	2.06	1.09	1253	2.64	0.98	0.58

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student Survey

Note: Mean rating of 3.0 equates to "moderately aware"

TABLE 12: MEAN GRADE 7 PARENT/GUARDIAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS FOR 16 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION INFORMATION-GATHERING RESOURCES

	N	M	SD
College or university websites	1273	2.22	1.06
CFWV.com	1257	1.83	.99
Other college planning websites	1252	1.84	.98
College fairs	1249	1.83	1.00
Television	1267	1.93	.88
Radio	1263	1.72	.87
Direct mail	1266	1.76	.95
E-mail	1260	1.70	.94
Brochures and pamphlets	1264	1.98	.98
Magazines/newspapers	1260	1.77	.89
Signs, posters, or billboards	1258	1.75	.86
Text messages	1258	1.49	.85
School counselor	1249	1.92	1.08
Family members	1266	2.42	1.04
GEAR UP staff	1255	1.69	.99
College admissions representatives	1258	1.81	1.08

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Parent/Guardian Survey

Additional Support

The survey next asked students to indicate the extent to which they required additional support in 14 areas. Grade 7 students most frequently requested opportunities to participate in college visits (62%) and to obtain information about college entrance requirements (60%). Grade 7 parents were most interested in information about financial aid/scholarships (72.8%), college entrance requirements (68%) and information about participating in GEAR UP events (66.2%). Grade 12 students mostly requested information about college financial aid/scholarships (54%) and also expressed interest in opportunities to participate in college visits (53%). See Table 13 for additional detail.

TABLE 13: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS REQUESTING 14 ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS BY GRADE

	Grade 7		Grade 12		Grade 7 Parents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
More advanced classes	1164	46.1%	314	24.0%	495	35.8%
Information about participating in GEAR UP events	1068	42.3%	469	35.8%	915	66.2%
Tutoring	962	38.1%	419	32.0%	553	40.0%
Opportunities to participate in college visits	1568	62.1%	690	52.7%	887	64.1%
Information about college entrance requirements	1515	60.0%	594	45.4%	940	68.0%
Information about college financial aid/scholarships	1461	57.9%	709	54.2%	1007	72.8%
Leadership opportunities	1061	42.0%	367	28.0%	552	39.9%
Summer activities	938	37.1%	299	22.8%	544	39.3%
Career exploration activities	1334	52.8%	536	40.9%	797	57.6%
Test preparation	1250	49.5%	584	44.6%	837	60.5%
Assistance with the college entrance process	1139	45.1%	564	43.1%	791	57.2%
Assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA)	958	37.9%	650	49.7%	774	56.0%
Information and events presented in other languages (e.g., Spanish)	776	30.7%	156	11.9%	191	13.8%
Other	72	2.9%	36	2.8%	61	4.4%

Source: Year 1 WV GEAR UP Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys

College Preparation Activities

Finally, we asked Grade 12 students to respond to three additional questions about the extent to which they had engaged in important college preparation activities. Several notable findings emerged.

Only 6% of Grade 12 students indicated they had completed a FAFSA application at the time of the survey, although a significant majority responded that they planned to complete a FAFSA application in the next year (62%). These results must be interpreted with caution, as the earliest date by which grade 12 students could begin completing a FAFSA for the 2015-16 school year was January 1, 2015. Surveys were administered prior to this date. Half of all Grade 12 students surveyed (50%) indicated they had completed a college application at the time of the survey and slightly more than a quarter responded that they planned to complete a college application in the next year (27%). Over three-quarters of Grade 12 students stated they had already taken or planned to take the SAT or ACT tests in the next year (77%).

Approximately 11% of Grade 12 students do not know what a FAFSA application is, and only 6% had completed a FAFSA application by the time of the Year 1 student survey.

More than three-quarters of Grade 12 students had already taken or planned to take the SAT or ACT tests in the next year.

Further analysis was conducted to determine whether there was an association between students who indicated they intended to enroll in postsecondary education following high school and those who engaged in college preparation activities during their senior year. We found that students who indicated they planned to enroll in college were far more likely to have taken specific actions toward preparing for college than students who did not. That is, they had already completed or planned to complete a college application (85 vs. 14.8%), take SAT or ACT exams (84% vs. 16%), and complete a FAFSA (75% vs. 25.2%).

Conclusions

This report provides baseline information about the students and parents/guardians served by the WV GEAR UP program. Since we conducted surveys prior to the provision of most WV GEAR UP services, this information's chief utility is in helping the Commission and participating districts and schools better understand the context in which WV GEAR UP will be implemented over the next seven years. Understanding this context is critical because it helps set the stage for a successful program and enables the Commission to establish and monitor attainable benchmarks for the program. To assist in these efforts, the following section highlights a number of key findings and discusses their implications for WV GEAR UP.

