



## Year 3 Annual Evaluation Report

October 2017

**Submitted to:**  
West Virginia Higher  
Education Policy Commission

**Submitted by:**  
ICF External Evaluation Team

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## I. Introduction

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) is midway through its second consecutive GEAR UP grant, which began in 2014 and ends in 2021. GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is designed to help high school students prepare to succeed in earning a college diploma or skill certificate.

Such goals are ambitious for the 10 counties currently served by West Virginia (WV) GEAR UP: Boone, Fayette, Mason, Mercer, Mingo, Nicolas, Summers, Webster, Wirt, and Wyoming. These counties are situated in regions that face a stagnant economy, pervasive poverty, and an accelerating opioid epidemic threatening families and entire communities with disintegration. Many residents had anticipated that their children would find employment in the same occupations that traditionally supported these communities, with the result that for generations, some families have not emphasized pursuit of academic success or postsecondary education.

By introducing resources into the schools in these counties to support a “college-going culture,” WV GEAR UP offers an emphasis on academic achievement and a radically new vision of possible futures to communities historically beset by a low-wage economy. Carnevale & Smith (2012) find that the region’s low rate of educational attainment, especially postsecondary attendance, “is both a cause and a consequence of the region’s industrial and occupational makeup.” New industries are unlikely to relocate where populations lag in educational achievement, and schools and students are less likely to pursue education with ambition when they see no local employment prospects that require it. These authors forecast that by 2020, 51 percent of employment in West Virginia will require some postsecondary education, far below the projected national average of 66 percent, but only 30 percent of West Virginians today earn an associate degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

Compounding these circumstances is out-migration of more well-educated residents. Carnevale and Smith found that during the recent recession years, West Virginia lost both new college graduates and experienced, well-educated workers to other states, as they sought employment commensurate with their education. West Virginia is also one of only two states that has more deaths than births, with the result that it lost 9,951 in population from July 2015 to July 2016, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Other analysts predict population loss will continue to 2030, primarily because of the birth to death ratio (Christiadi, Deskins, & Lego, 2014). Others attribute some of the population loss to the decline in the coal mining industry, with insufficient job creation to offset it (Jenkins, 2016).

The difficult and thoroughly documented economic circumstances of many in West Virginia is only compounded by the opioid crisis that dominates current media coverage of the state. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported in 2015 that West Virginia had the highest rate of death due to drug overdose (41.5 per 100,000) among the 50 states, substantially ahead of the next most afflicted state, New Hampshire (34.3 per 100,000). Moreover, the West Virginia rate increased 16.9 percent from 2014 to 2015. Theories as to why the scale of the epidemic is so severe in West Virginia primarily point to the nature of the state’s economy and the flood of opioids that have entered the state. *Business Insider* (2016) noted both the high rates of unemployment and the substantial proportion of jobs that require manual labor and are thus more likely to produce injuries. The *Fiscal Times* (Pianin, 2016) noted that “economic despair, widespread

unemployment, inadequate mental health facilities and a sense of isolation in communities scattered throughout the rugged, mountainous coal state may have all contributed to the widespread abuse of OxyContin, oxycodone and other powerful prescription painkillers.”

The three-part series that won the Pulitzer Prize for Eric Eyre of the *Charleston Gazette-Mail* documents how out-of-state drug companies shipped vast amounts of opioids into the state and notes the impact on five of the ten WV GEAR UP counties (Boone, Fayette, Mercer, Mingo, and Wyoming). These counties have suffered disproportionately from fatal drug overdoses, even within the context of West Virginia. Wyoming County's overdose death rate leads the nation (with 54.6 per 100,000), and Boone County and Mingo County are among the top four counties—all in West Virginia—for fatal pain pill overdoses in the U.S., according to CDC data (Eyre, 2016, December 18). Mercer County ranks in the top 10 and Fayette among the top 20 counties nationwide. Eyre noted: “Out-of-state drug companies shipped nearly 9 million highly addictive—and potentially lethal—hydrocodone pills over two years to a single pharmacy in...Mingo County....In six years, drug wholesalers showered the state with 780 million hydrocodone and oxycodone pills, while 1,728 West Virginians fatally overdosed on those two painkillers, a *Sunday Gazette-Mail* investigation found” (Eyre, 2016, December 18).

Especially poignant is the impact of the crisis on children. Circumstances like these only further compound the educational challenges many already face. Parental substance abuse is the second most common reason that children enter foster care and the percent is increasing. In West Virginia, the number of children in foster care grew by 24 percent between 2012 and 2016, according to the state’s Department of Health & Human Resources. The number of children removed from parental care in West Virginia because of drug abuse rose from 970 in 2006 to 2,171 in 2016 (Talbot, 2017). In such circumstances schools may offer students their only consistent source of shelter, nutrition, and kindness (see, for example, *PBS News Hour* (2016)).

Indeed, these children are themselves at risk. The Commissioner of the Bureau for Public Health, Dr. Rahul Gupta, reported to the West Virginia Board of Education on August 9, 2017 (Lannom, 2017) that one in 20 babies born in West Virginia suffers neonatal abstinence syndrome and presented statistics from various sources that indicate how much access high school and college students have to illegal substances and how little they really know about them. He urged the Board of Education to ensure that schools and teachers are prepared for this reality.

This environment poses additional challenges for GEAR UP and other educational programs, but also underscores the importance and potential impact of such programs. One WV GEAR UP site coordinator noted that drug issues and unemployment are factors impacting GEAR UP students. Another described how an after-school homework help program provides not only academic benefits but also personal benefits: “Some would rather stay at school than go home...dysfunction awaits them when they get home.” Although GEAR UP is not designed to solve the opioid crisis or related challenges, the program can play a pivotal role as a safe haven for students. It also can provide a supportive culture focused on preparing students for the future.

Aside from drug and health issues, state budget cuts also are exerting an impact on K-12 and higher education. The West Virginia legislature’s struggle to produce a budget resulted in a bill passed June 16 that reduced funding to higher education by \$16 million for the fiscal year that began July 1. The legislature also passed more than \$5 million in cuts to public education, eliminating the Innovation in Education and Technology Systems Specialist programs. The budget

adds no new revenue sources and does not include the pay raise for teachers that the governor wanted to see. The cuts to higher education have some legislators and many across the state worried that many postsecondary institutions will respond with tuition increases that will hurt those least able to afford it (McElhinny, 2017, December 22; McElhinny, 2017, June 25; *West Virginia Public Broadcasting*, 2017, June 19; *Associated Press*, 2017, June 21).

This introduction offers a snapshot of the challenging context in which WV GEAR UP is managing services in ten counties for students attempting to steer a course through troubled and confusing times. The point of setting this context is not to emphasize the barriers to change, however, but to underscore the fundamental importance of GEAR UP's mission for the students, families, and schools to whom it is providing these new opportunities. ICF's comprehensive evaluation of GEAR UP is designed to undergird the Commission's enterprise, documenting what is occurring, its impact, and pinpointing ways to make these services more likely to succeed.

## 1. GEAR UP Evaluation Design

In 2014, the Commission contracted with ICF to provide an external program evaluation of WV GEAR UP. ICF's evaluation framework includes four components: (1) a program **implementation study** to assist the Commission in determining the fidelity with which program activities were delivered and to inform the Commission of any facilitators or barriers to implementation; (2) a summative **outcomes study** to ascertain the extent to which data-informed benchmarks, identified in concert with the Commission, are achieved; (3) various **impact studies** with quasi-experimental (QED) and randomized control trial (RCT) designs to address selected program outcomes and impacts; and (4) a **sustainability study** to inform the Commission about how the GEAR UP program could continue to have an impact after the grant ends.

## 2. Purpose of this Report

As of Year 3, the ICF evaluation team has collected survey outcome data from three separate classes of non-priority group students as they have progressed through their educational careers in GEAR UP schools. This includes (1) the class of 2019, who do not receive direct GEAR UP services and serve as a retrospective comparison (R-Comp) group for the evaluation—they will graduate from high school the year before the GEAR UP cohort does; (2) the class of 2020, who receive direct, sustained support through the GEAR UP program from grade 7 through the first year of college, and represent the “treatment” group for the purposes of the evaluation (cohort); and (3) the class of 2021, who do not receive direct GEAR UP services and serve as a future comparison (F-Comp) group for the evaluation—they will graduate from high school the year after the cohort. Table 1 depicts the data collection schedule for these three groups for the first three years of the WV GEAR UP evaluation.



**Table 1. Year 1 to Year 3 Data Collection Schedule for R-Comp, Cohort, and F-Comp Student Groups**

Group	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Class of 2019 (R-Comp)	Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys at Grade 08	N/C	Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys at Grade 10
Class of 2020 (Cohort)	Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys at Grade 07	Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys at Grade 08	Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys at Grade 09
Class of 2021 (F-Comp)	N/C	N/C	Student and Parent/Guardian Surveys at Grade 08

N/C = Data not collected this year

One of the evaluation team's objectives for the summative outcomes study of WV GEAR UP is to provide annual comparisons of grade-alike students across the R-Comp, cohort, and F-Comp groups. These comparisons allow for some insights into how outcomes differ across groups of students who vary in their exposure to GEAR UP. For example, in the Year 2 West Virginia GEAR UP Annual Evaluation Report, the evaluation team presented a comparison of survey outcomes observed at grade 8 for both cohort and R-Comp students, and illustrated that cohort students had almost universally better outcomes than R-Comp students.

Year 3 presents the opportunity to examine how R-Comp, cohort, and F-Comp students differ from one another on these same outcomes, measured at grade 8. One hypothesis posed by the evaluation team was that the F-Comp group would fare less favorably than the cohort group on these outcomes, due to the presence of sustained, direct services that were provided to cohort students and not to F-Comp students. However, an alternate hypothesis was that, due to the institutionalization of GEAR UP-supported practices over three years of involvement in participating schools, the F-Comp group could fare similarly or perhaps have even better outcomes than the cohort group. Additionally, we conjectured that R-Comp students might have the least favorable outcomes of all three groups, since they completed grade 8 before their schools institutionalized GEAR UP services. **Thus, the first objective of this report was to conduct a systematic comparison and analysis of differences in grade 8 survey outcomes as measured for R-Comp, cohort, and F-Comp students.**<sup>1</sup>

WV GEAR UP also provides intensive just-in-time supports to each successive cohort of grade 12 students in participating schools, using the priority service model. To evaluate the summative outcomes of this aspect of the program, the evaluation team has collected survey data from grade

<sup>1</sup> We did not compare parent/guardian survey outcomes for these groups because the response rate for parents of F-Comp students was very low.

12 students once every two years, as depicted in Table 2. One goal of the summative outcomes study of WV GEAR UP is to monitor trends in priority student outcomes over time, and provide comparisons among multiple groups of priority students to examine how, if at all, schools are improving the delivery and efficacy of the services and supports provided to these students as they prepare to either enroll in college or pursue other postsecondary education (PSE) options.

**Table 2. Year 1 to Year 3 Data Collection Schedule for Priority Student Groups**

Group	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Class of 2015 (Y1 Priority)	Student Survey at Grade 12	N/C	N/C
Class of 2016 (Y2 Priority)	N/C	N/C	N/C
Class of 2017 (Y3 Priority)	N/C	N/C	Student Survey at Grade 12

N/C = Data not collected this year

As of Year 3, the evaluation team has collected survey data from two groups of grade 12 students—the class of 2015 (Year 1 priority) and the class of 2017 (Year 3 priority). Although the evaluation team previously presented survey outcomes for Year 1 and Year 3 priority students, separately in the Year 1 and Year 3 West Virginia GEAR UP Interim Evaluation Reports, we have not yet conducted a systematic comparison of outcomes for these two groups. We posited that Year 3 priority students would achieve better outcomes than Year 1 priority students due to the continued refinement and improvement of just-in-time services provided by staff in GEAR UP schools over time. Thus, ***the second objective of this report was to compare survey outcomes and analyze key differences between Year 1 priority and Year 3 priority students.***

The evaluation team collects data annually from all school personnel in WV GEAR UP schools, with the primary goal of measuring the adoption and use of practices that support a positive college-going culture (CGC) among faculty and staff. CGC includes adherence to high standards or academic rigor, high expectations for students, and the presence of visual cues and material resources and support that reinforce the view that PSE is possible for all students. In Years 1 and 2, the evaluation team measured these concepts using an annual survey administered to all grade 6-12 personnel in GEAR UP schools. This survey was modified and administered in Year 3 to all grade 9-12 personnel, because the cohort group had transitioned to high school.

In the Year 2 WV GEAR UP Annual Evaluation Report, the evaluation team examined Year 1 to Year 2 changes in CGC, as measured by this annual survey, and showed that schools were beginning to improve in their application of these concepts. Year 3 presents an opportunity not only to continue monitoring program-wide trends as the cohort group moves into high school, but also to examine baseline CGC outcomes for a small number of new schools that began participating in the WV GEAR UP program for the first time during Year 3. ***Thus, the third objective of this report was to summarize three years of program-wide trend data in school***

***personnel survey outcomes for GEAR UP schools from 2014-15 (Year 1) to 2016-17 (Year 3).<sup>2</sup>***

Gathering on-the-ground perspectives about the program, facilitators and barriers to successful implementation, and bringing to the surface the experiences of program staff, in their own words, are critical components of the implementation study of WV GEAR UP. The primary information source for collecting this information is a series of annual face-to-face interviews conducted with county and site coordinators, who are tasked with implementing GEAR UP in participating sites. In Years 1 and 2, the evaluation team conducted both sets of interviews in a group setting and summarized key themes in the Year 1 and Year 2 West Virginia GEAR UP Annual Evaluation Reports. For Year 3, we conducted individual phone interviews with county coordinators, summarizing those results in the Year 3 West Virginia GEAR UP Interim Evaluation Report. However, the evaluation team has not yet had the opportunity to share the results of Year 3 site coordinator interviews or interpret those results in light of what was learned from county coordinators. ***Thus, the fourth and final objective of this report was to summarize and interpret findings from group interviews conducted with WV GEAR UP site coordinators in May 2017, alongside findings from individual interviews conducted with county coordinators in March 2017.***

## II. Data Sources

This report draws from two principal data sources, as described below.

### 1. Year 3 Participant Surveys

#### 1.1 Student Survey

In collaboration with the Commission, ICF developed student surveys to be administered in Year 3 of the program. Although ICF administered a parent/guardian survey, the response rate was low, and we do not discuss those findings in this report. The Year 3 WV GEAR UP Interim Evaluation Report considers those findings.

The Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Survey included 31 items organized across four sections. Ten were demographic items designed to gather background information about respondents and their families. Seven measured student perceptions of their academic ability, educational goals, and college-going self-efficacy (CGSE) and outcomes-expectations (CGOE). Nine measured student knowledge and awareness of college-related topics, the perceived cost of attending college, and financial aid options. Two items measured the importance of various information sources in helping students gather information about their PSE options and asked them to identify the supports they needed to be more successful in high school and more prepared for college. Finally,

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<sup>2</sup> Five high schools joined WV GEAR UP in Year 3. We conducted exploratory analyses of school personnel survey outcomes to examine whether or not including these schools in the main analysis sample influenced program-wide trends.

three additional items in the grade 12 version of the survey measured completion of college-readiness tasks (i.e., the Free Application for Federal Student Aid [FAFSA], SAT/ACT tests, and college applications). The Year 3 Student Survey includes many of the same items as the Year 1 and Year 2 surveys, with some notable changes that are relevant as this report attempts comparisons based on data gathered in multiple years.

Because we added the two subscales measuring the concepts of CGSE and CGOE in Year 2 (2015-16), we do not include them in our analysis of differences in survey outcomes between Year 1 and Year 3 priority group students; nor are these data provided for R-Comp students.

Also in Year 2, ICF added three items measuring knowledge about the amount of funding available to help pay for college via the WV PROMISE Scholarship, the WV Higher Education Grant (HEGP) Program, and Federal Pell grants. Again, we excluded these measures when comparing survey outcomes between Year 1 and Year 3 priority group students and R-Comp students.

The Year 2 and Year 3 surveys included a *zero* option for respondents asked to report how many of their siblings were either currently attending or had previously attended college.

The Year 3 survey included revised response options for three items measuring the completion of college-readiness tasks (FAFSA, SAT/ACT, and college applications). These revisions were made to align the available response options more closely with the required performance measures included in the Commission's Annual Performance Report (APR). Again, we excluded these items from comparisons of results for Year 1 and Year 3 priority group students.

At the request of the Commission, the Year 3 survey allowed students to select *other* and enter text information as an option for responding to the demographic questions concerning ethnicity, primary language, and race. The Year 3 survey appears in Appendix A.

## 1.2 School Personnel Survey

The Year 3 School Personnel Survey included 14 items. Four were demographic questions designed to gather information about the primary roles of respondents, school location, and grade(s) served. Two subscales measured faculty member perceptions of CGC in their schools and classrooms, with 10 prompts examining the rigor and expectations dimension of CGC, and 9 measuring the visual cues/material resources dimension. These items were refined based on Year 1 and Year 2 survey results.

Additional items asked respondents to rate their level of involvement in college-related activities in their school and their level of comfort with their knowledge to assist students with various college-related topics. Respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements about the overall experience provided through GEAR UP, how often they participated in GEAR UP activities, and how effective they would rate GEAR UP activities in helping students to succeed in school and prepare for college.

Several new items were included on the Year 2 and Year 3 versions of the survey. First, the ICF team developed a series of items to measure school faculty member perceptions of the CGSE of the students in their schools. Second, for middle schools not participating in GEAR UP after the 2015-16 school year, the Year 2 survey asked about the likelihood that various GEAR UP

activities would be sustained. The Year 3 survey retained these sustainability items, with slight re-wording to account for the fact that all schools were expected to continue their participation into Year 4. The Year 3 survey appears in Appendix A.

## 2. Year 3 Interview Protocols

### 2.1 County Coordinators

The ICF team developed a county coordinator individual interview protocol for the Year 3 evaluation of WV GEAR UP. The protocol included a facilitator script and informed consent form. The Year 3 protocol reflects a substantial revision of the county coordinator focus group protocol used in Year 2. The Year 3 protocol included nine prompts with a series of sub-questions and probes. The protocol organized items under four major themes, aligned to the evaluation design: (1) implementation, (2) impact, (3) sustainability, and (4) outcomes. Appendix A provides a reproduction of the interview protocol.

### 2.2 Site Coordinators

The ICF team revised the site coordinator focus group facilitation protocol for the Year 3 evaluation of WV GEAR UP. The protocol included a facilitator script and informed consent form. The Year 3 protocol included nine prompts with a series of sub-questions and probes. Prompts included (1) introduction, (2) implementation and buy-in, (3) interaction, (4) partners, (5) parent involvement, (6) priority students, (7) high school transition, (8) impact and sustainability, and (9) closing. Appendix A provides a reproduction of the interview protocol.

## III. Methods

The following section describes the WV GEAR UP evaluation participants, instrument administration methods, and the analytic approaches used in the development of this report.