Target Population

WV GEAR UP is clearly serving the target population. Previous GEAR UP grant results are proof that the program is far-reaching and can succeed at providing postsecondary access and opportunities for low-income students and their families. Moreover, this type of program can be particularly valuable for the many participating schools and school districts in West Virginia that serve high concentrations of low-income, first-generation college-going students. According to baseline survey data, West Virginia's current GEAR UP grant has the potential to serve a considerable number of such students. We estimate that up to 40% of the cohort group come from families whose total income is below \$30,000 per year, and we know that a large number of students in both the cohort and priority groups come from households where parents/guardians have little or no education beyond high school. These factors, coupled with the rural nature of many participating districts, create a unique and challenging context in which to implement a college access program like WV GEAR UP. However, they also highlight the potential that exists for WV GEAR UP to produce a lasting impact.

Educational Aspirations/Expectations, Confidence in Academic Ability, and Parent/Guardian Views about Postsecondary Education

Students express high educational aspirations. However, they tend to be more reserved about their actual expectations; parents/guardians tend to overestimate their child's postsecondary plans. The fact that a large majority of cohort and priority students indicated they aspire and expect to pursue postsecondary education options is a very promising finding. Parents/guardians of cohort group students also reported that their children hold high aspirations and expectations. However, we found that both students and parents/guardians were more reserved about the level of education they expect (or believe their child expects) to achieve than the level to which they aspire (or believe their child aspires). It is certainly worth investigating why this is the case. One possible explanation is that the perceived cost of college tempers expectations. We also wonder why this appears to be more of an issue for students in the cohort group than in the priority group. Useful questions to consider include:

1. What are the factors that influence student expectations versus aspirations?
2. Are students more optimistic in middle school and later become less so? If so, why, and what can be done to maintain high aspirations?
3. Do factors such as peer, familial, and teacher influence operate more strongly for middle school students, resulting in higher aspirations than high school students report?

Additionally, there is evidence that parents/guardians tend to overestimate their child's aspirations and expectations. It is unclear why this may be, but two potential explanations are (1) a communication gap between students and their parents, or (2) social desirability bias—parents/guardians report higher aspirations and expectations because they do not want to be perceived as holding low expectations for their child.

Students are generally confident about their academic ability, but need more help to feel confident in their math, science, and study skills. Readyng students for college is a major goal of GEAR UP, so what students believe about their ability to do well in core subjects, future college courses, and end-of-year testing is important. Students served by the WV GEAR UP program indicated that they are relatively confident about their academic skills and abilities in all areas assessed by our survey. Importantly, however, both cohort and priority students indicated least confidence in their math, science, and study skills. These areas are critical to success in college and career. Real or perceived, deficits in these areas could affect students' aspirations and goals and prevent them from achieving at their highest potential.

Parental views about postsecondary options are an important lever that WV GEAR UP can use to influence students' aspirations and expectations. The great majority of parents think college or other postsecondary options are important to their child's future career goals and overall success. However, in our analysis of survey results, we also found that when parents/guardians of Grade 7 students think it is too early to talk with their child about college, those students appear to have lower aspirations and expectations. Our analysis is not sufficient to ascertain the direction of this relationship or to determine a cause-and-effect relationship, but its presence alone underscores the importance of engaging parents early and ensuring they are talking to their children about their postsecondary options.

Perceptions of College Cost, Affordability, and Knowledge of Financial Aid Options

Perceptions of cost are a potential barrier to students' plans to continue education after high school, but students and parents/guardians both tend to overestimate costs. Although the vast majority of students plan to pursue postsecondary options, there are a few who do not. Among the many reasons cited, cost appears to be a major barrier and particularly daunting for students and their families. This said, even students and parents who do have postsecondary plans after high school do not understand the actual costs of attending college in West Virginia, our surveys show. The majority tend to overestimate, sometimes dramatically. One possibility is that students and parents/guardians are considering other costs in their estimates, even though the survey instructed them not to. Yet another possibility is that there is simply a great deal of misunderstanding about the actual costs of tuition, especially for low-income and first-generation college-goers, the background of many of the families served by GEAR UP, who have little experience with postsecondary education. In fact, evidence from our surveys suggests that families with a history of participation in postsecondary education are significantly less likely to overestimate costs. With more accurate knowledge about the costs of college, students may feel differently about their postsecondary options.