### 1. Evaluation Participants and Data Collection Methods

#### 1.1 Students

The survey schedule for WV GEAR UP in Table 3 illustrates that the evaluation team is tracking survey outcomes for four groups of students over the course of the project. First, we track cohort students longitudinally across all years. That is, the evaluation team surveys these students every year as they advance from grade 7 in Year 1 of the program to the first year of PSE in Year 7. Second, the evaluation team surveys a new group of priority students served by the project every other year, starting in Year 1. Each year, the priority group surveyed includes all grade 12 students in GEAR UP schools, with the exception of a small number of high schools serving only cohort students. Third, the evaluation is following a retrospective comparison group (R-Comp) of students who will graduate from high school one year before the cohort group. These students are surveyed every other year from the time they are in grade 8 in Year 1 to their first year of PSE



in Year 6. Fourth, the evaluation tracks outcomes for a future comparison group (F-Comp) of students who will graduate from high school one year after the cohort group. These students are surveyed every other year from the time they are in grade 8 in Year 3 of the program to the time they become grade 12 priority students in year 7 of the program.

**Table 3. Student Survey Schedule for WV GEAR UP**

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Cohort (GR07)	Cohort <sup>◇</sup> (GR08)	Cohort (GR09)	Cohort (GR10)	Cohort (GR11)	Cohort (GR12)	Cohort (PSE)
Y1 Priority <sup>◇◇</sup> (GR12)		Y3 Priority <sup>◇◇</sup> (GR12)		Y5 Priority (GR12)		Y7 Priority (GR12)
R-Comp <sup>◇</sup> (GR08)		R-Comp (GR10)		R-Comp (GR12)	R-Comp (PSE)	
		F-Comp <sup>◇</sup> (GR08)		F-Comp (GR10)		†

† The Year 7 priority group overlaps with the F-Comp group

◇ These groups of grade 8 students are compared in this report (R-Comp, cohort, and F-Comp)

◇◇ These groups of grade 12 students are compared in this report (Y1 Priority and Y3 Priority)

Depending on their needs, individual schools use different settings for student survey administration. Some students complete surveys on their home computers and others on school computers or mobile devices. The research team provided survey links and scannable Quick Response (QR) codes for the student survey, promotional materials/reminders to send home with students to parents/guardians, and publicized the survey on the WV GEAR UP website. We also offered paper/pencil versions of the student surveys 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. Upon request, we also made available Spanish language versions of each survey and consent form.

Relevant to this report, the number of R-Comp students who responded to the student survey as grade 8 students (i.e., 2014-15) was 2,379. The number of cohort students who responded and assented to take the student survey as grade 8 students (i.e., 2015-16) was 2,504. The number of F-Comp students who responded and assented to take the student survey as grade 8 students (2016-17) was 2,150. A total of 1,207 Year 1 priority students and 1,329 Year 3 priority students responded to and assented to take the Year 1 and Year 3 surveys.

## 1.2 School Personnel

The WV GEAR UP school personnel survey is administered from May to June of each academic year. In Years 1 and 2, since the program served middle school students in the cohort group and grade 12 students in the priority group, the survey was administered online to all grade 6-12 teachers, counselors, site coordinators, and school administrators employed in WV GEAR UP schools. In Year 3, when cohort students had moved on to high school, the survey was



administered online to the same three categories of educators, but only those who served students in grades 9-12. For all three years, the evaluation team utilized the Standardized Collection and Reporting of Information Benefitting Education (SCRIBE) system to administer these surveys. Each year, site coordinators were provided with a link to the survey during a regularly scheduled site coordinator meeting and instructed to distribute the link to school personnel. The link was also embedded on the WV GEAR UP website. Ultimately, 800 school personnel members completed the Year 1 survey and 805 completed the Year 2 survey. A total of 563 completed the survey in Year 3.<sup>3</sup> Because unique respondent IDs were only collected in Year 1, it is not possible to assess how many school personnel completed the surveys in multiple years.

### 1.3 County Coordinators

All 10 WV GEAR UP county coordinators were invited to participate in individual interviews during Year 3. Two were unreachable due to scheduling conflicts, resulting in an overall response rate of 80%. All interviews were conducted by telephone in March 2017.

### 1.4 Site Coordinators

Site coordinators from all 23 Year 3 GEAR UP schools were invited to participate in one of three focus group interviews during Year 3. Ultimately 19 site coordinators participated, representing 16 schools, approximately 69% of all Year 3 GEAR UP schools. Interviews were conducted in three groups in person during a regularly scheduled site coordinator meeting in May 2017. Two groups included six site coordinators and the third, seven.

## 2. Analytic Approaches

### 2.1 Survey Data Analysis

We used descriptive statistical analyses when examining differences in survey outcomes across groups of students and across years of time. For all groups and time periods examined, this report presents sample sizes, mean values, and standard deviations for continuous outcomes, and the frequency count and/or percentages of responses for categorical outcomes. For any significance tests, we used independent samples t-tests and analyses of variance (ANOVA) for continuous outcomes, and chi-square analyses for categorical outcomes. When overall tests showed statistically significant differences, we then conducted separate post-hoc comparisons and interpreted the differences across various groups of respondents using a common effect size estimate, Cohen's *d*. See Table 4 for the interpretation used.

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<sup>3</sup> In Year 3, the number of WV GEAR UP schools dropped to 23, reflecting the transition of the cohort student group to high school.

**Table 4. Effect Size Interpretations for WV GEAR UP Reporting**

Effect Size	Symbol	Note	Interpretation Guidelines
Cohen's $d$	$d$	Used to calculate effect size of the difference in mean values or percentages among groups	+/- .20 small +/- .50 medium +/- .80 large

## 2.2 County and Site Coordinator Interviews

All qualitative interview data were coded using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis involves reviewing and coding participant responses according to broad themes, breaking those themes into sub-themes, and analyzing and assessing the interrelationships among themes. We describe the results in narrative form, supported by illustrative quotes.

# IV. Results

We present results under four sections: (1) Cohort, F-Comp, and R-Comp Student Survey Outcomes as Measured at Grade 8, (2) Priority Student Survey Outcomes as Measured in Year 1 and Year 3, (3) School Personnel Survey Outcomes from Year 1 to Year 3, and (4) County and Site Coordinator Interviews.

## 1. Cohort, F-Comp, and R-Comp Student Survey Outcomes as Measured at Grade 8

Our first set of analyses compares the survey outcomes obtained from cohort group students with those obtained from the future comparison group (F-Comp) and the retrospective comparison group (R-Comp). As a reminder, all three student groups came from the same WV GEAR UP schools and completed the survey in grade 8.

### 1.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The R-Comp group took the survey as grade 8 students in December 2014. A sample of 2,379 students responded. A total of 2,504 cohort students responded to the survey when they were in grade 8 (2015-16). The corresponding number of F-Comp students who took the student survey in grade 8 (2016-17) was 2,150.

**Gender.** The R-Comp and cohort group samples were both 51% male and 49% female, while the F-Comp sample was 49% male and 50% female. The cohort and F-Comp groups had a small number of students (i.e., less than 1%) who selected *other* as their gender. This response option was not available when R-Comp students completed the survey.

**Race/ethnicity and primary language.** Approximately 91% of R-Comp and cohort students identified as White, as did the majority of F-Comp students (89%). Approximately 3% of R-Comp and 4% of cohort and F-Comp students selected Black/African American. Nearly 5% of R-Comp students chose two or more races, compared to 4% of cohort students and 6% of F-Comp

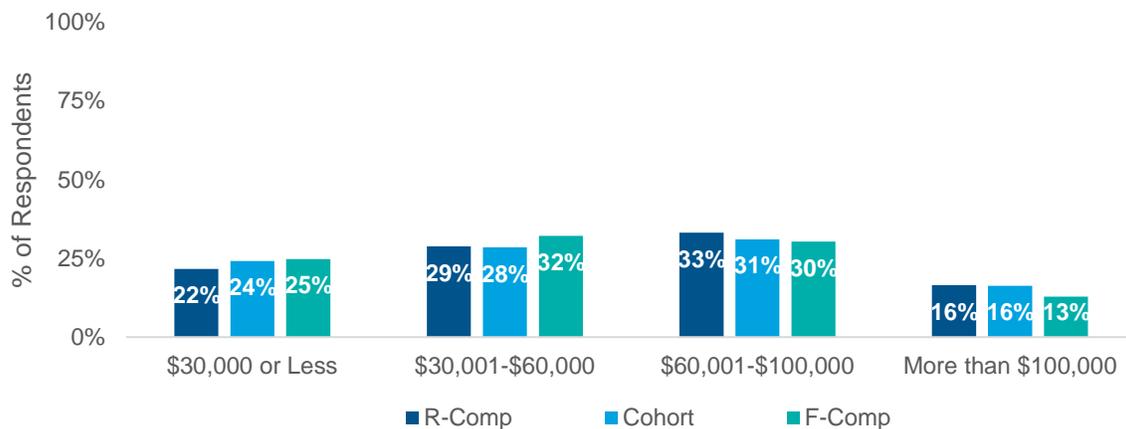


students. The remaining race categories each made up less than 1% of the samples. The difference in distribution of race categories across the three groups was not statistically significant.

All three groups of students identified almost universally as non-Hispanic or Latino (i.e., 95% to 97%) and spoke English as their primary language at home (i.e., more than 99%). Group differences in the distribution of ethnicity among R-Comp, cohort, and F-Comp students were statistically significant,<sup>4</sup> but effect sizes for the differences across individual ethnicity categories were extremely small. These differences were likely due to the inclusion of an *other* ethnicity response option on the Year 3 survey, not available on the Year 1 or Year 2 versions.

**Family income.** A plurality of students in all three groups reported not knowing their family’s total annual income (i.e., 59% for R-Comp, 56% for cohort, and 54% for F-Comp samples). About 9% of R-Comp students and 11% of both cohort and F-Comp students estimated their family income to be \$30,000 or less. About 12% of R-Comp, 13% of cohort, and 15% of F-Comp students reported income between \$30,001 and \$60,000. We found 14% of students in all three groups reported family income between \$60,001 and \$100,000, and 7% of R-Comp and cohort students and 6% of R-Comp students reported more than \$100,000. The difference in reported family income across all three groups was statistically significant.<sup>5</sup>

Because so many students did not know their family income, we also examined the distribution of family income across the three groups after excluding those who did not respond or answered *I don’t know or I’d rather not say*. Figure 1 shows the distribution for this subsample. Notably, there were no significant differences across the three student groups. It should be noted that this subsample includes 40% of R-Comp, 44% of cohort, and 46% of F-Comp students.



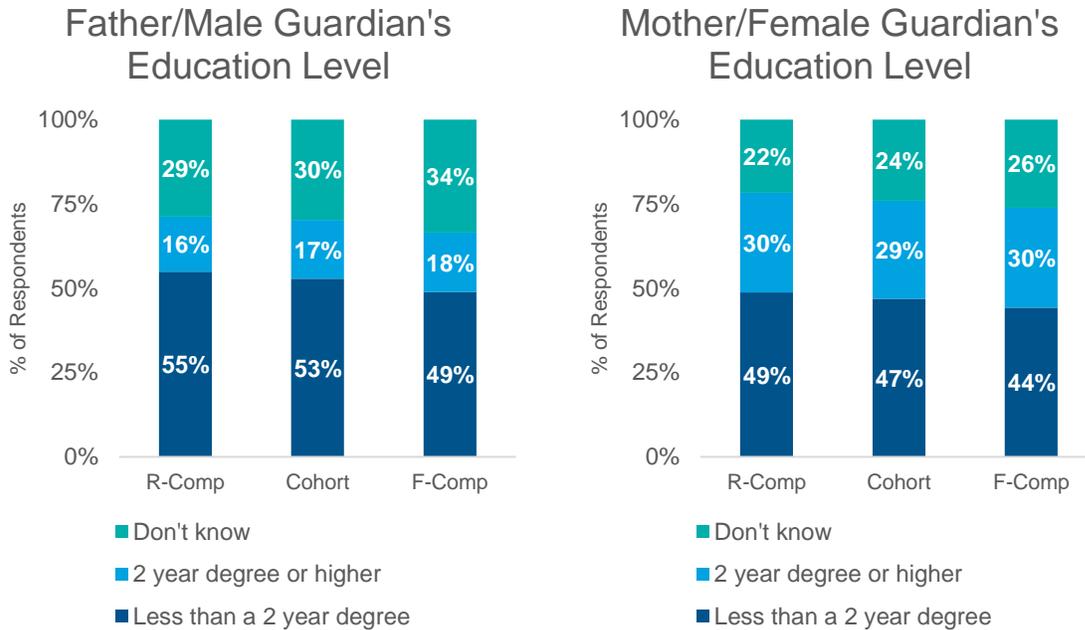
**FIGURE 1. FAMILY INCOME AS REPORTED BY COHORT AND COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS AT GRADE 8**

**(EXCLUDING THOSE WHO DID NOT RESPOND OR DID NOT KNOW)**

<sup>4</sup>  $\chi^2(2) = 16.70, p < .001$

<sup>5</sup>  $\chi^2(8) = 24.54, p < .01$

**Parent education levels.** There was a statistically significant<sup>6</sup> difference in parent education levels reported by students across the three samples. Generally, fathers/male guardians and mothers/female guardians of R-Comp and cohort students were said to be less educated than those of F-Comp students, but effect sizes for the differences among individual response options, when comparing each of the comparison groups to the cohort group, were considered very small (i.e.,  $d < .10$ ). Notably, students across all three groups reported that their mothers/female guardians were more highly educated than their fathers/male guardians. It was also more common for students in all three groups to report that they did not know their father/male guardian’s education level, rather than their mother/female guardian’s. (See Figure 2.)



**FIGURE 2. PARENTAL EDUCATION LEVELS AS REPORTED BY COHORT AND COMPARISON STUDENTS AT GRADE 8**

## 1.2 Educational Goals, Aspirations, and Academic Confidence

### 1.2.1 Plans to Continue Education after High School

Students were asked to indicate whether or not they planned to continue their education after high school. We found no statistically significant differences in the percentage of students who responded affirmatively (94% of F-Comp group students and 93% of cohort and R-Comp students).

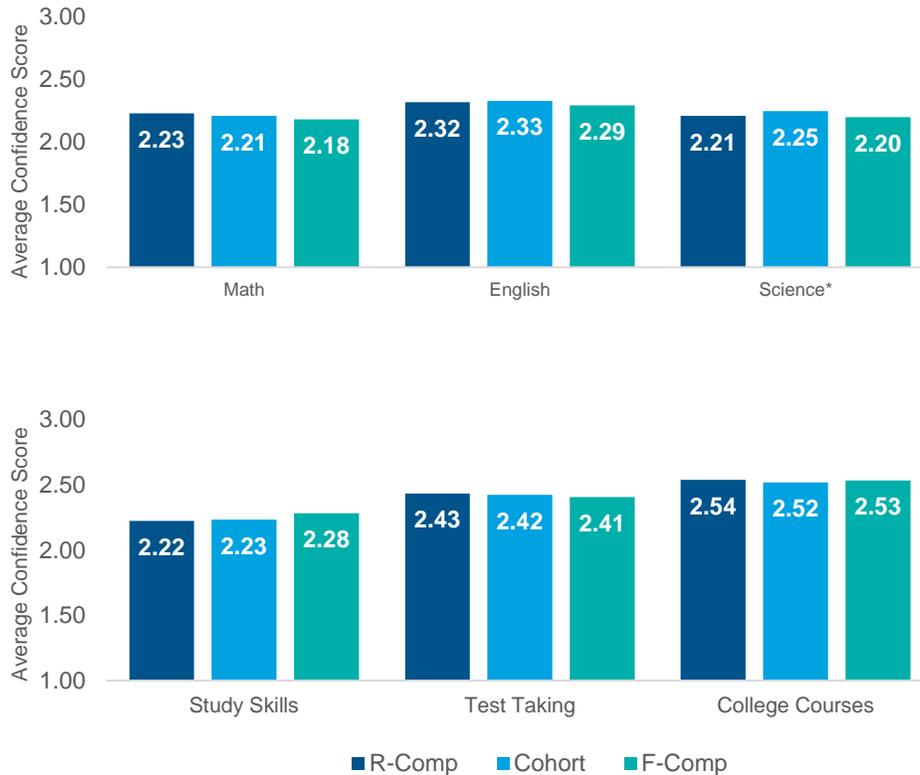
### 1.2.2 Academic Confidence

Students next rated their academic confidence across six content areas (i.e., math, English/language arts, science, study skills, ability to pass end-of-year tests [test taking], and

<sup>6</sup> Father/Male Guardian:  $X^2(4) = 18.65, p < .001$ ; Mother/Female Guardian:  $X^2(4) = 14.47, p < .01$

ability to do well in college-level courses in the future [college courses]) using a four-point scale (i.e., 1 = *Not Confident*, 2 = *Confident*, 3 = *Very Confident*, and 4 = *Don't Know*). When calculating the mean score for each of the survey items, we excluded the option *Don't Know*.

ANOVA showed there was an overall significant difference across the three student groups in terms of mean confidence in science.<sup>7</sup> Post-hoc tests, which compared each of the groups independently, however, revealed none of the three groups differed significantly on this outcome at a level below  $p < .05$ . Figure 3 provides an overview of the differences by group.



\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

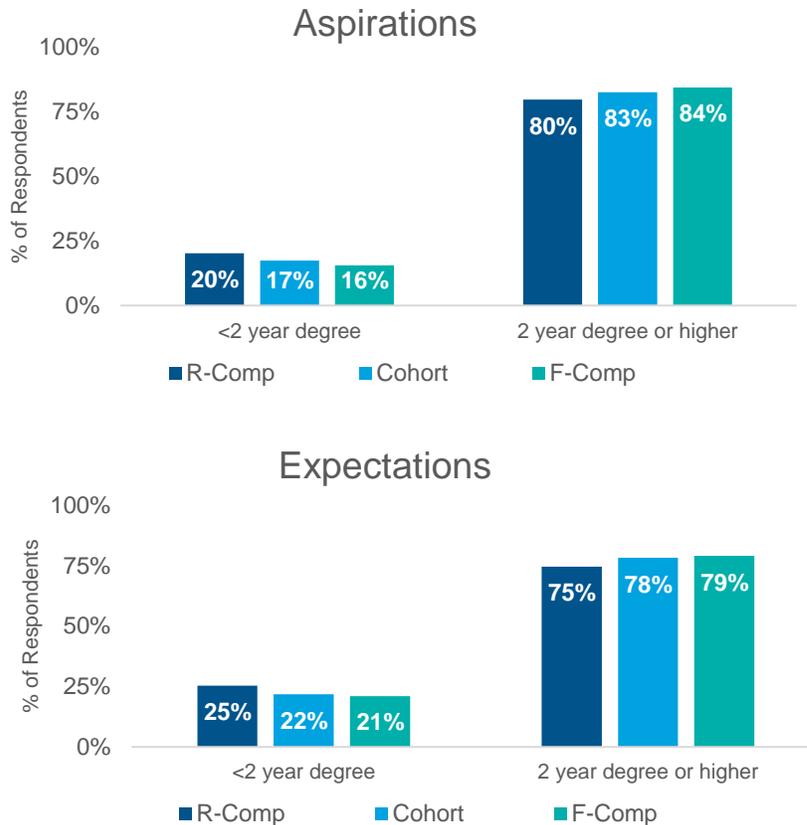
**FIGURE 3. ACADEMIC CONFIDENCE AS REPORTED BY COHORT AND COMPARISON GROUPS AT GRADE 8**

### 1.2.3 Educational Aspirations/Expectations

Students were asked to indicate the level of education they both aspired to and expected to achieve. For these items, the survey included five response options (i.e., 1 = *high school or less*, 2 = *some college*, 3 = *a two-year college degree*, 4 = *a four-year college degree*, and 5 = *more than a four-year college degree*). To ease interpretation of the findings, we combined options 1 and 2 into a category we labeled “less than a two-year degree.” Options 3, 4, and 5 we collapsed into a category labeled “two-year degree or higher.” Next, we compared the percentage of cohort and comparison group students expecting and aspiring to achieve these two levels of education.