Building knowledge about financial aid options among students and their families is an important way to improve their perceptions of affordability. At the time of our surveys (early December 2014), students and parents/guardians indicated they had not spoken with WV GEAR UP

staff about financial aid, nor were they aware of many important financial aid options. For example, very few Grade 7 students reported knowing about financial aid topics such as FAFSA and Federal Pell grants. The low number of Grade 12 students who reported being well-informed about these options is equally troubling. For example, many do not know about Federal work study, college savings/529 plans, or Federal Pell grants. Their lack of knowledge would not be so problematic if students could rely on their parents/guardians for this information. However, more than 50% of the parents/guardians of Grade 7 students indicated they were not at all aware or only slightly aware of the financial aid topics presented, and more than a quarter (26%) stated they were not at all aware of college acceptance requirements. Parents require more education and students need alternate sources of information beyond their family members. Because Grade 7 students rated family members as the most influential source of information about postsecondary education, and Grade 12 students ranked them among their top three sources, keeping families (not just parents/guardians) connected and informed about postsecondary options must be a priority.

Students are looking elsewhere for information about postsecondary options, and parents are not finding many information sources useful. Possibly because their parents/guardians have limited background with college options, students in the cohort group reported turning to sources such as television and websites to gather additional information about their postsecondary options. We found that Grade 12 students think family members are important resources, but they have expanded their network to include school counselors and college websites as well. Parents/guardians are not finding many sources very useful at all. Those they rated most highly included family members, college websites, and brochures/pamphlets. WV GEAR UP staff and texting were noticeably absent from their highest rated sources. We expect these sources to increase in importance as implementation of GEAR UP progresses.

GEAR UP will serve as a much needed additional resource for parents and students.

Parents/guardians and students expressed strong interest in many additional supports. Those most highly rated by all groups included (1) opportunities to participate in college visits, (2) information about college financial aid/scholarships, and (3) career exploration activities. WV GEAR UP is well positioned to capitalize on these desires and provide these kinds of supports. Notably about two-thirds of parents/guardians in the cohort group reported a desire for more information about participating in GEAR UP events. This is a promising finding.

Recommendations

Based on the survey results, the ICF evaluation team offers these recommendations:

- Capitalize on the positive aspirations and expectations that students reported by designing services to engage families and build support for a college-going culture in participating schools.
- Work closely with the cohort group and their families to promote positive college-going views as early as possible and facilitate communication to bridge the gap between student postsecondary aspirations and expectations and parent/guardian understanding of these.
- Identify national, regional, and local best practices by collaborating with the evaluation team to uncover local efforts and attending national and regional events to glean information about efforts in other states that promote family involvement and more effectively engage families in conversations about postsecondary options.
- Site-based WV GEAR UP staff may wish to focus on math, science, and study skills when planning tutoring and other academic support services for the coming year, as students are universally less confident in these areas.
- Continue building knowledge about the myriad of financial aid options available to students and their families.
- Call on the evaluation team to monitor changes in the barriers that students and parents perceive to attaining a postsecondary education.
- Continue to work with college partners, school administrators, teachers, and parents to assure that opportunities to visit colleges and information on college requirements is made available within local school systems. In those schools where college partnerships may not be abundant, schools may want to partner for events.
- Continue to encourage family involvement beyond parents/guardians. Expand and market events to other family members, such as siblings, grandparents, and cousins. Families need support to understand what is important, where to find resources, and how to advocate for their students.
- Intentionally publicize WV GEAR UP-supported student and family events and sustain outreach to parents/guardians, especially among the cohort group.
- Emphasize outreach for texting intervention, as it was among the least influential information sources cited by both groups of students. There is great potential for this service to grow in importance over the life of the grant.

Appendix A - Consent Forms/Instruments

Below we present the Grade 7 and 12 opt-out consent forms utilized during Year 1, the Grade 12 student survey, and the Grade 7 parent survey. Note, the Grade 7 and Grade 8 student surveys are excluded in the interest of brevity. These surveys were identical to the Grade 12 version, with the exception of three additional items measuring completion of college preparation activities.

West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2014-15

Parental Consent Form – GRADE 7

Date: December 2, 2014

Dear Parent or Guardian:

*We are writing to ask you to complete a brief survey and to give permission for your child to complete a similar survey during school. The surveys are about education and training after high school. **If you DO NOT want your child to take the survey, please sign and return the form attached to this letter.***

Who is doing the surveys and why? The reason for these surveys is that your child's school is part of the West Virginia GEAR UP program. GEAR UP stands for *Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*. It is a program that helps students get ready for education and training after high school. To learn more about WV GEAR UP, please visit www.wvgearup.org.