<sup>7</sup>  $F(2, 6,876) = 4.07, p < .05$

We found that educational aspirations and expectations were generally quite high for all groups, with the majority of students hoping and expecting to attain at least a two-year degree. Cohort and F-Comp group students were nearly identical in their aspirations and expectations, and R-Comp students were least likely to aspire and expect to achieve a two-year degree or higher, and most likely to aspire and expect to achieve less than a two-year degree. The overall difference was statistically significant<sup>8</sup> for both aspirations and expectations. However, the effect size for the difference in the proportion of students who aspired and expected to achieve more than a two-year degree between cohort and R-Comp and between cohort and F-Comp groups was very small ( $d < .11$  in all cases). Figure 4 provides additional information.



**FIGURE 4. EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR COHORT AND COMPARISON GROUPS AT GRADE 8**

### 1.3 College Entrance Requirements (CERs), Cost, and Financial Aid

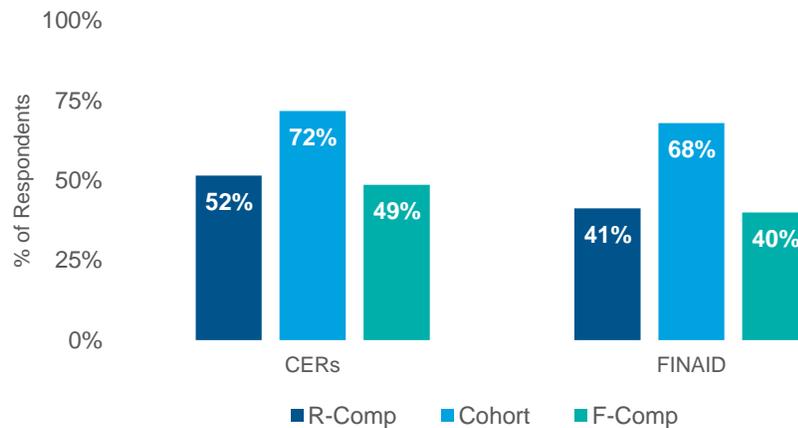
#### 1.3.1 Interactions with GEAR UP Staff

We asked students if they had spoken with anyone from GEAR UP or their school about college entrance requirements (CERs) or the availability of financial aid to help pay for college (FINAID).

<sup>8</sup> Aspirations:  $X^2(2) = 17.92, p < .001$ ; Expectations:  $X^2(2) = 14.26, p < .001$

We found cohort group students were significantly<sup>9</sup> and far more likely than R-Comp and F-Comp students to have spoken with someone about both topics. The effect size approached the threshold for a medium effect when comparing the proportions of cohort and R-Comp students who had spoken with someone about CERs ( $d = .48$ ). When comparing cohort and F-Comp students, the effect size was medium ( $d = .55$ ).

The effect size for the difference in the proportions of cohort and R-Comp students who had spoken to someone about financial aid was medium ( $d = .61$ ). The effect was also medium when comparing cohort and F-Comp groups ( $d = .64$ ). Figure 5 shows the results.



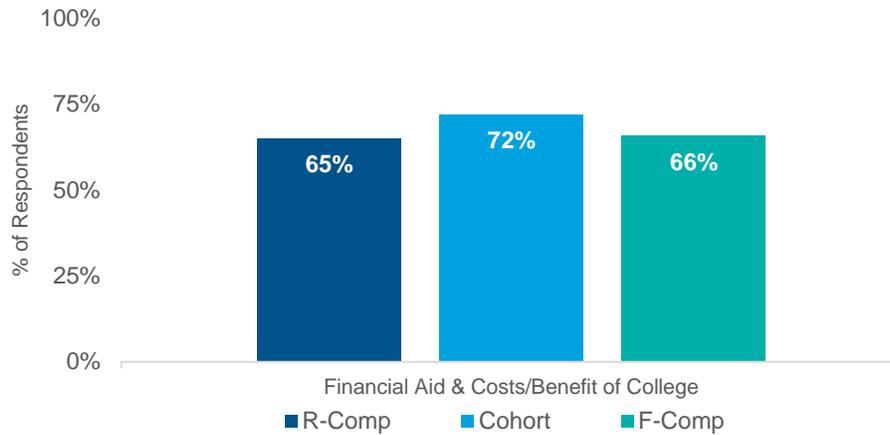
**FIGURE 5. PERCENTAGE OF COHORT AND COMPARISON STUDENTS WHO HAD SPOKEN WITH SOMEONE ABOUT CERs AND THE AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL AID (FINAID) TO HELP PAY FOR COLLEGE AT GRADE 8**

### 1.3.2 Perceived Knowledge of Financial Aid/Costs and Benefits of College

Cohort students were also more likely than R-Comp and F-Comp students to respond affirmatively that they were knowledgeable about financial aid and the costs and benefits of going to college (72% vs. 65% and 66%, respectively). The overall difference was statistically significant,<sup>10</sup> but the effect size for the difference in the proportion of students who reported being knowledgeable was small when comparing cohort with R-Comp students ( $d = .18$ ) and cohort with F-Comp students ( $d = .16$ ). Figure 6 shows the results.

<sup>9</sup> College entrance requirements:  $X^2(2) = 310.84, p < .001$ ; availability of financial aid to help pay for college:  $X^2(2) = 472.00, p < .001$

<sup>10</sup>  $X^2(2) = 31.55, p < .001$



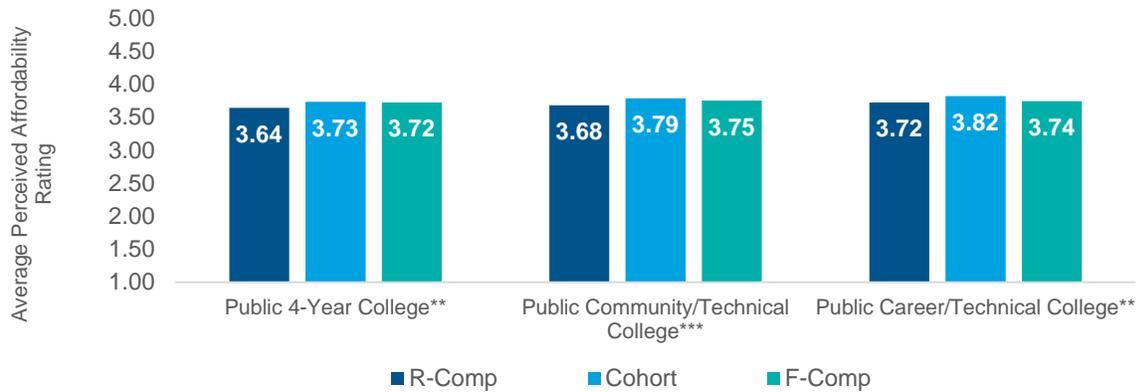
**FIGURE 6. PERCENTAGE OF COHORT AND COMPARISON STUDENTS WHO INDICATED THAT THEY WERE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT FINAID AND THE COSTS/BENEFITS OF COLLEGE AT GRADE 8**

### 1.3.3 Perceptions of Affordability and Cost

Next, we asked students to indicate the extent to which they felt they could afford to attend three public PSE options: (1) a public four-year college, (2) a public community/technical college, and (3) a public career/technical center. Respondents used a five-point Likert-type response scale (i.e., 1 = *definitely not*, 2 = *probably not*, 3 = *not sure*, 4 = *probably*, 5 = *definitely*). Using ANOVA, we compared the average affordability ratings for all three options across the three groups of students. We found cohort students, on average, reported more positive perceptions than R-Comp and F-Comp students about their ability to afford all three options (see Figure 7). The overall ANOVAs showed the difference in affordability ratings were statistically significant.<sup>11</sup>

Post-hoc tests revealed that cohort and R-Comp groups differed significantly with respect to their average affordability ratings for all three options—cohort students had more positive perceptions of affordability, but effect sizes were trivial ( $d \leq .10$ ). The cohort and F-Comp groups differed only with respect to their perceptions about the affordability of the public career technical college option—the cohort group had more positive perceptions of affordability, but this was a very small effect ( $d = .08$ ).

<sup>11</sup> Public four-year college:  $F(2, 6,970) = 5.19, p < .01$ ; public community/technical college:  $F(2, 6,881) = 7.04, p < .001$ ; public career/technical college:  $F(2, 6,875) = 5.99, p < .01$



\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

**FIGURE 7. AVERAGE AFFORDABILITY RATINGS BY COHORT AND COMPARISON GROUP STUDENTS FOR THREE PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS AT GRADE 8**

In Years 2 and 3, students were asked to estimate the average cost of tuition—excluding the cost of food, housing, and books—for two public college options in West Virginia: (a) a four-year public college/university and (b) a public community/technical college. Seven response options were offered, ranging from 1 = *up to \$4,000* to 7 = *more than \$26,000*. According to the Commission,, the correct estimates were as follows for the period in which both surveys were administered:

- **Four-year public college/university:** \$4,001-\$8,000
- **Public community/technical college:** Up to \$4,000

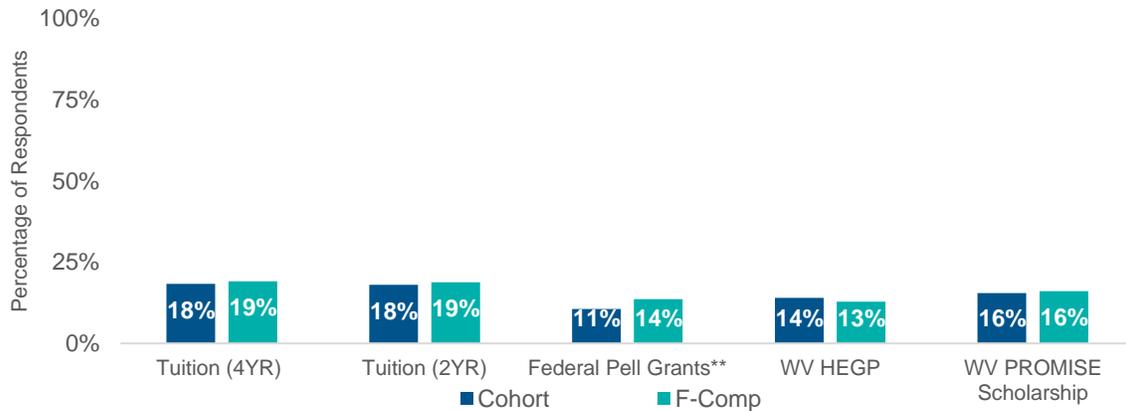
Another item on the Year 2 and Year 3 surveys asked students to indicate the maximum amount of money per academic year they thought was available to help pay for college through three programs: (1) Federal Pell grants, (2) the WV Higher Education Grant Program (HEGP), and (3) the WV PROMISE Scholarship. Respondents had eight response options ranging from 1 = *up to \$1,000* to 8 = *more than \$7,000*. The correct responses were as follows:

- **Federal Pell grant:** \$5,001 to \$6,000
- **WV HEGP:** \$2,001 to \$3,000
- **WV PROMISE Scholarship:** \$4,001 to \$5,000

We compared the proportion of cohort and F-Comp student groups who could accurately estimate tuition costs and financial aid amounts at grade 8. R-Comp students were not included in these comparisons because they took the survey as grade 8 students in Year 1, before these items were included.

Notably, there were no significant differences in the proportion of cohort and F-Comp students who could accurately estimate tuition costs for either of the two options: fewer than 20% of students in either group could accurately estimate these costs (see Figure 8).

We found F-Comp students were significantly<sup>12</sup> more likely than cohort students to accurately estimate the amount of money available from Federal Pell grants (14% vs. 11%). However, relatively few students could accurately estimate this, and the effect size for this difference was small ( $d = .16$ ). More information is presented in Figure 8.



\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

**FIGURE 8. PERCENTAGE OF COHORT AND COMPARISON STUDENTS ACCURATELY ESTIMATING THE AVERAGE COST OF PUBLIC COLLEGE TUITION AND THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE FROM THREE PROGRAMS BY GROUP AT GRADE 8**

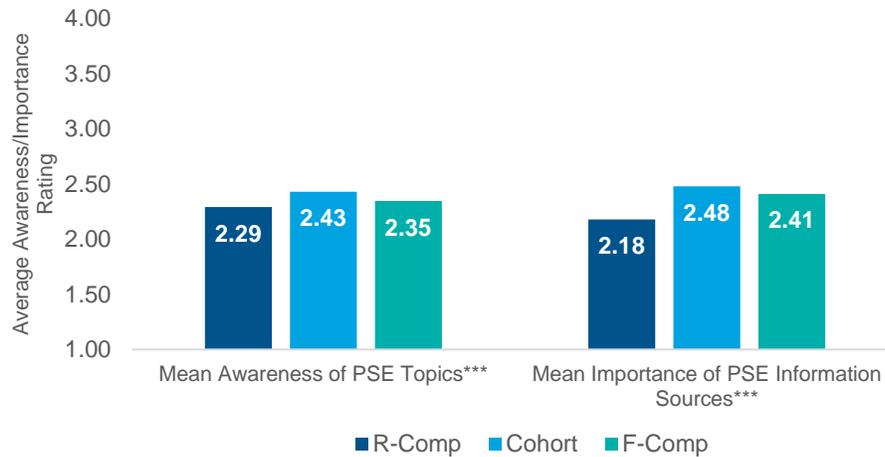
### 1.3.4 Awareness of PSE Topics and Importance of Various Sources in Gathering Information about PSE Options

Students were next asked to indicate their awareness of 11 PSE-related topics. The survey also included 16 items measuring the importance that respondents gave to various sources in helping them gather information about their PSE options. The awareness and importance items all used a four-point Likert-type response format, with response options ranging from 1 = *not at all important/aware* to 4 = *extremely important/aware*. On both scales, a mean rating of 3.0 represents *moderate awareness/importance*.

To analyze differences in these outcomes across groups, we first developed average “awareness” and “importance” scales by calculating each respondent’s average rating across all 11 awareness items and all 16 importance items. When comparing results across the three groups of students, we found cohort students reported higher average awareness ratings than R-Comp and F-Comp students. The overall ANOVAs were significant,<sup>13</sup> and the effect size was largest when comparing cohort and R-Comp groups on mean importance ratings ( $d = .41$ ). See Figure 9.

<sup>12</sup>  $\chi^2(1) = 9.59, p < .01$

<sup>13</sup> Awareness:  $F(2, 6,961) = 11.94, p < .001$ ; importance:  $F(2, 6,962) = 103.94, p < .001$



\*\*statistically significant (p<.05); \*statistically significant (p<.01); \*\*\*statistically significant (p<.001)

**FIGURE 9. COHORT AND COMPARISON STUDENT AWARENESS AND IMPORTANCE RATINGS FOR VARIOUS POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TOPICS AND INFORMATION SOURCES AT GRADE 8**

When looking within individual topics, we found a significant difference in awareness ratings across the three groups for seven of the 11 PSE topics. Post-hoc analyses showed cohort students provided significantly higher ratings than R-Comp students for eight of the 11 PSE topics: (1) FAFSA ( $d = .36$ ), (2) college savings plans/529 ( $d = .12$ ), (3) ACT/SAT ( $d = .11$ ), (4) WV HEGP ( $d = .26$ ), (5) Federal Pell grants ( $d = .33$ ), (6) Federal loans ( $d = .28$ ), (7) Federal work-study ( $d = .21$ ), and (8) requirements for college acceptance ( $d = .11$ ). All effects are considered small, but substantively important. See Table 5.

Cohort students provided significantly higher awareness ratings than F-Comp students for six topics: (1) FAFSA ( $d = .11$ ), (2) ACT/SAT ( $d = .13$ ), (3) WV HEGP ( $d = .16$ ), (4) Federal Pell grants ( $d = .11$ ), (5) Federal loans ( $d = .09$ ), and (6) Federal work-study ( $d = .09$ ). All effects were small. Again, see Table 5.

**Table 5. Difference in Awareness of 11 PSE Topics as Rated by Cohort and Comparison Groups at Grade 8**

Topic	R-Comp			Cohort			F-Comp		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. FAFSA***	2,341	1.62	0.81	2,462	1.93	0.92	2,114	1.82	0.92
b. College savings plan/529***	2,336	1.97	0.96	2,462	2.09	0.96	2,106	2.04	0.99
c. ACT/SAT***	2,322	2.59	1.02	2,449	2.48	1.03	2,103	2.34	1.05
d. WV HEGP***	2,330	1.99	0.96	2,457	2.25	1.01	2,109	2.09	0.99
e. Federal Pell grants***	2,334	1.64	0.86	2,453	1.94	0.97	2,109	1.84	0.95
f. Federal student loans**	2,335	2.21	0.96	2,466	2.48	0.97	2,116	2.39	0.99
g. Federal work-study**	2,330	1.87	0.95	2,460	2.08	0.99	2,101	1.99	1.00



h. Scholarships (e.g., PROMISE or institutional)	2,327	2.86	0.99	2,468	2.90	0.97	2,110	2.84	1.00
i. Requirements for college acceptance***	2,322	2.56	1.00	2,454	2.67	0.97	2,104	2.60	1.01
j. The importance/benefit of a college education	2,329	2.93	1.06	2,462	2.97	1.01	2,104	2.95	1.04
k. High school graduation requirements	2,334	2.95	0.99	2,456	2.95	0.97	2,101	2.92	1.00

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

Cohort and comparison group students differed significantly in their importance ratings for all 16 information sources included on the survey. Post-hoc tests showed that cohort students gave higher importance ratings than R-Comp students for all topics. The effect sizes ranged from very small (e.g.,  $d = .07$  for the importance of family members) to strong (e.g.,  $d = .91$  for the importance of GEAR UP staff). The average effect size for the difference in importance ratings among cohort and R-Comp students was .29, a small, but substantively important effect.

Differences in mean importance ratings among cohort and F-Comp students were statistically significant for the following sources: (1) College Foundation of West Virginia (CFWV) website CFWV.com ( $d = .09$ ); (2) television ( $d = .07$ ); (3) radio ( $d = .07$ ); (4) brochures and pamphlets ( $d = .07$ ); (5) signs, posters, and billboards ( $d = .09$ ); (6) GEAR UP staff ( $d = .45$ ); and (7) college admissions representatives ( $d = .08$ ). The difference for GEAR UP staff approached the threshold for a medium effect, but all other differences between cohort and F-Comp students were trivial. See Table 6.