A company called ICF International is doing a study of WV GEAR UP for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to learn if GEAR UP is achieving its goals.

Who is involved in WV GEAR UP? We work with 50 schools in 10 county school districts in WV. This includes your child's school. Only some grades in your child's school are getting GEAR UP support this year, because the money for GEAR UP is limited. The child who brought this letter home is in a grade that is part of GEAR UP. That means you and your child can get free help to get ready for college or other after high school options.

What is the Student Survey? GEAR UP is asking all students in your child's grade to do a 10- to 15-minute survey every year. This year, we are doing the survey from December 2014 to January 2015. The survey will be given at school by your child's teachers or other school staff. It asks questions about what your child knows and thinks about college and other options after high school. It asks about your child's goals for high school and beyond. It also asks if your child uses tutoring programs or attends other school events.

We ask all students in your child's grade to complete the survey. Knowing about their plans for college helps us know if GEAR UP is working. Your child's participation in the survey is very important.

Right now we are asking for your permission to give your child the survey this year. If your child stays in a GEAR UP school, we will ask you for permission to do the survey every year. We hope you will let your child take the survey.

Is there a Parent Survey? Yes! Within one week, your child will bring home a paper copy of the parent survey. We ask parents of students in GEAR UP schools to complete surveys every year too. The parent survey asks questions similar to the ones on the student survey and takes 10 to 15 minutes. Having parents' feedback lets us know if there are ways we can do more to support families. You can fill out the survey and send it back to your child's school when you are done. You have the option to do the parent survey online. Your child will also bring you a link you can use to get to it. No matter which version of the survey you do, we ask you to complete it by January 7, 2015.

Will you keep the information we provide private? We have to follow the law. That means we have to keep your information private. We will only write reports about groups of students and parents. We never write about individuals. The survey does not ask for your name or your child's name. We only ask for your child's student identification number (lunch/WVEIS number). We cannot tell who you or your child are using this number. The reason we ask for it is to make sure we can check that we get surveys back from the same students and parents each year. We also use it to connect

West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2014-15

Parental Consent Form – GRADE 7

student and parent surveys to each other. We may also use the number to connect surveys to other information from your child's school.

Right now, we are only asking for your permission to take the surveys. Any other information we might ask for in the future would be collected from the West Virginia Department of Education or your county school district. We will follow the law when we request this information and make sure your privacy is protected. We will ask for your permission if the law says we have to.

Are there any risks or benefits to participating in the surveys? We will not identify parents/guardians or children. The only risk is that the survey may take some time from your child's normal school day. We made the survey short to avoid this problem. If you decide to take the surveys, it will help us figure out how to support students better. WV GEAR UP schools might also use surveys to change their programs.

Are the surveys required? No. They are voluntary. That means you can decide if you want to take them or not. There are no penalties to you or your child if you choose not to take them. You and your child will not give up any support or programs you would normally get. You can still get free help to get ready for college or other after high school options even if you do not do the surveys. Even if you let your child take the survey, he or she can decide if they want to do it. He or she can skip questions or stop at any time without penalties. The same is true for parents who take the parent survey.

What do I need to do? If you want to give permission for your child to participate in the survey, you **DO NOT** need to respond to this letter.

If you **DO NOT** want your child to complete the survey, just complete and sign the form below and return it to your child's school by *December 12, 2014*. If you sign this form, our team will work with the school to ensure that your child does not complete the survey.

What if I have questions? If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Nate Hixson. He is a researcher working on the study. You can reach him at 304/342-0037 or nate.hixson@icfi.com. If you have questions about the WV GEAR UP program, please contact Dr. Adam Green. He is in charge of GEAR UP. You can reach him at 304/558-0655 or green@hepc.wvnet.edu. Thanks for helping make GEAR UP a success!

Sincerely,
Dr. Adam S. Green, Vice Chancellor
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

* * * * *

If you give permission for your child to take the December 2014/January 2015 GEAR UP survey, you do not need to do anything with this form. Just keep it for your records. If you **DO NOT WANT** your child to complete the survey, please complete, sign, and return this form to your child's school no later than *December 12, 2014*.

I DO NOT WANT my child, _____, (please print full student name) to participate in the West Virginia GEAR UP survey in December 2014/January 2015.