**Table 6. Difference in Importance of 16 PSE Information Sources as Rated by Cohort and Comparison Groups at Grade 8**

Source	R-Comp			Cohort			F-Comp		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. College or university websites***	2,340	2.36	1.02	2,466	2.63	1.01	2,120	2.59	1.00
b. CFWV.com***	2,335	2.17	1.03	2,458	2.56	1.04	2,104	2.47	1.03
c. Other college planning websites***	2,326	2.08	.97	2,447	2.38	1.01	2,109	2.38	1.00
d. College fairs***	2,319	2.02	1.00	2,447	2.36	1.03	2,101	2.32	1.05
e. Television***	2,340	2.35	.99	2,464	2.51	0.99	2,111	2.44	1.00
f. Radio***	2,328	2.07	1.00	2,459	2.28	1.04	2,107	2.20	1.02
g. Direct mail***	2,328	2.02	1.03	2,460	2.20	1.07	2,108	2.19	1.07
h. Email***	2,328	2.02	1.03	2,459	2.24	1.07	2,107	2.26	1.07
i. Brochures and pamphlets***	2,328	2.22	1.00	2,464	2.47	0.99	2,106	2.40	1.01

j. Magazines/newspapers***	2,326	2.12	.97	2,458	2.31	1.00	2,103	2.27	1.02
k. Signs, posters, or billboards***	2,329	2.23	.98	2,458	2.46	0.99	2,104	2.38	0.99
l. Text messages***	2,333	1.98	1.08	2,450	2.19	1.09	2,100	2.19	1.10
m. School counselor***	2,333	2.38	1.06	2,452	2.73	1.04	2,103	2.67	1.04
n. Family members**	2,333	2.87	1.03	2,450	2.94	0.98	2,099	2.97	0.97
o. GEAR UP staff***	2,326	1.94	1.00	2,443	2.86	1.01	2,091	2.39	1.08
p. College admissions representatives***	2,315	2.07	1.08	2,431	2.54	1.09	2,089	2.45	1.13

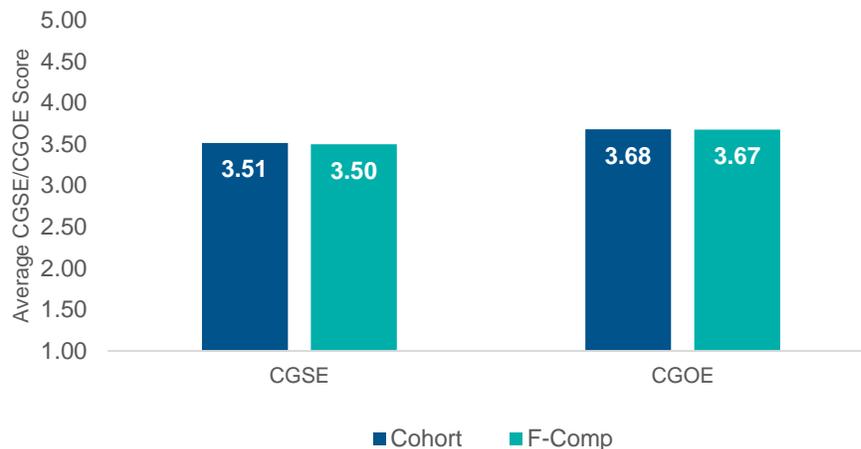
Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant (p<.05); \*\*statistically significant (p<.01); \*\*\*statistically significant (p<.001)

## 1.4 College-Going Self-Efficacy and Outcomes-Expectations

Two survey items included on the Year 2 and Year 3 surveys were multi-part scales asking students to rate their (1) CGSE, which represents the perceived ability to achieve various milestones with respect to getting into college, and (2) CGOE, which represents perceived ability to be successful once enrolled in college. These scales were adapted from Gibbons (2005), and used a five-point Likert-type response scale (1 = *Don't know*, 2 = *Not at all sure*, 3 = *Somewhat sure*, 4 = *Sure*, and 5 = *Very sure*). We compared CGSE and CGOE outcomes among cohort and F-Comp students. R-Comp students were not included in these comparisons because the two scales were not included on the survey when these students completed it at grade 8.

To analyze differences in these outcomes across the cohort and F-Comp groups, we first developed average CGSE and CGOE scales by calculating each respondent's average rating across all 14 CGSE items and all 16 CGOE items. When comparing results across the two groups of students, we found no significant differences in average CGSE or CGOE ratings (see Figure 10).



**FIGURE 10. AVERAGE PERCEPTIONS OF CGSE AND CGOE FOR COHORT AND F-COMP STUDENTS AT GRADE 8**

However, when examining individual items for each subscale, we found cohort students rated themselves more certain than did their F-Comp counterparts on 10 of 14 CGSE items, and 12 of 16 CGOE items. Notably, only one item showed a statistically significant difference across the two groups. That is, cohort students were significantly<sup>14</sup> surer of their ability to *get my family to support my wish of finishing college*. The effect size for the difference was very small ( $d = .08$ ). See Tables 7 and 8.

**Table 7. Difference in CGSE Ratings for Cohort and F-Comp Students at Grade 8**

Item	Cohort			F-Comp		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. I can find a way to pay for college.	2,498	3.15	1.29	2,136	3.16	1.29
b. I can get accepted to a college.	2,492	3.38	1.21	2,136	3.35	1.23
c. I can have family support for going to college.	2,488	3.96	1.26	2,126	4.03	1.24
d. I can choose a good college.	2,483	3.94	1.13	2,126	3.92	1.14
e. I can get a scholarship or grant for college.	2,489	3.16	1.25	2,124	3.11	1.27
f. I can make an educational plan that will prepare me for college.	2,482	3.36	1.20	2,130	3.29	1.23
g. I can make my family proud with my choices after high school.	2,489	4.06	1.14	2,132	4.06	1.14
h. I can choose college courses that best fit my interests.	2,486	3.89	1.13	2,125	3.90	1.15
i. I can pay for college even if my family cannot help me.	2,479	2.68	1.22	2,125	2.70	1.22
j. I can get good grades in my high school math classes.	2,486	3.38	1.22	2,131	3.37	1.25
k. I can get good grades in my high school science classes.	2,474	3.43	1.17	2,123	3.39	1.18
l. I can choose the high school classes needed to get into a good college.	2,487	3.64	1.17	2,124	3.62	1.16
m. I know enough about computers to get into college.	2,479	3.30	1.25	2,127	3.25	1.25
n. I can go to college after high school.	2,486	3.91	1.25	2,127	3.89	1.25

Source: Year 2 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

<sup>14</sup>  $t(4513) = 2.55, p < .05$

**Table 8. Difference in CGOE Ratings for Cohort and F-Comp Students at Grade 8**

Topic	Cohort			F-Comp		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. I could pay for each year of college.	2,486	2.89	1.30	2,127	2.87	1.28
b. I could get A's and B's in college.	2,480	3.27	1.21	2,122	3.26	1.19
c. I could get my family to support my wish of finishing college.*	2,478	3.89	1.26	2,124	3.99	1.21
d. I could take care of myself in college.	2,475	3.94	1.14	2,123	3.97	1.12
e. I could fit in at college.	2,471	3.60	1.25	2,118	3.60	1.22
f. I could get good enough grades to get or keep a scholarship.	2,479	3.55	1.20	2,120	3.51	1.21
g. I could finish college and receive a college degree.	2,470	3.78	1.22	2,112	3.76	1.21
h. I could care for my family responsibilities while in college.	2,477	3.56	1.23	2,119	3.52	1.20
i. I could set my own schedule while in college.	2,474	3.54	1.22	2,114	3.60	1.19
j. I could make friends at college.	2,482	3.94	1.19	2,112	3.91	1.20
k. I could get the education I need for my choice of career.	2,471	3.90	1.17	2,119	3.89	1.15
l. I could get a job after I graduate from college.	2,475	3.96	1.15	2,110	3.95	1.15
m. I would like being in college.	2,472	3.81	1.25	2,119	3.76	1.26
n. I could be smart enough to finish college.	2,473	3.77	1.20	2,111	3.72	1.21
o. I could pick the right things to study at college.	2,462	3.79	1.15	2,106	3.78	1.14
p. I could do the classwork and homework assignments in college classes.	2,470	3.75	1.21	2,112	3.76	1.20

Source: Year 2 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

## 1.5 Additional Supports Requested

The final survey item asked students to select from among 14 additional supports that they would like to have to help them be more successful in school and more prepared for college. We found the cohort and comparison groups differed significantly on five items. Not surprisingly, cohort students were more likely than R-Comp and F-Comp students to request information about participating in GEAR UP events. However, they were also more likely to request information about leadership opportunities and assistance with the college entrance process. They were more likely than R-Comp but not F-Comp students to request assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA) and to request information and events presented in other languages (e.g., Spanish). Effect sizes for all differences were small. Table 9 includes all 14 items.

**Table 9. Percentage of Cohort and Comparison Students Requesting 14 Additional Supports at Grade 8**

Topic	R-Comp	Cohort	F-Comp
a. More advanced classes (e.g., AP)	51%	52%	54%
b. Information about participating in GEAR UP events***	36%	49%	44%
c. Tutoring	40%	41%	40%
d. Opportunities to participate in college visits	62%	64%	62%
e. Information about CERs	62%	62%	63%
f. Information about college financial aid/scholarships	60%	60%	62%
g. Leadership opportunities***	38%	46%	41%
h. Summer activities	35%	36%	35%
i. Career exploration activities	57%	55%	55%
j. Test preparation	51%	52%	52%
k. Assistance with the college entrance process*	46%	50%	48%
l. Assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA)***	38%	44%	46%
m. Information and events presented in other languages (e.g., Spanish)*	28%	31%	31%

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

## 2. Priority Student Survey Outcomes as Measured in Year 1 and Year 3

### 2.1 Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 1,207 grade 12 priority students responded to the Year 1 Student Survey (hereafter, Year 1 priority students) and 1,329 grade 12 priority students responded to the Year 3 Student Survey (hereafter, Year 3 priority students).

**Gender.** The Year 1 priority group was 50% male and 50% female, and Year 3 priority students, 52% male, 47% female, and 1% other. (The *other* option was not available on the Year 1 Student Survey.) These differences were found to be statistically significant,<sup>15</sup> but the effect sizes for the differences across groups were very small ( $d < .10$  for each).

**Race/ethnicity and primary language.** Approximately 91% of Year 1 priority students identified as White, 5% as Black/African-American, and 3% as two or more races. Similarly, approximately 91% of Year 3 priority students identified as White, 4% as Black/African-American, and 3% as

<sup>15</sup>  $\chi^2(2) = 14.03, p < .001$

two or more races. The remaining race categories for both years included 1% or less of the sample. These differences were not statistically significant.

The difference in the percentage of students identifying as Hispanic or Latino in each sample also was not statistically significant. However, approximately 2% of Year 1 priority students reported that they were Hispanic or Latino, compared with 4% of Year 3 priority students. This difference represents a small effect size ( $d = .29$ ). Notably, 22% of Year 3 priority students did not respond when asked to report their ethnicity, perhaps owing to the addition of the *other* option for this item in Year 3. Students in both samples universally spoke English as their primary language at home (greater than 99%).

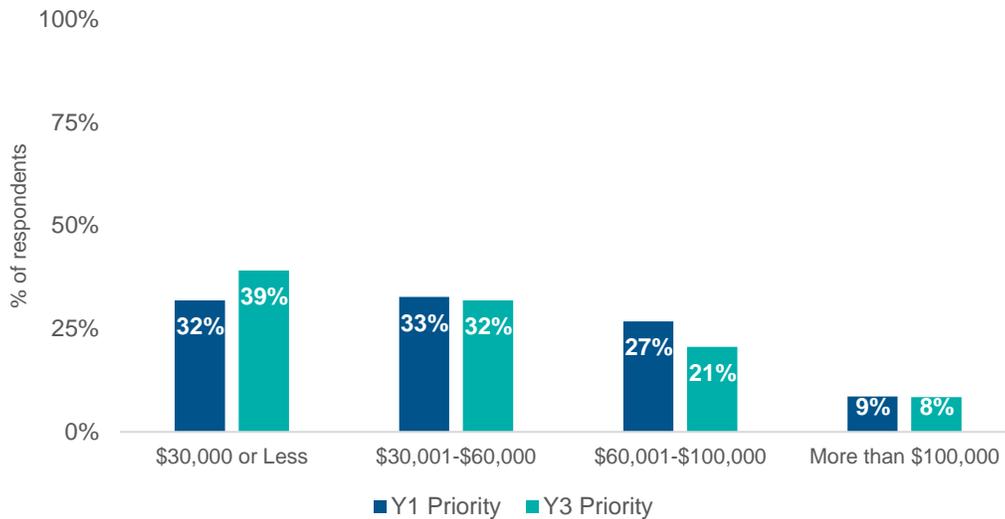
**Family income.** We found a statistically significant<sup>16</sup> difference in the distribution of self-reported family income across the two groups of priority students. The percentage of Year 3 priority students who reported their annual family income was \$30,000 or less was five points higher than the percentage of Year 1 priority students (i.e., 26% vs. 21%). Additionally, the percentage of Year 3 priority students who reported their family income to be between \$60,001-\$100,000 was three points lower than the percentage of Year 1 priority students (i.e., 14% vs. 17%). However, almost one-third of both samples either did not respond to this item or indicated that they did not know or would rather not report their family income.

Because so many priority students did not report their family income, we also examined differences in the distribution of family income for the subset of students who did provide a response other than *I don't know or I'd rather not say*. We again found a statistically significant<sup>17</sup> difference. Notably, as depicted in Figure 11, the Year 3 priority group had a larger percentage of students whose families were estimated to be earning less than \$30,000 per year than the Year 1 priority group (39% vs. 32%) and a smaller percentage of students whose families made between \$60,001 and \$100,000. The effect size for both differences was small ( $d = .17$  and  $d = .19$ , respectively). It should be noted that this subsample includes 65% of Year 1 priority students and 67% of Year 3 priority students.

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<sup>16</sup>  $\chi^2(4) = 14.75, p < .01$

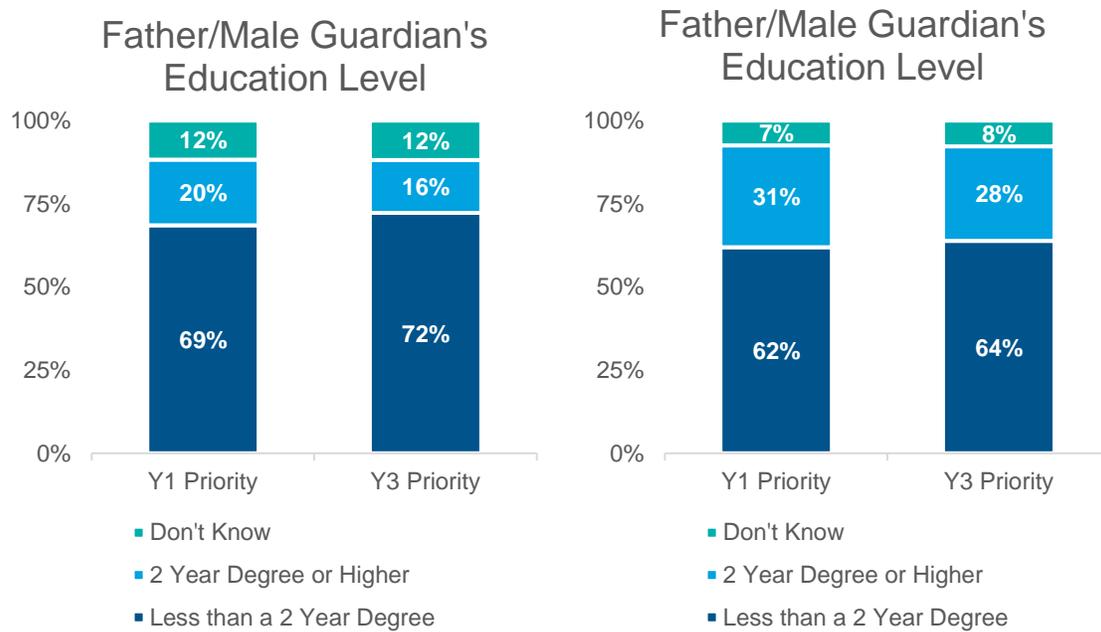
<sup>17</sup>  $\chi^2(3) = 12.75, p < .01$



**FIGURE 11. FAMILY INCOME AS REPORTED BY YEAR 1 PRIORITY AND YEAR 3 PRIORITY GROUP STUDENTS (EXCLUDING THOSE THAT DID NOT RESPOND OR DID NOT KNOW)**

**Parental education levels.** There was a statistically significant<sup>18</sup> difference in the distribution of the education levels of fathers/male guardians reported by the two groups of priority students. The fathers/male guardians of Year 1 priority students were more educated than those of Year 3 priority students: approximately 69% of the Year 1 fathers/male guardians versus 72% of Year 3 fathers/male guardians had no degree. The percentage of students whose fathers/male guardians had at least a two-year college degree was 20% for Year 1 and 16% for Year 3 priority students. The effect size for these differences was small ( $d < .20$  for both). Education levels of mothers or female guardians were similar across the two groups of students. Figure 12 summarizes the data.

<sup>18</sup>  $\chi^2(2) = 6.713, p < .05$



**FIGURE 12. PARENTAL EDUCATION LEVELS AS REPORTED BY YEAR 1 PRIORITY AND YEAR 3 PRIORITY GROUP STUDENTS**

## 2.2 Educational Goals, Aspirations, and Academic Confidence

### 2.2.1 Plans to Continue Education after High School

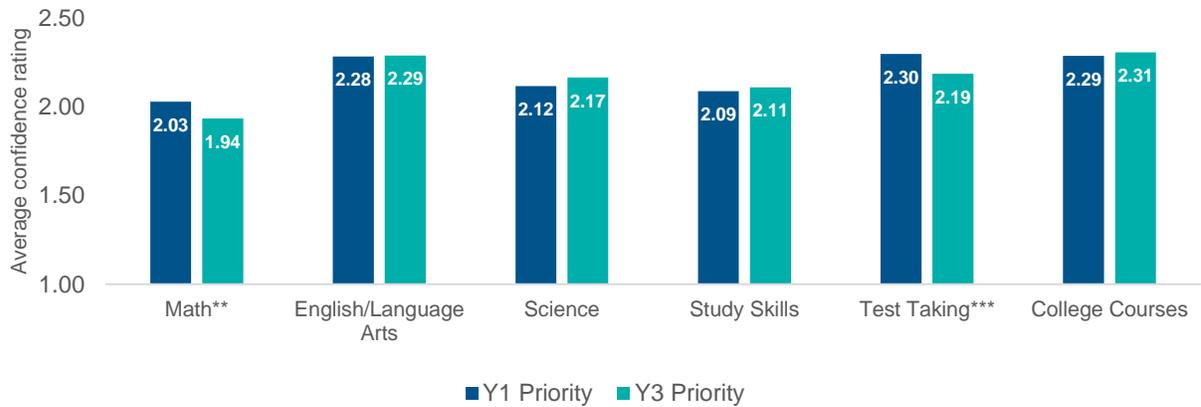
All students were asked to indicate whether or not they planned to continue their education after high school. We found no significant difference across groups, with 90% of Year 1 priority and 89% of Year 3 priority students responding affirmatively.