Parent/Guardian name (please print): _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

WV HEPC signature: _____

Date: _____

ICF International signature: _____

Date: _____

West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2014-15

Parental Consent Form – GRADE 12

Date: December 2, 2014

Dear GEAR UP Parent or Guardian:

*We are writing to ask you to give permission for your child to complete a brief survey during school. The survey is about education and training after high school. **If you DO NOT want your child to take the survey, please sign and return the form attached to this letter.***

Who is doing the surveys and why? The reason for this survey is that your child's school is part of the West Virginia GEAR UP program. GEAR UP stands for *Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*. It is a program that helps students get ready for education and training after high school. To learn more about WV GEAR UP, please visit www.wvgearup.org.

A company called ICF International is doing a study of WV GEAR UP for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to learn if GEAR UP is achieving its goals.

Who is involved in WV GEAR UP? We work with 50 schools in 10 county school districts in WV. This includes your child's school. Only some grades in your child's school are getting GEAR UP support this year, because the money for GEAR UP is limited. The child who brought this letter home is in a grade that is part of GEAR UP. That means you and your child can get free help to get ready for college or other after high school options!

What is the Student Survey? GEAR UP is asking all students in your child's grade to do a 10- to 15-minute survey this year. We are doing the survey from December 2014 to January 2015. The survey will be given at school by your child's teachers or other school staff. It asks questions about what your child knows and thinks about college and other options after high school. It asks about your child's goals for high school and beyond. It also asks if your child uses tutoring programs or attends other school events.

We ask all students in your child's grade to complete the survey. Knowing about their plans for college helps us know if GEAR UP is working. Your child's participation in the survey is very important. We hope you will let your child take the survey.

Will you keep the information my child provides private? We have to follow the law. That means we have to keep your information private. We will only write reports about groups of students. We never write about individuals. The survey does not ask for your child's name. We only ask for your child's student identification number (lunch/WVEIS number). We cannot tell who your child is using this number. The reason we ask for it is to make sure we can check that we get surveys back from students each year. We may also use the number to connect surveys to other information from your child's school.

Right now, we are only asking for your permission to take the surveys. Any other information we might ask for in the future would be collected from the West Virginia Department of Education or your county school district. We will follow the law when we request this information and make sure your privacy is protected. We will ask for your permission if the law says we have to.

West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2014-15

Parental Consent Form – GRADE 12

Are there any risks or benefits to participating in the surveys? We will not identify children who take the survey. The only risk is that the survey may take some time from your child's normal school day. We made the survey short to avoid this problem. If you decide to let your child take the surveys, it will help us figure out how to support students better. WV GEAR UP schools might also use surveys to change their programs.

Are the surveys required? No. They are voluntary. That means you can decide if you want to take them or not. There are no penalties to you or your child if you choose not to take them. You and your child will not give up any support or programs you would normally get. You can still get free help to get ready for college or other after high school options even if you do not do the surveys. Even if you let your child take the survey, he or she can decide if they want to do it. He or she can skip questions or stop at any time without penalties. The same is true for parents who take the parent survey.

What do I need to do? If you want to give permission for your child to participate in the survey, you **DO NOT** need to respond to this letter.

If you **DO NOT** want your child to complete the survey, just complete and sign the form below and return it to your child's school by *December 12, 2014*. If you sign this form, our team will work with the school to ensure that your child does not complete the survey.

What if I have questions? If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Nate Hixson. He is a researcher working on the study. You can reach him at 304/342-0037 or nate.hixson@icfi.com. If you have questions about the WV GEAR UP program, please contact Dr. Adam Green. He is in charge of GEAR UP. You can reach him at 304/558-0655 or green@hepc.wvnet.edu. Thanks for helping make GEAR UP a success!

Sincerely,
Dr. Adam S. Green, Vice Chancellor
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

* * * * *

If you give permission for your child to take the December 2014/January 2015 GEAR UP survey, you do not need to do anything with this form. Just keep it for your records. If you **DO NOT WANT** your child to complete the survey, please complete, sign, and return this form to your child's school no later than *December 12, 2014*.

I DO NOT WANT my child, _____, (please print full student name) to participate in the West Virginia GEAR UP survey in December 2014/January 2015.

Parent/Guardian name (please print): _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

WV HEPC signature: _____

Date: _____

ICF International signature: _____

Date: _____

West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey - 2014-15 School Year

Grade 12

Directions: Please respond to all questions by completely filling in the circle for each answer:

Like this: ☒ Not like this: ☐ ☐ ☐

Section I: About You

1. Please write your 9-digit lunch/WVEIS number in the spaces below. Fill in the bubbles to match each number. The example on the left shows how to fill in your lunch/WVEIS number. If there are zeroes at the beginning of your number, please include them.