### 2.2.2 Academic Confidence

Students next rated their academic confidence across six content areas (i.e., mathematics, English, science, study skills, test-taking skills, and general ability to do well in college courses in the future). We found that, with the exception of confidence in math and ability to pass the end-of-year tests, Year 3 priority group students reported higher confidence than Year 1 priority students. Differences in confidence ratings were statistically significant for math skills<sup>19</sup> and ability to pass end-of-year tests.<sup>20</sup> See Figure 13 for complete details.

<sup>19</sup>  $t(2,524) = 2.89, p < .01$

<sup>20</sup>  $t(2,493) = 3.53, p < .001$

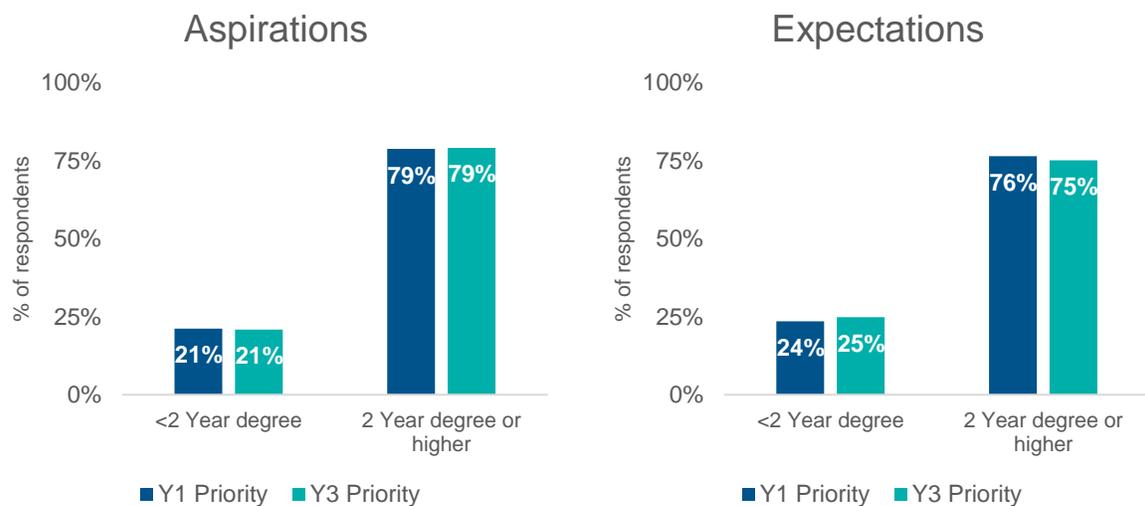


\*statistically significant (p<.05); \*\*statistically significant (p<.01); \*\*\*statistically significant (p<.001)

**FIGURE 13. PRIORITY STUDENT SELF-REPORTED ACADEMIC CONFIDENCE BY GROUP**

### 2.2.3 Educational Aspirations/Expectations

Students were next asked to indicate the levels of education to which they aspired and which they expected to achieve. For these items, the survey included five response options (i.e., 1 = *high school or less*, 2 = *some college*, 3 = *a two-year college degree*, 4 = *a four-year college degree*, and 5 = *more than a four-year college degree*). To ease interpretation of the findings, we combined the first two options into a category we labeled, *less than a two-year degree*. The top three response options were collapsed into a category labeled, *two-year degree or higher*. We found no statistically significant differences in the percentages of students aspiring or expecting to attain a two-year degree or higher (see Figure 14).

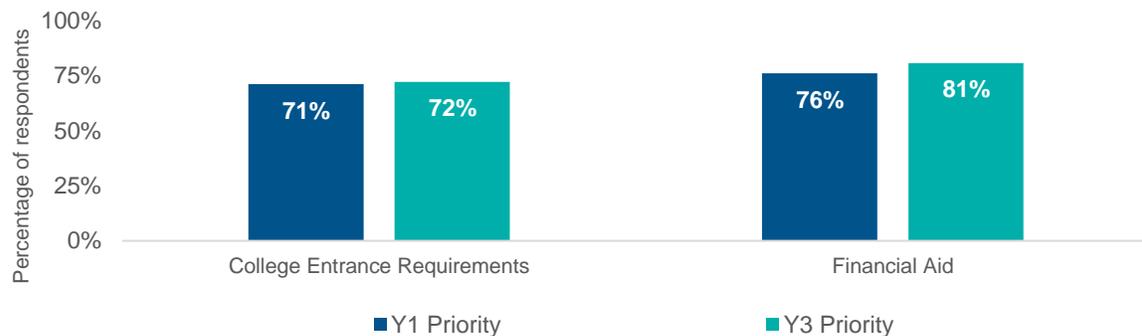


**FIGURE 14. PRIORITY STUDENT EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS BY GROUP**

## 2.3 CERs, Cost, and Financial Aid

### 2.3.1 Interactions with GEAR UP Staff

We asked students whether they had spoken with anyone from their school or GEAR UP about CERs or the availability of financial aid to help pay for college. As presented in Figure 15, nearly identical percentages of Year 1 and Year 3 priority students responded affirmatively regarding the topic of CERs (71% vs. 72%). However, a slightly larger percentage of Year 3 priority students reported having spoken with someone at their school or from GEAR UP about the availability of financial aid to help pay for college (81% vs. 76%). The differences were not statistically significant, and the effect size for the difference in percentages for the financial aid item was small ( $d = .15$ ).



**FIGURE 15. PERCENTAGE OF PRIORITY GROUP STUDENTS WHO HAVE SPOKEN WITH SOMEONE ABOUT CERs AND FINANCIAL AID BY YEAR**

### 2.3.2 Perceived Knowledge of Financial Aid/Costs and Benefits of College

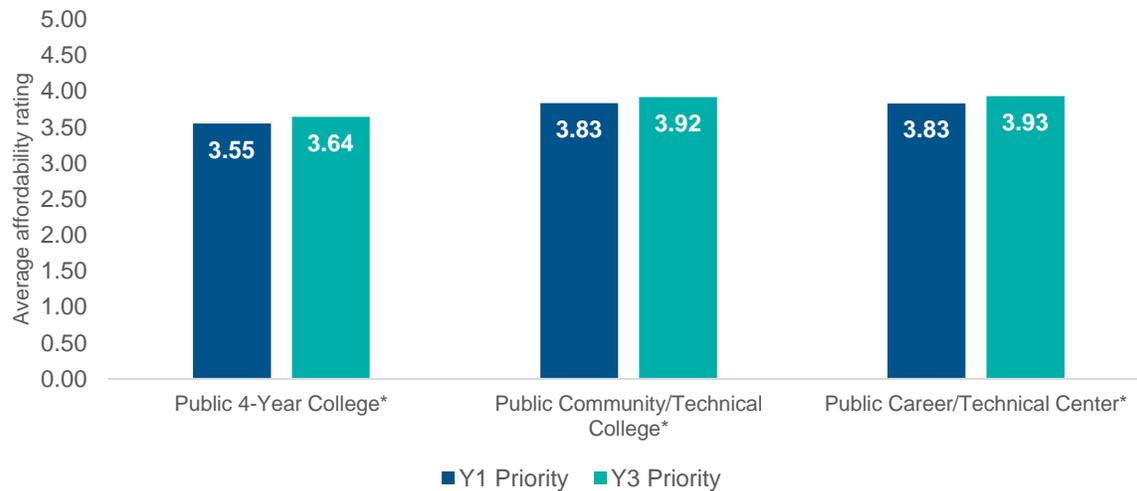
Year 3 priority group students were more likely than Year 1 priority group students to respond affirmatively that they were knowledgeable about financial aid and the costs and benefits of going to college (80% vs. 76%). The difference was statistically significant,<sup>21</sup> but the effect size for the difference in these two percentages was small ( $d = .12$ ).

### 2.3.3 Perceptions of Affordability and Cost

Next, we asked students to indicate the extent to which they felt they could afford to attend three public PSE options: (1) a public four-year college, (2) a public community/technical college, and (3) a public career/technical center. Respondents used a five-point Likert-type response scale (i.e., 1 = *definitely not*, 2 = *probably not*, 3 = *not sure*, 4 = *probably*, 5 = *definitely*). We compared the average affordability ratings between Year 1 and Year 3 priority students for all three options. We found Year 3 priority students, on average, reported more positive perceptions of the affordability of all three options than Year 1 priority students (see Figure 16). Although all three differences were statistically significant,<sup>22</sup> the effect sizes were relatively small ( $d = .10$  or lower).

<sup>21</sup>  $\chi^2(1) = 4.90, p < .05$

<sup>22</sup> Public 4-Year College:  $t(2,455) = 2.05, p < .05$ ; Public Community/Technical College:  $t(2,455) = 2.04, p < .05$ ; Public Career/Technical Center:  $t(2,454) = 2.38, p < .05$



\*statistically significant (p<.05); \*\*statistically significant (p<.01); \*\*\*statistically significant (p<.001)

**FIGURE 16. AVERAGE AFFORDABILITY RATINGS BY PRIORITY STUDENTS FOR THREE PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS BY GROUP**

Students were next asked to estimate the average cost of tuition—excluding the cost of food, housing, and books—for two public college options in West Virginia: (a) a four-year public college, and (b) a public community/technical college. Seven response options were offered, ranging from 1 = up to \$4,000 to 7 = more than \$26,000. According to the Commission, the correct estimates were as follows for the period in which both surveys were administered:

- **Four-year public college/university:** \$4,001-\$8,000
- **Public community/technical college:** Up to \$4,000

Overall, we found that only approximately 24% of Year 1, and approximately 23% of Year 3 priority students, accurately estimated the costs associated with attending a four-year public college/university. Additionally, we found that 22% and 24% of Year 1 and Year 3 priority students, respectively, accurately estimated the costs associated with attending a public community/technical college. There were no significant differences.

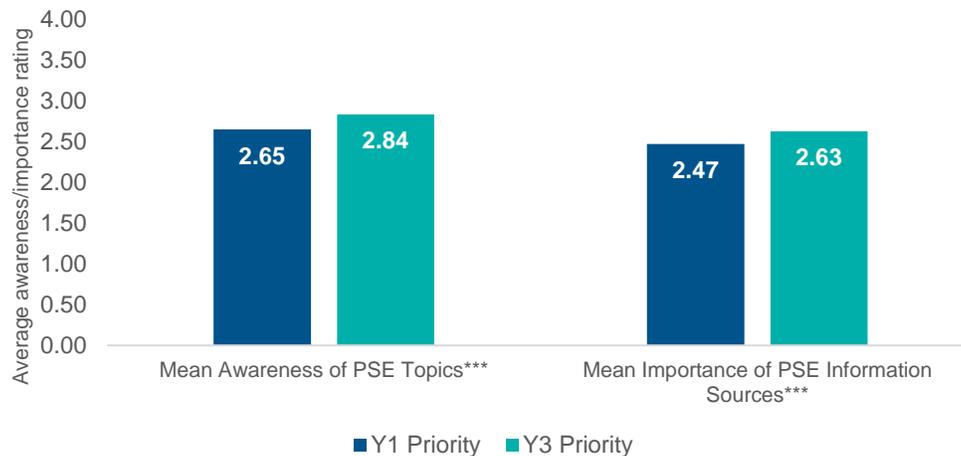
***Special Note:** A final item in this section of the student survey asked students to estimate the maximum amount of money per academic year that is available to help pay for college through three programs: (1) Federal Pell grants, (2) the WV HEGP, and (3) the WV PROMISE Scholarship. This item was not administered by the evaluation team until Year 2, thus the data necessary to compare outcomes between Year 1 priority and Year 3 priority students are not available. For more information about the response of Year 3 priority group students to this item, we direct readers to the Year 3 WV GEAR UP Interim Evaluation Report.*

### 2.3.4 Awareness of PSE Topics and Importance of Various Sources in Gathering Information about PSE Options

The Year 1 and Year 3 Student Surveys asked respondents to indicate their awareness of 11 PSE education topics and the importance of 16 sources in providing information about PSE options. In both years the items used four-point Likert-type response scales (i.e., 1 = not at all, 2 = slightly, 3 = moderately, 4 = extremely). We calculated average awareness/importance ratings

for both scales by calculating the mean awareness/importance score for each participant across all scale items. We also compared the average awareness/importance ratings for individual scale items.

When comparing Year 1 priority and Year 3 priority students, we found the latter group reported significantly higher average awareness ratings. The difference was statistically significant<sup>23</sup>, and the effect size was small ( $d = .25$ ). Year 3 priority students also provided higher importance ratings than Year 1 priority students. The difference was again statistically significant<sup>24</sup>, and the effect size for the difference was small ( $d = .20$ ). See Figure 17.



\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

### FIGURE 17. STUDENT AWARENESS AND IMPORTANCE RATINGS FOR VARIOUS POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TOPICS AND INFORMATION SOURCES BY YEAR

Looking at individual topics, we found Year 3 priority students showed statistically significant and positive differences in their awareness ratings for eight of the 11 PSE topics when compared with Year 1 priority students (all at  $p < .001$ ). The largest differences were found for four topics: (1) FAFSA ( $d = .47$ ), (2) Federal work-study ( $d = .29$ ), (3) WV HEGP ( $d = .29$ ), and (4) Federal Pell grants ( $d = .27$ ). The effect size for FAFSA approached the threshold for a medium effect. The remaining differences were small but substantively important. See Table 10 for more details.

<sup>23</sup>  $t(2,481) = 6.29, p < .001$

<sup>24</sup>  $t(2,486) = 5.02, p < .001$

**Table 10. Difference in Awareness Ratings for Priority Group Students by Year**

Topic	Y1 Priority			Y3 Priority		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. FAFSA***	1,167	2.65	0.91	1,301	3.08	0.93
b. College savings plan/529***	1,158	1.90	0.95	1,295	2.06	1.04
c. ACT/SAT	1,168	3.25	0.85	1,299	3.28	0.91
d. WV HEGP***	1,168	2.20	0.97	1,300	2.49	1.04
e. Federal Pell grants***	1,164	2.17	0.97	1,302	2.44	1.04
f. Federal student loans***	1,164	2.45	0.95	1,300	2.66	0.98
g. Federal work-study***	1,161	2.11	0.98	1,299	2.41	1.05
h. Scholarships (e.g., PROMISE or institutional)***	1,163	2.97	0.89	1,303	3.10	0.94
i. Requirements for college acceptance***	1,161	2.92	0.95	1,297	3.07	0.95
j. The importance/benefit of a college education	1,161	3.19	0.95	1,300	3.24	0.93
k. High school graduation requirements	1,167	3.37	0.86	1,294	3.36	0.88

Source: Year 1 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

Year 1 and Year 3 priority student groups showed statistically significant differences in their importance ratings for 13 of the 16 PSE information sources included on the survey. In all cases, the Year 3 priority group gave higher importance ratings than did the Year 1 priority group. The most substantive differences in importance ratings were found for GEAR UP staff ( $d = .33$ ) and college fairs ( $d = .25$ ). We found smaller, but still positive differences in the importance ratings for (1) text messages ( $d = .22$ ), (2) email ( $d = .21$ ), (3) college admissions representatives ( $d = .21$ ), (4) other college planning websites ( $d = .20$ ), (5) school counselor ( $d = .18$ ), (6) CFVW.com ( $d = .16$ ), and (7) college or university websites ( $d = .16$ ). Each of these differences was statistically significant and in favor of the students in Year 3.

**Table 11. Difference in Importance Ratings by Priority Group Students by Year**

Topic	Y1 Priority			Y3 Priority		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. College or university websites***	1,195	2.83	0.95	1,301	2.98	0.95
b. CFVW.com***	1,188	2.61	1.01	1,297	2.76	0.97
c. Other college planning websites***	1,185	2.41	1.00	1,300	2.61	0.97
d. College fairs***	1,190	2.64	0.96	1,297	2.87	0.96
e. Television	1,189	2.28	1.01	1,299	2.32	1.01
f. Radio*	1,189	2.08	1.03	1,296	2.18	1.03
g. Direct mail**	1,192	2.63	1.00	1,302	2.75	1.03



h. Email**	1,192	2.63	1.00	1,301	2.83	1.02
i. Brochures and pamphlets*	1,187	2.61	0.93	1,298	2.70	0.96
j. Magazines/newspapers	1,186	2.19	1.01	1,302	2.26	1.03
k. Signs, posters, or billboards*	1,188	2.23	0.99	1,299	2.32	1.01
l. Text messages***	1,186	2.11	1.07	1,298	2.35	1.07
m. School counselor***	1,187	2.75	1.00	1,295	2.93	1.01
n. Family members	1,185	2.77	0.98	1,298	2.82	0.96
o. GEAR UP staff***	1,184	2.18	1.06	1,291	2.53	1.04
p. College admissions representatives***	1,176	2.64	0.98	1,289	2.84	0.99

Source: Year 1 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant (p<.05); \*\*statistically significant (p<.01); \*\*\*statistically significant (p<.001)

## 2.4 College-Going Self-Efficacy and Outcomes-Expectations

**Special Note:** The outcomes of CGSE and CGOE were measured beginning in Year 3 of the program. As a result, these outcomes were measured for Year 3 priority students, but not Year 1 priority students. For additional information on the CGSE and CGOE outcomes observed for Year 3 priority students, we direct readers to the Year 3 WV GEAR UP Interim Evaluation Report.

## 2.5 College-Readiness Activities

**Special Note:** The grade 12 student survey includes additional items measuring student participation in three college-readiness activities: (1) completion of the FAFSA, (2) completion of SAT/ACT, and (3) completion of college applications. At the Commission's request, ICF revised the item stems and available response options for these items in Year 3 to better align with annual performance reporting (APR) objectives. Because of these revisions, the outcomes for Year 1 and Year 3 priority student groups are not comparable. We direct readers to the Year 1 WV GEAR UP Annual Evaluation Report and the Year 3 WV GEAR UP Interim Evaluation Report to find descriptive data on college-readiness activities for Year 1 and Year 3 priority students, respectively.

## 2.6 Additional Supports Requested

The final survey item asked students to select from among 13 additional supports that they would like to have to help them be more successful in school and more prepared for college. We found that the Year 1 and Year 3 priority groups did not differ substantially on most items. However, Year 3 priority students were significantly more likely than Year 1 priority students (30% vs. 25%) to report that they wanted more information about advanced placement (AP) classes and significantly less likely to report (41% vs. 50%) that they wanted more assistance with completing financial aid forms. The latter finding is possibly owing to the fact that changes to the FAFSA meant Year 3 priority group students could complete the application three months earlier than Year 1 priority group students. The effect sizes for these differences were all small. Table 12 includes all 13 items.