This is an Example: lunch/WVEIS number: 009132567

0 _0_ _9_ _1_ _3_ _2_ _5_ _6_ _7_

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

Your lunch/WVEIS number:

____ _

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

2. What is your current grade level? ☐ A 6 ☐ B 7 ☐ C 8 ☐ D 9 ☐ E 10 ☐ F 11 ☐ G 12

3. What is your gender?

☐ A Male ☐ B Female ☐ C Other

4. What is your race?

☐ A White ☐ D American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ B Black or African American ☐ E Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
☐ C Asian ☐ F Two or more races

5. What is your ethnicity?

☐ A Hispanic or Latino ☐ B Not Hispanic or Latino

6. What is the main language you speak at home?

☐ A English ☐ B Spanish ☐ C Other

7. How much money do you think your family made (before taxes) during the past 12 months? As you think about it, please include any money you earned from working and all the money you think the people living in your house made.

- ☐ (A) \$30,000 or less
 ☐ (B) \$30,001 – \$60,000
 ☐ (C) \$60,001 – \$100,000
 ☐ (D) \$100,001 or more
 ☐ (E) Don't know or I'd rather not say

8. What is the highest level of education of your...

Father or
male
guardian

Mother or
female
guardian

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> (A) | <input type="radio"/> (A) | Some high school |
| <input type="radio"/> (B) | <input type="radio"/> (B) | High school diploma/GED |
| <input type="radio"/> (C) | <input type="radio"/> (C) | Some college (less than a 2- or 4-year degree, e.g., certificate or career/tech. cert.) |
| <input type="radio"/> (D) | <input type="radio"/> (D) | 2-year college degree (Associate's) |
| <input type="radio"/> (E) | <input type="radio"/> (E) | 4-year college degree (Bachelor's) |
| <input type="radio"/> (F) | <input type="radio"/> (F) | Master's degree |
| <input type="radio"/> (G) | <input type="radio"/> (G) | Ph. D. or higher |
| <input type="radio"/> (H) | <input type="radio"/> (H) | Don't know |

9. If you have brothers or sisters, how many have attended college in the past or are in college now?

- ☐ (A) 1
 ☐ (B) 2
 ☐ (C) 3
 ☐ (D) 4
 ☐ (E) 5 or more
 ☐ (F) I don't have brothers or sisters

Section II: Your Educational Goals

10. As you think about your current skills, how confident are you of your ability in the following areas?

	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident	Don't Know
Math	<input type="radio"/> (A)	<input type="radio"/> (B)	<input type="radio"/> (C)	<input type="radio"/> (D)
English/Language Arts	<input type="radio"/> (A)	<input type="radio"/> (B)	<input type="radio"/> (C)	<input type="radio"/> (D)
Science	<input type="radio"/> (A)	<input type="radio"/> (B)	<input type="radio"/> (C)	<input type="radio"/> (D)
Study skills	<input type="radio"/> (A)	<input type="radio"/> (B)	<input type="radio"/> (C)	<input type="radio"/> (D)
Ability to pass the end-of-year tests (e.g., WESTEST 2, Smarter Balanced Assessment)	<input type="radio"/> (A)	<input type="radio"/> (B)	<input type="radio"/> (C)	<input type="radio"/> (D)
Ability to do well in college level courses in the future	<input type="radio"/> (A)	<input type="radio"/> (B)	<input type="radio"/> (C)	<input type="radio"/> (D)

11. Do you plan to continue your education after high school? ☐ (Y) ☐ (N)

12. If you answered "no" to question 11, what are the main reasons you do not plan to continue your education? (bubble all that apply)

- ☐ My grades aren't good enough.
 ☐ Family issues
☐ It costs too much/I can't afford it
 ☐ I plan to enlist in the military
☐ I need to work
 ☐ Other (please write in reason):
☐ I want to work

13. What is the highest level of education that you. . .

Would like *Expect to*
to get? *get?*

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| (A) | (A) | High school or less |
| (B) | (B) | Some college (less than a 2- or 4-year degree, e.g., certificate or career/tech. cert.) |
| (C) | (C) | Two-year associate's college degree |
| (D) | (D) | Four-year bachelor's college degree |
| (E) | (E) | More than a 4-year college degree |

Section III. College Entrance Requirements, Cost, and Financial Aid

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

College entrance requirements? (Y) (N)

The availability of financial aid to help you pay for college? (Y) (N)

15. Are you knowledgeable about financial aid and the cost and benefits to you of going to college?

(Y) (N)

16. Do you think that you could afford to attend one of the following types of colleges using financial aid, scholarships, and your family's resources?

	Definitely Not	Probably Not	Not Sure	Probably	Definitely
A public 4-year college	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
A public community/technical college	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
A public career/technical center	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

17. How much do you think it costs for one year of in-state **tuition (your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books)** at...

	... a 4-year public college in West Virginia	... a public community/technical college in West Virginia
Up to \$4,000	(A)	(A)
\$4,001-\$8,000	(B)	(B)
\$8,001-\$11,000	(C)	(C)
\$11,001-\$16,000	(D)	(D)
\$16,001-\$21,000	(E)	(E)
\$21,001-\$26,000	(F)	(F)
More than \$26,000	(G)	(G)

18. How aware are you about the following topics?

	<i>Not at All</i>	<i>Slightly</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>Extremely</i>
<i>FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College savings plan/529</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>ACT/SAT</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>WV Higher Education Grant</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Federal Pell Grants</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Federal student loans</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Federal work-study</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Scholarships (e.g., PROMISE or Institutional)</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Requirements for college acceptance</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>The importance/benefit of a college education</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>High school graduation requirements</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

19. How important have the following resources, individuals or tools been in gathering information about your options for college?

	<i>Not at All</i>	<i>Slightly</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>Extremely</i>
<i>College or university websites</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College Foundation of WV website (CFWV.com)</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Other college planning websites</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College fairs</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Television</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Radio</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Direct mail</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>E-mail</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Brochures and pamphlets</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Magazines/newspapers</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Signs, posters, or billboards</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Text messages</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>School counselor</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Family members</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>GEAR UP staff</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College admissions representatives</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

20. Which of the following do you need from your school or GEAR UP to help you be more successful in school and more prepared for college (bubble all that apply)?

- More advanced classes (e.g., AP)* ☐
- Information about participating in GEAR UP events* ☐
- Tutoring* ☐
- Opportunities to participate in college visits* ☐
- Information about college entrance requirements* ☐
- Information about college financial aid/scholarships* ☐
- Leadership opportunities* ☐
- Summer activities* ☐
- Career exploration activities* ☐
- Test preparation* ☐
- Assistance with the college entrance process* ☐
- Assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA)* ☐
- Information and events presented in other languages (e.g., Spanish)* ☐
- Other* ☐

Section IV: College Preparation Activities

21. Have you or do you plan to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in the next year?

- (A) I do not know what the FAFSA is. (D) I will complete the FAFSA.
- (B) I will not complete the FAFSA. (E) I have completed the FAFSA.
- (C) I might complete the FAFSA.

22. Have you taken or do you plan to take the SAT or ACT tests in the next year?

- (A) Yes (B) No (C) Don't Know

23. Have you or do you plan to complete a college application in the next year?

- (A) I don't know what a college application is. (D) I will complete a college application.
- (B) I will not complete a college application. (E) I have completed a college application.
- (C) I might complete a college application.

Thank you for your time!

Please return this survey to your teacher or school.

West Virginia GEAR UP Parent Survey - 2014-15 School Year

Directions: Please respond to all items by completely filling in the circle for each answer:

Like this: ☒ Not like this: ☒ ☒ ☒

Note: Many of the questions on this survey ask about "your child." If you have more than one child, please complete this survey in reference to the child who brought the survey home.

ICF Use Only

Section I: About You and Your Child

1. Please write your child's 9-digit lunch/WVEIS number in the spaces below. Fill in the bubbles to match each number. The example on the left shows how to fill in the lunch/WVEIS number. If there are zeroes at the beginning of your child's number, please include them.

This is an Example: lunch/WVEIS number: 009132567

0 _0_ _9_ _1_ _3_ _2_ _5_ _6_ _7_

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

Your child's lunch/WVEIS number:

<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"/>	<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"/>	<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"/>
<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"/>	<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"/>	<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"/>
<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"/>

2. What is your child's current grade level? ☐ A 6 ☐ B 7 ☐ C 8 ☐ D 9 ☐ E 10 ☐ F 11 ☐ G 12

3. What is your relationship to the child who brought this survey home?

- ☐ A Parent or guardian ☐ C Grandparent
☐ B Step or foster parent ☐ D Other

4. What is your race?

- ☐ A White ☐ D American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ B Black or African American ☐ E Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
☐ C Asian ☐ F Two or more races

5. What is your ethnicity?

- ☐ A Hispanic or Latino ☐ B Not Hispanic or Latino

6. What is the main language you speak at home?

- ☐ A English ☐ B Spanish ☐ C Other

7. Which of the following options best describes your family's total income (before taxes) during the past 12 months? Please include income for yourself and all your family members living with you during this time.