**Table 12. Percentage of Students Requesting 13 Additional Supports by Group**

Topic	Y1 Priority	Y3 Priority	Difference
a. More advanced classes (e.g., AP)**	25%	30%	+5%
b. Information about participating in GEAR UP events	36%	34%	-2%
c. Tutoring	33%	36%	+3%
d. Opportunities to participate in college visits	54%	50%	-4%
e. Information about CERs	46%	45%	-1%
f. Information about college financial aid/scholarships	54%	52%	-2%
g. Leadership opportunities	28%	29%	+1%
h. Summer activities	23%	23%	--
i. Career exploration activities	41%	42%	+1%
j. Test preparation	45%	47%	+2%
k. Assistance with the college entrance process	43%	42%	-1%
l. Assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA)***	50%	41%	-9%
m. Information and events presented in other languages (e.g., Spanish)	12%	14%	+2%

Source: Year 1 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP Student Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

### 3. School Personnel Survey Outcomes from Year 1 to Year 3

#### 3.1 Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 563 individuals representing 23 WV GEAR UP schools responded to the Year 3 school personnel survey. Notably, 456 respondents were from schools that participated in the program last year ( $N = 18$ ) and 107 were from schools that joined the program in Year 3 ( $N = 5$ ). The majority of respondents were teachers (89%), 6% were administrators, and 5% were counselors. Approximately 5% indicated that, in addition to their primary role, they also served as a GEAR UP site coordinator. We found no significant differences across Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 in the distribution of their primary roles or in the percentage who also served as site coordinators.

The survey also asked respondents to indicate which grade level(s) they serve. It is important to note again that in Years 1 and 2, the survey was administered to all faculty members in GEAR UP schools serving students in grades 6-12. However, in Year 3, the personnel survey was administered to a smaller number of schools and only to individuals in GEAR UP high schools serving grades 9-12, because the cohort students made their transition to high school in Year 3 with the result that WV GEAR UP no longer operated in middle schools.

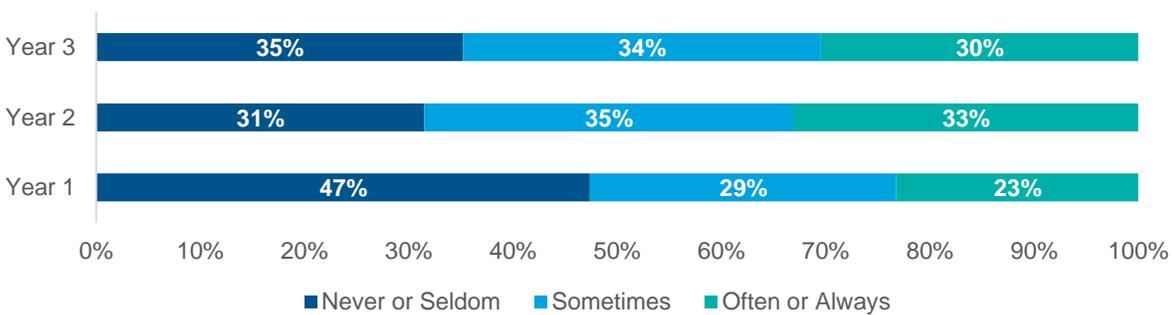


## 3.2 Trend Data for Years 1 Through 3

The following section describes the longitudinal trends in survey outcomes for school personnel in GEAR UP schools.

### 3.2.1 Participation/Satisfaction with GEAR UP and Perceptions of Program Effectiveness Participation.

We asked school personnel how often they had participated in GEAR UP activities. Five response options were provided (i.e., 1 = *never*, 2 = *seldom*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *often*, 5 = *always*). A total of 551 respondents answered the question in Year 3 (98%). Of those, more than one-third (35%) indicated that they *never or seldom* participated in GEAR UP events, 34% indicated that they *sometimes* participated, and 30% indicated that they *often or always* participated. We found a statistically significant difference in the distribution of responses across time.<sup>25</sup> Specifically, only 13% of respondents indicated that they had never participated in GEAR UP events in Years 2 and 3, compared with 29% in Year 1. The effect size for the difference in the proportions of respondents who selected this option (i.e., *never*) was medium when comparing Year 3 and Year 1 ( $d = .53$ ) and very small for the comparison between Year 3 and Year 2 ( $d = .04$ ). See Figure 18 for more details.



**FIGURE 18. FREQUENCY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL PARTICIPATION IN GEAR UP ACTIVITIES BY YEAR**

**Special Note:** We replicated this analysis using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding respondents from the five schools new to the GEAR UP program in Year 3. The pattern of results was the same as depicted above.

The survey included an open-ended item asking respondents to describe the types of GEAR UP activities in which they participated. More than half of all Year 3 survey respondents (i.e., 265 of 563) provided a response. We coded comments into one or more of the following seven themes: (1) student activities, (2) academic support, (3) field trips and/or college visits, (4) financial aid/other college preparation activities, (5) timing, (6) not included/informed, and (7) not applicable. Examples of comments organized under each of these themes are presented in Table 13.

<sup>25</sup>  $\chi^2(8) = 85.80, p < .001$

**Table 13. Sample Comments about School Personnel Participation in GEAR UP Activities**

Topic	Sample Comment
a. Student activities	I try to participate and encourage all of the students to take ownership of GEAR UP activities so that it will mean more to them. I think the College Signing Day is very effective.
b. Academic support	I was an after-school tutor, but no matter how much I encouraged or begged students to attend, they only showed up when a major presentation was due.
c. Field trips and/or college visits	I attended one field trip with GEAR UP. It was a wonderful experience for the students.
d. Financial aid/other college preparation activities	I provided students with help in career exploration, living expenses, filling out FAFSA applications, registering for the ACT, and discussing college experiences.
e. Timing	As a mother of young children, I rarely participate outside of school hours.
f. Not included/informed	I have only participated once all year; otherwise, I have not been asked.
g. Not applicable	The students I work with daily will not be attending college.

Source: Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Survey

Similar to Year 2, Year 3 respondents were most likely to discuss having participated in some type of student activity, but less likely to comment about academic support activities. A slightly higher percentage mentioned college visits or field trips (24% in Year 3 compared to 20% in Year 2).

Several respondents in Year 3 also shared concerns about timing issues that made it challenging to participate substantively in GEAR UP. For example, a small number noted that they could only attend events during the day. Others commented about not having enough time to participate, and some indicated that, as new employees, they had not yet participated. Another group mentioned attending GEAR UP events when possible and informed enough in advance.

A substantial number of Year 3 respondents commented that they were either not included or not informed about GEAR UP activities at their school. Some perceived that they were intentionally not invited, because they did not serve targeted groups of students (i.e., cohort and priority). Responses organized under this theme ranged from “I am never asked to help out” to “[I am] never asked to be part of this program. The same teachers go on all the trips and activities.”

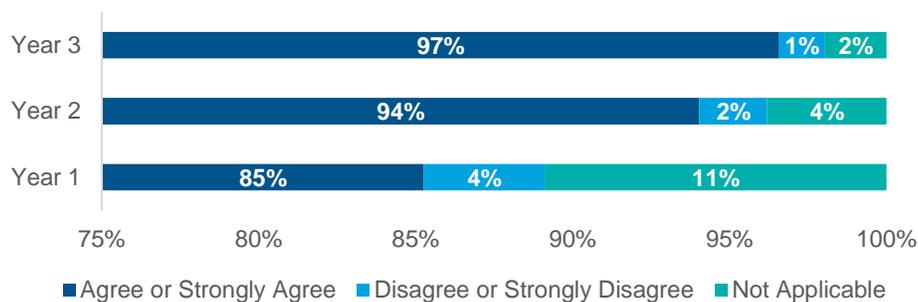
Additionally, several Year 3 respondents did not perceive GEAR UP as applicable to the students they served or to their specialized role within the school. Responses ranged from “I teach a functional academic classroom” to “There are a predetermined set of teachers who take care of all GEAR UP activities.”

**Satisfaction.** We next asked respondents about the extent to which they agreed with two statements about the services provided through GEAR UP: (1) *I think GEAR UP is making a*



positive impact on students in my school, and (2) GEAR UP activities are likely to be sustained after the grant ends. Respondents had five response options for these items (i.e., 0 = not applicable, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree).

We found respondents in all three years mostly positive about GEAR UP services. Figure 19 shows that very few disagreed or strongly disagreed that GEAR UP was making a positive impact in Year 1 (4%) and even fewer reported this perception in Years 2 and 3 (2% and 1%, respectively). In fact, the vast majority of respondents in all years agreed or strongly agreed that GEAR UP was making a positive impact on students at their school. We found the distribution of ratings was significantly different<sup>26</sup> across years, however, primarily because the percentage of respondents who selected the *not applicable* option decreased considerably over time. The effect size for the decrease in the proportion who selected this option was strong when comparing Year 3 to Year 1 ( $d = .99$ ), but small when comparing Year 3 to Year 2 ( $d = .36$ ).



**FIGURE 19. PERCEPTIONS AMONG SCHOOL PERSONNEL THAT GEAR UP IS MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON STUDENTS IN THEIR SCHOOL BY YEAR**

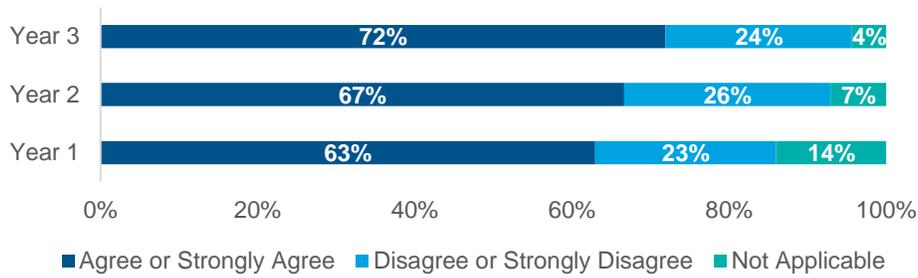
**Special Note:** We replicated this analysis using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding respondents from the five schools new to the GEAR UP program in Year 3. The pattern of results was nearly identical.

When responding to the item, *GEAR UP activities are likely to be sustained after the grant ends*, we found respondents were again less likely in Year 3 than in Years 1 and 2 to choose the *not applicable* response option (i.e., 4% in Year 3 versus 7% in Year 1 and 14% in Year 2).<sup>27</sup> Again, the effect size for the difference in the proportion of respondents selecting *not applicable* was generally small when comparing Year 3 to Year 2 ( $d = .28$ ), but moderate, approaching strong, when comparing Year 3 to Year 1 ( $d = .70$ ).

Additionally, Year 3 respondents were more likely to agree or strongly agree than those in Years 2 and 1 that GEAR UP activities would be sustained after the grant ends (i.e., 72% in Year 3 vs. 67% in Year 2 and 63% in Year 1). The effect size for this difference was small when comparing Year 3 to Year 2 ( $d = .14$ ) and Year 3 to Year 1 ( $d = .23$ ). See Figure 20 for details.

<sup>26</sup>  $\chi^2(4) = 66.58, p < .001$

<sup>27</sup>  $\chi^2(4) = 43.71, p < .001$



**FIGURE 20. PERCEPTIONS AMONG SCHOOL PERSONNEL THAT GEAR UP SERVICES WILL BE SUSTAINED AFTER THE GRANT ENDS BY YEAR**

**Special Note:** We replicated this analysis using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding respondents from the five schools new to the GEAR UP program in Year 3. The pattern of results was the same as depicted above.

**Perceptions of program effectiveness.** In Year 2 and Year 3, we asked school personnel to (a) indicate whether or not they participated in 11 GEAR UP-sponsored activities, and (b) rate the effectiveness of these activities in helping students to succeed in school and prepare for college. Six response options were provided for each activity (i.e., 1 = *not offered/does not apply*, 2 = *did not attend*, 3 = *not at all effective*, 4 = *slightly effective*, 5 = *moderately effective*, 6 = *extremely effective*). Table 14 shows the percentage of personnel in Years 2 and 3 who reported either that an activity was not offered or that they did not attend.

Notably, fewer than half of all respondents, and usually no more than one-third, indicated that any activities were not offered/did not apply or that they did not attend. However, Year 3 personnel were more likely to respond in this manner than Year 2 personnel. Notably, we found a 16 point increase from Year 2 to Year 3 in the percentage of personnel who either did not participate in college visits or responded *did not apply*. We also saw large increases in this percentage for summer activities (+8%), tutoring (+8%), and career exploration activities (+7%). Also evident in Table 14, personnel in both years were least likely to report having participated in summer activities and teacher professional development.

**Table 14. Percentage of School Personnel Responding *Not Offered* or *Did Not Attend* by Activity and Year**

Activity	Year 2		Year 3		Difference (Y3-Y2)
	N	Not Offered or Did Not Attend	N	Not Offered or Did Not Attend	
a. Tutoring	789	26%	546	33%	+8%
b. Opportunities to participate in college visits	789	16%	545	32%	+16%
c. Summer activities	783	41%	544	49%	+8%
d. College Application and Exploration Week*	787	28%	544	29%	+1%
e. Provide information about CERs*	781	24%	539	28%	+4%
f. Career exploration activities	787	18%	545	25%	+7%
g. Test preparation	785	29%	542	29%	--
h. Assistance with the college entrance process	786	33%	540	32%	-1%
i. Assistance with FAFSA	785	33%	541	33%	--
j. Teacher professional development*	782	36%	543	41%	+5%
k. Mentoring opportunities*	784	30%	540	36%	+6%

Source: Year 2 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

In Table 15 we show the average effectiveness ratings by year for each activity. We include only those respondents who chose an answer other than *it was not offered/does not apply* or *did not attend*. We found that Year 3 respondents reported greater perceptions of effectiveness than Year 2 respondents for all activities except tutoring. The differences were statistically significant<sup>28</sup> but effect sizes were small for College Application and Exploration Week ( $d = .15$ ), providing information about CERs ( $d = .16$ ), and mentoring opportunities ( $d = .16$ ).

<sup>28</sup> College Application and Exploration Week  $t(951) = 2.10, p < .05$ ; provide information about CERs  $t(977) = 2.41, p < .05$ ; mentoring opportunities  $t(895) = 2.28, p < .05$

**Table 15. School Personnel Ratings of the Effectiveness of GEAR UP Resources, Information, and Tools by Year**

Resource, Information, or Tool	Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. Tutoring	587	5.15	.77	365	5.15	.79
b. Opportunities to participate in college visits	665	5.43	.66	373	5.44	.69
c. Summer activities	463	4.95	.85	276	5.05	.77
d. College Application and Exploration Week*	566	5.24	.77	387	5.34	.73
e. Provide information about CERs*	591	5.23	.77	388	5.35	.69
f. Career exploration activities	649	5.23	.73	410	5.27	.73
g. Test preparation	554	5.22	.78	383	5.29	.74
h. Assistance with the college entrance process	530	5.27	.75	370	5.35	.70
i. Assistance with FAFSA	527	5.41	.74	362	5.43	.74
j. Teacher professional development	498	5.02	.81	318	5.12	.74
k. Mentoring opportunities*	550	5.13	.77	347	5.25	.73

Source: Year 2 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

**Special Note:** We replicated this analysis using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding respondents from the five schools new to the GEAR UP program in Year 3. We found nearly identical results to those described above. However, Year 2 to Year 3 differences in the average effectiveness ratings for the activity of teacher professional development became statistically significant.<sup>29</sup> As with other topics, the effect size was small ( $d = .19$ ).

### 3.2.2 College-Going Culture in my School

We asked all respondents—teachers, administrators, and counselors—to rate their schools on 19 items measuring two components of CGC: (1) expectations/rigor and (2) visual cues/material resources. Each item used a four-point Likert-type response format (i.e., 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, 4 = *strongly agree*). Two notable changes occurred across the years with respect to these scales. First, the evaluation team removed one item from the CGC scales between Year 2 and Year 3.<sup>30</sup> We confirmed that this change had no major bearing on the strength of the factor loadings for each component. However, this necessitated recalculating CGC scores for Year 1 and Year 2 to ensure comparability with Year 3 results. The second change is that the

<sup>29</sup>  $t(830) = 2.45, p < .05$

<sup>30</sup> Item removed: *All students have the potential to succeed in college or other professional postsecondary training.*

evaluation team added an item to the scale in Year 3.<sup>31</sup> To ensure comparability, this item was not factored in when deriving overall CGC scores. However, descriptive data for this item appear in Table 16.

**Expectations/rigor.** Table 16 shows each of the 10 items assigned to the rigor/expectations component of CGC, and the descriptive statistics for the entire sample of school personnel each year. We conducted ANOVA to determine whether ratings for the nine items included in all three years varied by year. When ANOVA returned statistically significant results, we conducted post-hoc tests to determine which year-to-year comparisons were significant. Effect size estimates were calculated for significant differences.

We found there were no significant differences in the average respondent ratings for any of the nine expectations/rigor items from Year 2 to Year 3. However, for seven of the nine items, there were significant differences between Year 3 ratings and ratings from Year 1 and Year 2 ( $p < .001$  for all comparisons).

Personnel reported the greatest Year 1 to Year 3 differences in their perceptions that *students care about learning and getting a good education* and that *creativity and original thinking are highly valued* in their school. The effect sizes for both items were small, but substantively important ( $d = .38$  and  $d = .36$ ). We also saw a substantively important difference regarding the extent to which teachers *regularly talk with students about the importance of college* ( $d = .32$ ), and *students are encouraged to set future college and career goals* ( $d = .31$ ).

**Table 16. Average School-Level CGC Ratings by Item and Year: Expectations/Rigor Component**

Item	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. Creativity and original thinking are highly valued.***	797	3.17	.61	804	3.40	.61	561	3.39	.60
b. All students have the ability to succeed academically.***	791	3.22	.67	802	3.37	.65	562	3.38	.62
c. Students are encouraged to do their best.***	798	3.42	.56	802	3.57	.58	562	3.51	.59
d. Teachers regularly talk to students about the importance of college.***	795	3.22	.57	801	3.41	.59	559	3.40	.61
e. Students care about learning and getting a good education.***	794	2.74	.68	805	3.00	.68	561	2.99	.70
f. Students are encouraged to set future college and career goals.***	790	3.25	.54	800	3.42	.57	559	3.43	.58
g. Students are learning effective problem-solving skills.***	797	3.00	.54	805	3.17	.62	561	3.17	.66

<sup>31</sup> Item added: *Advanced (i.e. honors, pre-AP) courses are appropriately rigorous.*

h. Teachers are able to engage students in a rigorous curriculum.	795	3.12	.61	799	3.18	.64	561	3.16	.67
i. The curriculum appropriately challenges most students.	799	3.17	.58	797	3.20	.63	557	3.25	.60
j. Advanced (i.e., honors, pre-AP) courses are appropriately rigorous. <sup>32</sup>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	559	3.39	.63

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

**Visual cues/material resources.** Table 17 shows average school personnel perceptions of the visual cues/material resources component of CGC in their schools. We again used ANOVAs to check for items with statistically significant changes over time. We found statistically significant differences in average scale ratings for all but one item (i.e., *Teachers engage in ongoing professional development about ways to promote college readiness*).

Post-hoc analyses revealed that in nearly all cases, Year 3 average ratings differed significantly and positively from Year 1 ratings. We found particularly noteworthy differences with respect to five items: (1) *College pennants, banners, and posters are visible* ( $d = .75$ ), (2) *Teachers are provided information about the school's college-going rate and FAFSA completion rates* ( $d = .65$ ), (3) *Parents are included in the college preparation process* ( $d = .62$ ), (4) *Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions* ( $d = .58$ ), and (5) *Teachers include visual cues to encourage discussions about their college experience* ( $d = .55$ ). All these effect sizes were medium. For two remaining items, effects were small, but approached the threshold for a medium effect: (1) *School staff are provided with professional development on the topics of college readiness and success* ( $d = .42$ ), and (2) *College messaging is integrated into events, including sports events or arts performances* ( $d = .47$ ).