- (A) \$30,000 or less (B) \$30,001 – \$60,000 (C) \$60,001 – \$100,000 (D) \$100,001 or more (E) I'd rather not say

8. What is the highest level of education obtained by your child's...

Father or
male
guardian

Mother or
female
guardian

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| (A) | (A) | Some high school |
| (B) | (B) | High school diploma/GED |
| (C) | (C) | Some college (less than a 2- or 4-year degree, e.g., certificate or career/tech. cert.) |
| (D) | (D) | 2-year college degree (Associate's) |
| (E) | (E) | 4-year college degree (Bachelor's) |
| (F) | (F) | Master's degree |
| (G) | (G) | Ph. D. or higher |
| (H) | (H) | Don't know |

9. If you have other children, how many have attended or are currently attending college?

- (A) 1 (B) 2 (C) 3 (D) 4 (E) 5 or more (F) I don't have other children

Section II: Your Child's Educational Goals

10. Have you talked with your child about attending college? (Y) (N)

11. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<i>Attending college is important to my child's career goal and future.</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>It's too early to think about my child going to college.</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

12. What is the highest level of education that you think your child . . .

Would like
to get?

Expects
to get?

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| (A) | (A) | High school or less |
| (B) | (B) | Some college (less than a 2- or 4-year degree, e.g., certificate or career/tech. cert.) |
| (C) | (C) | Two-year associate's college degree |
| (D) | (D) | Four-year bachelor's college degree |
| (E) | (E) | More than a 4-year college degree |

Section III. College Entrance Requirements, Cost, and Financial Aid

13. Has anyone from your child's school or GEAR UP ever spoken with you about...

College entrance requirements? ☐ Y ☐ N

The availability of financial aid to help you pay for college? ☐ Y ☐ N

14. Do you know about financial aid and the cost and benefits to your child of pursuing a postsecondary education (e.g., going to college)?

☐ Y ☐ N

15. Do you think that your child could afford to attend one of the following types of colleges using financial aid, scholarships, and your family's resources?

Definitely Not Probably Not Not Sure Probably Definitely

A public 4-year college ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

A public community/technical college ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

A public career/technical center ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E

16. How much do you think it costs for one year of in-state **tuition (your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books)** at...

... a 4-year public college in West Virginia

... a public community/technical college in West Virginia

Up to \$4,000	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> A
\$4,001-\$8,000	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> B
\$8,001-\$11,000	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> C
\$11,001-\$16,000	<input type="radio"/> D	<input type="radio"/> D
\$16,001-\$21,000	<input type="radio"/> E	<input type="radio"/> E
\$21,001-\$26,000	<input type="radio"/> F	<input type="radio"/> F
More than \$26,000	<input type="radio"/> G	<input type="radio"/> G

17. How aware are you about the following topics?

Not at All Slightly Moderately Extremely

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
College savings plan/529	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
ACT/SAT	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
WV Higher Education Grant	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
Federal Pell Grants	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
Federal student loans	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
Federal work-study	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
Scholarships (e.g., PROMISE or Institutional)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
Requirements for college acceptance	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
The importance/benefit of a college education	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D
High school graduation requirements	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D

18. How important have the following resources, individuals, or tools been in gathering information about your child's options for college?

	<i>Not at All</i>	<i>Slightly</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>Extremely</i>
<i>College or university websites</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College Foundation of WV website (CFWV.com)</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Other college planning websites</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College fairs</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Television</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Radio</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Direct mail</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>E-mail</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Brochures and pamphlets</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Magazines/newspapers</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Signs, posters, or billboards</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Text messages</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>School counselor</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>Family members</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>GEAR UP staff</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
<i>College admissions representatives</i>	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)

19. Which of the following do you need from your child's school or GEAR UP to help your child be more successful in school and more prepared for college (bubble all that apply)?

- More advanced classes (e.g., AP)* ☐
- Information about participating in GEAR UP events* ☐
- Tutoring* ☐
- Opportunities to participate in college visits* ☐
- Information about college entrance requirements* ☐
- Information about college financial aid/scholarships* ☐
- Leadership opportunities* ☐
- Summer activities* ☐
- Career exploration activities* ☐
- Test preparation* ☐
- Assistance with the college entrance process* ☐
- Assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA)* ☐
- Information and events presented in other languages (e.g., Spanish)* ☐
- Other* ☐

Thank you for your time!

Please ask your child to return this survey to her/his school.