In most cases, Year 2 and Year 3 average ratings did not differ significantly from one another. However, there were four exceptions: (1) *Parents are included in the college preparation process*, (2) *Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions*, (3) *Teachers are provided information about the school's college-going rate and FAFSA completion rates*, and (4) *Teachers are equipped with the knowledge to assist students in the transition from high school to college*. For all four items the effects were positive, but small ( $d < .22$ ).

<sup>32</sup> Item added to the scale in Year 3, and not included in comparison analysis.

**Table 17. Average School-Level CGC Ratings by Item and Year: Visual Cues/Material Resources Component**

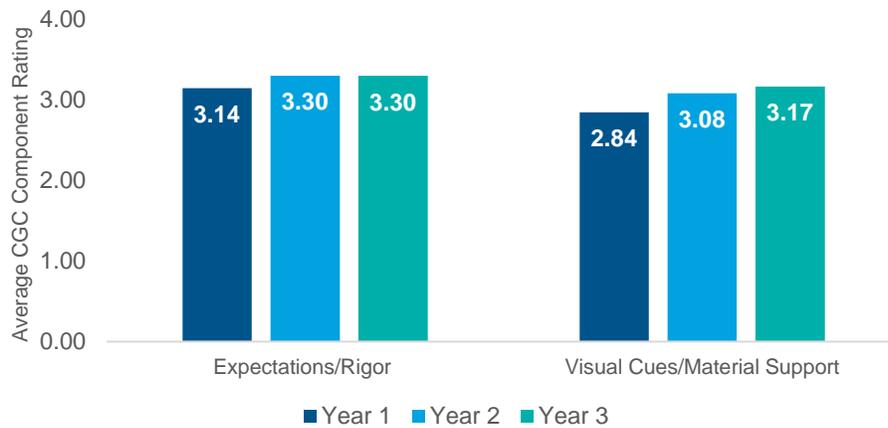
Item	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. College pennants, banners, and posters are visible.***	797	2.84	.83	804	3.31	.72	561	3.39	.61
b. Parents are included in the college preparation process.***	789	2.97	.67	800	3.27	.64	560	3.36	.58
c. School staff are provided with professional development on the topics of college readiness and success.***	794	2.67	.72	796	2.92	.76	560	2.98	.73
d. Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions.***	790	3.06	.61	797	3.27	.65	558	3.39	.55
e. Teachers include visual cues to encourage discussions about their college experience.***	791	2.82	.70	803	3.17	.69	561	3.19	.63
f. Teachers are provided information about the school's college-going rate and FAFSA completion rates.***	787	2.68	.80	797	3.01	.80	560	3.17	.69
g. College messaging is integrated into events, including sports events or arts performances.***	790	2.66	.70	798	2.89	.76	555	2.99	.72
h. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development about ways to promote college readiness.	789	2.87	.71	795	2.89	.78	558	2.91	.76
i. Teachers are equipped with the knowledge to assist students in the transition from high school to college.*	792	3.05	.67	795	3.02	.73	556	3.13	.65

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

Using ANOVA and post-hoc tests, we also compared the average overall scores on the CGC scales for both the Expectations/Rigor and Visual Cues/Material Resources components across time (see Figure 21). We found average Year 3 scores on the Expectations/Rigor component did not differ from Year 2 scores, but the difference from Year 1 to Year 3 was statistically significant, with a small, but substantively important effect size ( $d = .36$ ).

The average Visual Cues/Material Resources score for Year 3 was higher than in both Year 1 and Year 2. In fact, this difference was statistically significant in both cases. The effect size for the difference between Year 1 and Year 3 ratings was medium ( $d = .62$ ) and the difference between Year 2 and Year 3 was small ( $d = .14$ ).



**FIGURE 21. SCHOOL-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS/RIGOR AND VISUAL CUES/MATERIAL SUPPORT CGC COMPONENT RATINGS BY YEAR**

**Special Note:** We conducted ANOVA to determine whether school personnel outcomes differed when removing new schools. We found similar findings for both scales, but the following differences emerged:

For the Expectations/Rigor component, the item *The curriculum appropriately challenges most students*, the overall ANOVA became statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). However, only the difference between Year 1 and Year 3 average ratings was statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ). Year 3 ratings were higher than Year 1 ratings, but the effect size was trivial ( $d = .07$ ).

For the Visual Cues/Material Resources component, there was a statistically significant difference in Year 2 and Year 3 average ratings for the item *College pennants, banners, and posters are visible* ( $p < .05$ ). Year 3 ratings were higher, but the effect size was small ( $d = .15$ ).

**Most important aspect of building a CGC.** Respondents were next asked to provide a brief description of what they believed to be the most important aspect of building a CGC in their school. In Year 3, 394 of 563 respondents commented. Table 18 shows the categorization of their responses by theme, sub-theme, if applicable, and count. Student activities ( $N = 81$ ) were commonly reported as the most important aspect, followed by understanding the importance and benefits of college ( $N = 79$ ). College and career preparation ( $N = 74$ ) was the next most frequently identified theme, followed by academic expectations and support ( $N = 49$ ), family/community ( $N = 53$ ), teacher support and resources ( $N = 36$ ), communication/talking with students ( $N = 34$ ), and student motivation ( $N = 9$ ).

**Table 18. Thematic Analysis of School Personnel Perceptions about the Most Important Aspect of Building a CGC**

Theme	Sub-Theme	Count of Responses
a. Academic expectations and support	Rigorous curriculum	17
	Setting high expectations	32
	Total	49
b. Career/college preparation	Providing information to students	14
	Career exploration opportunities	20
	Developing life skills	3
	General preparation	13
	Increasing awareness/exposure	24
	Total	74
c. Student activities	Financial aid support	17
	After-school events	17
	College visits	23
	General college/career exposure	24
	Total	81
d. Family/community	Parent/community involvement	14
	Parental college knowledge or support	39
	Total	53
e. Importance and benefits of college	Total	79
f. Teacher support and/or resources	Total	36
g. Communication/talking with students	Total	34
h. Student motivation	Total	9

Source: Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Survey

Eighty-one respondents made comments that we coded under the theme **student activities**. In most cases, respondents indicated a need to expose students to the many college or career opportunities available in and outside of their community. Similar to Year 2, some Year 3 respondents mentioned the importance of two-year or vocational school options, or the need to fill jobs within the community that would not necessarily require a traditional four-year college degree. One respondent commented:

*While not every student will plan to attend college, I believe the opportunity to see options beyond high school should be prevalent throughout the school. Not only should four-year colleges be the focus, but two-year schools, trade schools, apprenticeship programs, etc. should be highlighted and valued as positive career and educational goals.*



When describing after-school or other events, respondents spoke about the need for student activities to include opportunities to hear from their peers regarding college (N = 17). One respondent explained that students should hear that it is realistic to plan to attend college. Another respondent reported this type of activity, stating “previous students return and relay their college experiences with students and advise them.” Others mentioned college visits (N = 23) and financial aid events (N = 17).

In several cases, respondents spoke about **understanding the benefits and importance of college** as an important aspect to building a CGC (N = 79). One respondent explained that “Stressing the importance of how much better a college graduate's income is compared to a non-graduate” was the most important aspect of building a CGC.

Fifty-three comments spoke about **family and community** support and/or resources. As in Year 2, Year 3 comments focused on the need for parents to participate more in college decision-making processes, as well as the need to inform both parents and students about the career opportunities that come with earning a college education. These sentiments were reflected in comments like:

*Students and the families from which they come vary tremendously. If we are to build a culture that values higher education, we must get families on board or the message they receive at home will generally drown out the message from school.*

Of the 49 respondents who provided comments related to **academic expectations and support**, a majority noted that students should be met with high expectations at school and in the classroom and be involved in rigorous curriculum throughout high school. For example, one respondent stated, “High academic standards are the most important aspect to building a college-going culture.”

Thirty-six respondents commented on the need for **teacher support and resources**. Many of these respondents specifically mentioned the importance of teachers buying in to their role in creating a CGC by participating in activities, providing information, and promoting the value of a postsecondary education. One respondent commented, “We need more involvement by all the faculty, not just a few. We need to get all grades involved, not just junior and senior grades.” Another respondent explained, “Every staff member is dedicated to facilitating knowledge and belief in the empowerment of education and postsecondary education.”

We coded 34 comments under **communication or talk with students about college**. Respondents reported the importance of informing students directly about college opportunities and ensuring they understand what is needed to attend. According to one respondent:

*The most important aspect to building a college-going culture at our school is periodic meetings with juniors and seniors to explain the process and the benefits of attending college. These meetings and instructional moments cannot be left up to the guidance counselor alone.*

According to another respondent, “Having an open and honest discussion about what college can offer them; also, showing them that there is help for everyone.”

Lastly, eleven respondents noted that the most important aspect of building a CGC is **student motivation**. One observed, “The most important aspect to promoting a college-going culture is



trying to motivate the students to begin setting goals and making plans for college and careers while they are still high school students.”

Additionally, the Year 3 survey included an open-ended item asking respondents to describe what they perceived their role to be in building a CGC at school. Over half of all survey respondents (379 of 563) answered the question. Responses were coded into one or more of seven themes: (1) provide information (N = 81), (2) provide academic support (N = 50), (3) mentoring (N = 22), (4) application and/or requirements support (N = 30), (5) encourage/set high expectations (N = 126), (6) be a resource (N = 24), and (7) talk to students (N = 63). Examples of comments within these themes are presented in Table 19.

**Table 19. Sample Personnel Responses Regarding Their Role(s) in Building a CGC in Their School**

Theme	Sample Comment
a. Provide information	I can tell students how to get the information they need.
b. Academic support	I teach two of the dual/early enrollment classes and really focus on college preparation in my others, including AP.
c. Mentoring	[Be a] mentor or someone that provides expert advice on postsecondary education.
d. Application and/or requirements support	My role in the building is helping students with FAFSA, scholarships, college acceptance, and ACT/SAT.
e. Encourage and/or set expectations	Encourage students to apply and teach them the importance of a college education.
f. Be a resource	I need to be there for each and every student to help them transition after high school.
g. Talk to students	[My role is] talking with the students and leaving a...line of communication open between myself and them.

Source: Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Survey

### 3.2.3 College-Going Culture in my Classroom

Respondents who indicated that their primary role was “teacher” were also asked to rate the CGC of their individual classroom. This section provides an overview of the findings for this subset of survey respondents.

**Expectations/rigor.** Table 20 shows each of the items assigned to the expectations/rigor subscale, and the descriptive statistics for the entire sample of school personnel by year. ANOVA and post-hoc tests revealed average ratings for Year 1 were significantly higher than ratings for Year 2 for every scale item. Year 3 ratings were significantly higher for all but one item: *I am able to engage my students in a rigorous curriculum*. Effect sizes for the difference in Year 3 and Year 1 ratings ranged from small (e.g., *Creativity and original thinking are highly valued*,  $d = .31$ ) to moderate, approaching strong (e.g., *All students have the ability to succeed academically*,  $d = .74$ ).

Additionally, teachers reported significant differences in their perceptions of classroom-level CGC from Year 2 to Year 3 for one scale item, *All students have the ability to succeed academically*. Year 3 ratings were greater than Year 2. The effect size for this difference was small, but substantively important ( $d = .37$ ).

**Table 20. Average Classroom-Level CGC Ratings by Item and Year: Expectations/Rigor Component**

Resource	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. Creativity and original thinking are highly valued.***	697	3.41	.58	693	3.60	.53	492	3.59	.54
b. All students have the ability to succeed academically.***	700	3.19	.65	694	3.41	.65	493	3.63	.52
c. Students are encouraged to do their best.***	706	3.46	.56	688	3.68	.51	490	3.69	.48
kd. I regularly talk to students about the importance of college.***	706	3.28	.61	692	3.42	.61	491	3.49	.58
e. Students care about learning and getting a good education.***	703	2.83	.67	691	3.10	.68	490	3.13	.70
f. Students are encouraged to set future college and career goals.***	698	3.29	.55	688	3.45	.56	491	3.51	.55
g. Students are learning effective problem-solving skills.***	706	3.21	.54	690	3.35	.57	489	3.39	.59
h. I am able to engage students in a rigorous curriculum.**	703	3.26	.58	687	3.37	.60	488	3.33	.69
i. The curriculum appropriately challenges most students.***	707	3.24	.56	689	3.40	.59	489	3.43	.60
j. Advanced (i.e. honors, pre-AP) courses are appropriately rigorous.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	559	3.39	.63

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) from year 2 to year 3

**Visual cues/material resources.** Table 21 shows teacher perceptions of classroom-level CGC related to visual cues/material resources by year. ANOVA illustrated that differences were statistically significant for all items, with one exception: *I engage in ongoing professional development about ways to promote college readiness*.

We saw the largest positive changes from Year 1 to Year 3 in two areas: (1) *I am provided information about the school's college-going rate and FAFSA completion rates* ( $d = .56$ ), and (2) *Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions* ( $d = .51$ ).

We found Year 3 respondents were far more likely than Year 2 respondents to report, *I am provided with professional development on the topics of college readiness and success*. The effect size for the difference in ratings was medium ( $d = .62$ ). Year 3 respondents also provided significantly higher ratings for five additional items: (1) *Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions* ( $d = .37$ ), (2) *I include visual cues to encourage discussions about my college experience* ( $d = .14$ ), (3) *I am provided information about the school's college-going and FAFSA completion rates* ( $d = .18$ ), (4) *College messaging is integrated into events, including sports events or arts performances* ( $d = .14$ ), and (5) *I am equipped with the knowledge to assist students in the transition from high school to college* ( $d = .17$ ).

**Table 21. Average Classroom-Level CGC Ratings by Item and Year: Visual Cues/Material Resources Component**

Resource	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. College pennants, banners, and posters are visible.***	705	2.70	.81	689	3.09	.78	490	3.13	.77
b. Parents are included in the college preparation process.***	691	2.81	.67	683	3.05	.71	490	3.13	.69
c. School staff are provided with professional development on the topics of college readiness and success.***	701	2.67	.74	528	2.54	.59	488	2.97	.78
d. Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions.***	699	3.01	.62	618	3.08	.67	488	3.32	.60
e. I include visual cues to encourage discussions about my college experience.***	705	2.80	.75	687	3.07	.75	489	3.17	.69
f. I am provided information about the school's college-going and FAFSA completion rates.***	705	2.64	.80	685	2.94	.82	489	3.08	.75
g. College messaging is integrated into events, including sports events or arts performances.***	699	2.67	.72	683	2.88	.80	489	3.00	.75
h. I engage in ongoing professional development about ways to promote college readiness.	701	2.87	.71	685	2.90	.80	491	2.98	.77
i. I am equipped with the knowledge to assist students in the transition from high school to college.**	702	3.11	.70	681	3.12	.74	489	3.24	.63

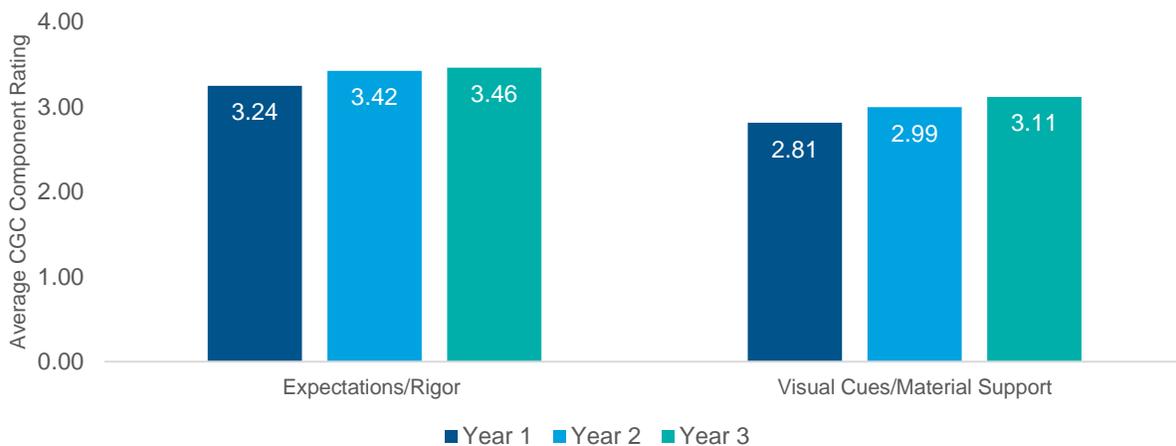
Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) from Year 2 to Year 3

Using ANOVAs and post-hoc tests, we also compared average overall scores on the CGC scales for both the Expectations/Rigor and Visual Cues/Material Resources components across time. (See Figure 22.)

The overall difference in average expectations/rigor ratings was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). Post-hoc analyses showed that, despite a small positive increase in mean ratings, the Year 3 and Year 2 average expectation/rigor ratings did not differ significantly from one another. However, Year 3 and Year 2 ratings did significantly differ from Year 1 ratings. Notably, the effect size for both differences approached the threshold for a medium effect ( $d = .49$ ).

When examining the visual cues/material resources component of CGC, we again found the overall difference in CGC ratings across years was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). Post-hoc analyses showed that the Year 3 and Year 2 ratings were significantly different from Year 1. However, this time the Year 3 average rating was also significantly higher than in Year 2; the effect size for the latter difference was small ( $d = .20$ ) compared to a medium effect for the former ( $d = .55$ ).



**FIGURE 22. CLASSROOM-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS/RIGOR AND VISUAL CUES/MATERIAL SUPPORT CGC COMPONENT RATINGS BY YEAR**

**Special Note:** We replicated this analysis using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding respondents from the five schools new to the GEAR UP program in Year 3. We found nearly identical results to those described above for all schools.

### 3.2.4 Knowledge of PSE Topics and Involvement in College-Related Activities

Two items on the school personnel survey asked respondents to rate their level of comfort with their knowledge to assist students with five college-related topics and to rate their own

involvement in several college-related activities at their school.<sup>33</sup> Respondents had four response options for comfort/knowledge items (i.e., 1 = *not at all comfortable*, 2 = *slightly comfortable*, 3 = *moderately comfortable*, 4 = *extremely comfortable*). Five response options were included for involvement items (i.e., 1 = *never*, 2 = *seldom*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *often*, 5 = *always*). An alternative option, *rather not say* or *not applicable*, was included on each scale, but these options were not used to calculate average ratings.

**Comfort/knowledge.** A series of ANOVA showed that the average comfort/knowledge level reported by survey respondents differed significantly across years and for all 10 topics included on the survey ( $p < .001$ ). Subsequent post-hoc analyses revealed that Year 3 respondents were significantly more comfortable with their knowledge to assist students with all 10 topics than Year 2 and Year 1 respondents (see Table 22).

When examining comparisons between Year 1 and Year 3, we found that Year 3 school personnel reported higher comfort with their knowledge to assist students than Year 1 personnel for all 10 topics. The average effect size change for the 10 topics from Year 1 to Year 3 approached the threshold for a medium effect ( $d = .40$ ). We found the largest Year 1 to Year 3 differences with respect to the following topics: (1) *college selection (match and fit)* ( $d = .47$ ), (2) *ACT/SAT* ( $d = .42$ ), (3) *high school graduation requirements* ( $d = .42$ ), (4) *college savings plan/529* ( $d = .43$ ), (5) *WV HEGP* ( $d = .40$ ), (6) *Federal grants, loans, and work-study* ( $d = .41$ ), and (7) *scholarships* ( $d = .43$ ) and *requirements for college acceptance* ( $d = .40$ ).

The average effect size for the difference between Year 3 and Year 2 comfort/knowledge ratings for all 10 topics was small ( $d = .21$ ). Year 3 ratings exceeded Year 2 ratings for all topics. The largest changes were found with respect to school personnel comfort with their knowledge to assist students with the following topics: (1) *high school graduation requirements* ( $d = .28$ ) and (2) *college selection (match and fit)* ( $d = .27$ ).

**Table 22. School Personnel Respondents' Comfort with their Knowledge to Assist Students with 10 PSE Topics by Year**

PSE Topic	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. FAFSA***	790	2.65	0.99	796	2.85	0.95	556	3.00	0.91
b. College savings plan/529***	785	1.97	0.94	787	2.24	0.98	553	2.39	1.01
c. ACT/SAT***	778	2.87	0.92	787	3.02	0.88	551	3.24	0.85
d. WV HEGP***	782	2.21	1.01	785	2.45	1.02	555	2.62	1.03
e. Federal grants, loans, and work-study***	781	2.48	0.98	789	2.70	0.97	554	2.87	0.95
f. College selection (match and fit)***	786	2.50	1.06	787	2.71	1.01	551	2.97	0.98

<sup>33</sup> Six topics were included on the Year 1 survey. The evaluation team revised and moved the item *I participate in GEAR UP activities* to a different section of the Year 2 survey.

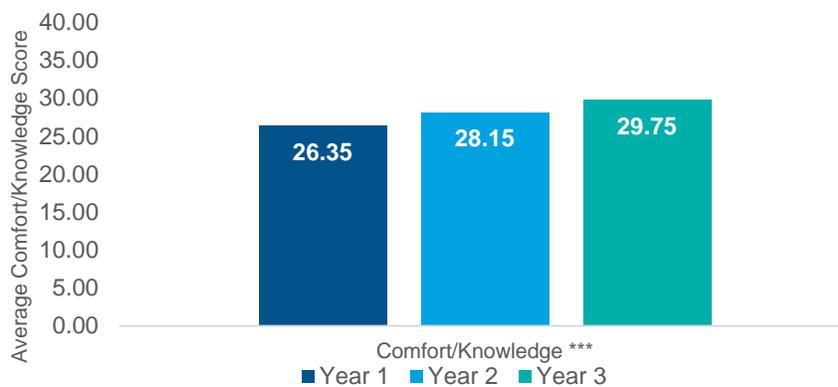
g. Scholarships (e.g., PROMISE or Institutional)***	787	2.58	0.97	785	2.79	0.95	548	2.99	0.92
h. Requirements for college acceptance***	782	2.86	0.93	783	3.02	0.90	549	3.21	0.83
i. Importance/benefit of college education***	767	3.55	0.72	780	3.60	0.66	520	3.71	0.58
j. High school graduation requirements***	777	3.15	0.87	784	3.27	0.82	529	3.48	0.69

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

As we did in Year 1 and Year 2, we calculated an overall comfort/knowledge score for each participant. This score was operationalized as the sum of participant self-ratings for each of the 10 items on the scale. The range for this variable was 0-40 points, and a score of 30 points would indicate *moderate* comfort with the 10 college-related topics. We calculated a one-way ANOVA on respondents' comfort/knowledge score, using year as the predictor. The overall results showed that comfort/knowledge levels differed significantly by year.

Personnel rated their comfort/knowledge higher in Year 3 than in Year 1 and Year 2. The effect size for the difference between Year 3 and Year 1 ratings was medium ( $d = .47$ ), while the effect for the difference in Year 3 and Year 2 ratings was small ( $d = .22$ ). See Figure 22.



**FIGURE 22. SCHOOL PERSONNEL RESPONDENTS' AVERAGE COMFORT WITH THEIR KNOWLEDGE TO ASSIST STUDENTS WITH PSE TOPICS BY YEAR**

**Special Note:** We replicated the above analyses using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding schools new to the program. The findings were nearly identical, with two exceptions. That is, Year 3 respondents from continuing schools were no more likely than Year 2 respondents to report being comfortable with their knowledge to assist students with the topics of (1) college savings plans/529, and (2) the importance/benefit of a college education.

**Involvement.** We next examined the extent to which respondents reported that they were involved in five college-related activities offered by their schools. ANOVA revealed that there were significant differences in involvement across years for all activities. (See Table 23.)

Specifically, involvement ratings were higher in Year 3 than in Year 1, and all differences were statistically significant. However, the average effect size was small ( $d = .23$ ). The largest difference was related to the extent to which personnel reported offering students *supplemental instructional support to prepare them for postsecondary options* ( $d = .31$ ).

We also found differences in Year 2 and Year 3 ratings for two items: (1) *I offer students supplemental instructional support to prepare them for postsecondary options*, and (2) *I talk with students about their plans for college or work after high school*. Year 3 ratings were higher than Year 2 ratings, but the effect sizes were small for both items ( $d = .23$  and  $.15$ , respectively).

**Table 23. School Personnel Involvement in Five College-Related Activities by Year**

Item	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. I participate in the college preparation activities of my school, e.g., chaperoning college visits.**	665	2.77	1.20	713	2.90	1.25	509	2.97	1.20
b. I have individual discussions with students about what they want to do with their futures.**	781	3.88	.86	789	3.93	.81	557	4.03	.74
c. I talk with students about their plans for college or work after high school.***	785	3.89	.85	789	3.97	.77	552	4.08	.73
d. I offer students supplemental instructional support to prepare them for postsecondary options.***	737	3.31	1.08	759	3.40	1.03	536	3.63	.96
e. I talk with parents about their ability to help prepare their students for postsecondary education.***	734	2.84	1.13	750	3.00	1.10	526	3.10	1.15
f. I offer or incorporate class time to support college preparation efforts at my school.†	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	523	3.43	1.08

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

†not included in average or sum comparison across years. Included only in Year 3

As we did in Year 1 and Year 2, we calculated an overall involvement score for each participant. This score was operationalized as the sum of participant self-ratings for the first five items on the scale. The range for this variable was 0-25 points, and a score of 15 points indicated being involved *sometimes*. Once again, we conducted ANOVA on school personnel respondents'

involvement scores using the year of response as the predictor variable. We found personnel reported significantly different involvement levels across years ( $p < .001$ ).

Year 3 respondents had higher involvement than Year 1 and Year 2 respondents. The differences were statistically significant for both comparisons. Effect sizes were small ( $d = .26$  for the difference between Year 1 and Year 3 ratings and  $d = .15$  for Year 2 and Year 3). Figure 23 shows the difference.



**FIGURE 23. SCHOOL PERSONNEL OVERALL MEAN INVOLVEMENT (ACROSS ITEMS) SCORE BY YEAR**

**Special Note:** We replicated the above analyses using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding schools new to the program. The findings were nearly identical with one exception. That is, Year 3 respondents from continuing schools were no more likely than Year 2 respondents to report that they talked with students about their plans for college or work after high school.

### 3.2.5 Perceptions Reported by School Personnel of Student College-Going Efficacy

In Year 2 and Year 3, we asked school personnel to respond to 10 items designed to measure their perceptions of student efficacy related to college-going (e.g., *the majority of students will be eligible to apply to a postsecondary institution*). (See Table 24.) Items were adapted from Gibbons (2005) and utilized a four-point Likert-type response scale (i.e., 1 = *not at all sure*, 2 = *somewhat sure*, 3 = *sure*, 4 = *very sure*). The option of *not applicable* was also offered, but not included in averaging item scores.

We used independent samples t-tests to test for statistically significant differences between Year 2 and Year 3 average ratings on each item. We found significant differences for two items: (1) *most students will be eligible to apply to a postsecondary institution*, and (2) *the majority of students can get good grades in high school math classes*. Average ratings were higher in year 3 than in Year 2 regarding the belief that *a majority of students will be eligible to apply to a postsecondary institution*, but were lower regarding the belief that *the majority of students could get good grades in their high school math classes*. Nevertheless, the effect sizes for both differences were small ( $d = .15$  and  $d = .13$ , respectively).

**Table 24. School Personnel Perceptions of their Students' College-Going Efficacy**

The majority of students...	Year 2			Year 3		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. Will not attend (college) but will seek a job or enter the military.	766	2.00	.81	538	2.06	.87
b. Will be eligible to apply to a postsecondary institution.*	772	2.55	.81	548	2.67	.83
c. Can make an educational plan that will prepare them for college.	769	2.49	.82	540	2.50	.82
d. Can get good grades in their high school science classes.	779	2.51	.76	547	2.48	.75
e. Can get good grades in their high school math classes.*	781	2.43	.79	545	2.33	.79
f. Can choose the high school classes needed to get into college.	781	2.64	.83	544	2.66	.84
g. Know enough about computers/technology to get into college.	783	2.88	.84	546	2.86	.86
h. Can go to college after high school.	784	2.58	.84	548	2.65	.84
i. Could get A's and B's in college.	780	2.29	.82	542	2.29	.81
j. Could finish college and receive a college degree.	774	2.43	.82	540	2.46	.83

Source: Year 2 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

**Special Note:** We replicated the above analyses using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding schools new to the program. The findings were nearly identical with one exception. That is, Year 3 respondents from continuing schools were no more likely than Year 2 respondents to report the majority of students can get good grades in their high school math classes.

### 3.2.6 Sustainability of GEAR UP Activities

In Year 3, we asked all school personnel to indicate the extent to which they believed their schools were likely to continue promoting 10 specific activities after the GEAR UP grant ends. Respondents used a four-point Likert-type scale (i.e., 1 = *not at all*, 2 = *slightly*, 3 = *moderately*, 4 = *extremely*). A fifth option, *not applicable*, was also offered, but not included in calculating mean ratings. (We included the same question on the Year 2 survey; however, only respondents in middle schools that would not be continuing on with the GEAR UP program were asked to answer.)

Table 25 shows the average ratings for both years. Not surprisingly, respondents in both groups reported their schools were most likely to sustain *academic support*, and the difference in mean ratings for this item was not statistically significant. We also found no significant differences with respect to the extent to which respondents thought the following activities would be sustained: (1) *family involvement*, (2) *mentoring*, (3) *community support*, and (4) *life skills development*.

However, Year 3 respondents were more likely than Year 2 respondents to report their schools would sustain five activities—effect sizes ranged from medium to strong: (1) *financial aid literacy* ( $d = .88$ ), (2) *partnerships with institutions of higher education* ( $d = .53$ ), (3) *college visits* ( $d = .41$ ),



(4) *access to college professionals* ( $d = .42$ ), and (5) *College Application and Exploration Week* ( $d = .61$ ).

**Table 25. Average Sustainability Ratings Reported By School Personnel by Year**

Resource	Year 2†			Year 3††		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
a. Family involvement	296	4.11	.78	543	4.14	.76
b. Mentoring	291	4.06	.81	544	4.13	.81
c. Academic support	295	4.37	.72	543	4.36	.73
d. Financial aid literacy***	241	3.52	.91	544	4.26	.75
e. Partnership with institutions of higher education***	264	3.75	.89	542	4.19	.78
f. Community support	291	3.99	.83	543	4.04	.82
g. College visits***	286	3.74	.91	545	4.11	.91
h. Access to college professionals***	274	3.64	.93	544	4.02	.88
i. Life skills development	291	4.02	.83	543	4.10	.80
j. College Application and Exploration Week***	233	3.66	.99	534	4.22	.82

Source: Year 2 and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

\*statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ); \*\*statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ); \*\*\*statistically significant ( $p < .001$ )

†includes only middle school respondents

††includes only high school respondents

**Special Note:** We replicated the above analyses using the sample of respondents from continuing schools to determine if the findings varied when excluding schools new to the program. No notable exceptions were found.

**Sustainability comments.** The survey also asked respondents to elaborate on their sustainability ratings (described above). Approximately one in four respondents added a comment ( $N = 150$ ). Most comments concerned how and why funding from GEAR UP was essential to sustaining the activities listed in Table 25. Most commented that the loss of GEAR UP funding would mean that only limited activities would be available. Fortunately, many respondents also indicated that they would try to sustain at least one activity, with some noting specific examples like college visits/field trips ( $N = 15$ ), financial aid workshops and awareness activities ( $N = 3$ ), academic support or tutoring ( $N = 6$ ), and a day or week focused on college application and exploration ( $N = 3$ ). Table 26 provides sample comments.

**Table 26. Comments Provided by School Personnel Regarding the Potential Sustainability of GEAR UP Services**

Theme	Sample Comment
a. Student activities	I believe that our staff feels that all of the above are important and will try to include them as much as possible.
b. College visits/field trips	We will not have the funding for as many college visits without our GEAR UP grant, but we will certainly do as many visits as possible.
c. Financial aid workshops and awareness activities	We will continue various activities that we can participate in at the school level (financial aid workshops, College Application Week, etc.); however, we will be unable to visit college campuses and job sites.
d. Academic support or tutoring	I believe that we will continue to guide students to explore college as an avenue that is available for them after graduation and provide academics and rigorous classes to help prepare our students for college.
e. College application and exploration	We have always supported college week. Teachers support students going to college.
f. Nothing will be maintained without funding.	The money that GEAR UP provides is extremely important for many activities to occur in our school....Without GEAR UP funds, many of our students will never have the opportunity to be exposed to college campuses, or help with FAFSA, or tutoring. GEAR UP has definitely been beneficial to our students!!

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys

### 3.2.7 Additional Comments

The final item on the school personnel survey asked respondents to provide any additional comments. We divided the responses into three overarching themes: (1) concerns, (2) impact, and (3) student motivation. Table 27 shows a selection of sample responses by theme and, where applicable, sub-theme.

**Table 27. Additional Comments**

Theme	Sub-Theme(s)	Sample Response(s)
a. Concerns (N = 37)	a.1. Student preparation	Many of our students are not adequately prepared for college in terms of the culture and requirements.
	a.2. Limited resources	Until the county adopts a plan that allows for schools to travel to campuses like the GEAR UP program does, it will not happen once the money is stopped.
	a.3. Community development	Historically, the culture we are dealing with in WV hasn't valued education to the extent of feeling any necessity to pursue postsecondary education. That's



a lot to overcome, but I think GEAR UP has potential for changing the culture and prevailing mindset of today's and future generations.

a.4. Affordability The affordability to attend college, even with some assistance, is beyond the reach of an "average" household in WV, per median income. Many students and families are discouraged before they can even begin as funding for higher ed continues to be cut, cut, cut, and wages remain so low. Vicious cycle of uneducated poverty.

a.5. Increase teacher preparation It is my goal next year to get more involved with the planning and sharing of GEAR UP to the students at my school. I feel it is crucial that I am prepared just as much as they are to utilize this resource.

a.6. Family background It is hard to change family history of no college and no jobs without doing something about the community job training of the parents.

b. Impact (N = 12)

b.1. Exposure Through the GEAR UP funding our students have been exposed to a variety of activities and services that have truly opened their eyes to possibilities after high school. I personally know of a number of students who are currently enrolled in a college/university, or are planning to attend in the fall, that are first-generation college students. That number continues to grow at my school. I do believe this is partially a direct result of the opportunities that have been provided by GEAR UP.

b.2. Student success Our graduation rate and college commitment is increasing yearly.

c. Student motivation (N = 11)

The ability of a student to excel is based upon their motivation to achieve at a high level. The activities provided by GEAR UP are focused and provide a high degree of motivation for students to attend postsecondary programs.

Apathy and lack of motivation in high school. Unrealistic ideas about college and their studies because they don't know how to study. Lack of communication skills.

Source: Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 WV GEAR UP School Personnel Surveys



## 4. County and Site Coordinator Interviews

The following section of this report provides an overview of results from group and individual interviews conducted with GEAR UP site and county coordinators in spring 2017. ICF conducted group interviews with site coordinators as part of a regularly scheduled site coordinator meeting in Charleston, WV. ICF conducted telephone interviews to obtain feedback from county coordinators. The evaluation team recorded and transcribed all focus groups and individual interviews with the consent of participants.

Next, ICF analyzed the transcripts to identify major themes, sub-themes, and interrelationships. We then coded transcripts by theme and sub-theme and chose illustrative quotations to present examples we thought would be useful to the Commission in interpreting the findings. Below we present a summary of results organized into 10 major sections. Eight fall under Implementation, including (1) communication; (2) roles and responsibilities; (3) school buy-in; (4) tutoring, mentoring, and academic preparation; (5) FAFSA workshops; (6) college awareness services; (7) GEAR UP partners; and (8) perceptions of GEAR UP activities. The other two major sections are impact, and outcomes and sustainability.

Site coordinators, in their capacity as the primary managers of GEAR UP activities, provided most of the background for this section of the report. As county coordinators juggled myriad responsibilities in addition to GEAR UP, they hesitated to comment on many activities. Most limited their responses to issues such as communication, their roles and responsibilities, and activities that they believed worked well or needed improvement.

### 4.1 Implementation

#### 4.1.1 Communication

Site coordinators expressed strongly positive views about WV GEAR UP regional program directors (PDs), saying that they fielded programming and financial questions with fast and accurate responses. Site coordinators also praised the Commission's commitment to the program.

*With me starting late and missing orientation, I would email [regional PD] and say, "What am I forgetting to do this month? Keep me on track. What am I supposed to be doing?" [My PD] would say, "Don't forget to do this." Which I was really wanting [PD] to do, because I didn't want to miss doing something just because I had forgotten.*

*Anytime I have a question, [my PD] answers me within minutes.*

*[My PD] picks up the phone, [and is] available at all times.... Just super.*

The only suggestion for the Commission involved mentors and mentor training. Some coordinators believed that the mentors needed more training.

*Our mentors needed more guidance because they had one day of training. We really should have attended that with them.*

Most county coordinators also offered positive comments about communication with the Commission:



*They're really, really good about communicating, making sure it gets to all the levels. And, surprisingly, as many levels that we have, at least from my perspective, I feel like it's really strong, because usually when stuff like that goes on, things fall through the cracks. But [Commission staff] will communicate with us, the people who work at [the Commission] will communicate with us...the school, the coordinators, and I think we all know what's going on.... They've got the communication part down pat.*

County coordinators also spoke very positively of their working relationship with the Commission and with regional PDs.

*They do an outstanding job, very smoothly, helping you go from point A to point B. I can't say anything except really good things about the higher ed commission. They're very, very supportive.*

*Any question I've ever asked, s/he's always got the answer to me quickly.*

Several county coordinators expressed interest in “a forum for county coordinators to exchange ideas,” or some way to work with other county coordinators “to find out what they're doing and to give me a better knowledge base.” Especially for new county coordinators:

*Maybe if we had some teleconferencing or something that was specific just to the county coordinator role, that could be more helpful, especially for people like me who are new to the network a little bit and see how they fit their responsibilities for GEAR UP...I'm sure everyone has many hats that they have to wear in this position, so how they kind of have to balance those things, and what kind of initiatives they're doing in their county that is successful, to kind of give us some initial ideas.*

While coordinators cited a strong working relationship with the Commission, however, the relationships between county coordinators and site coordinators at the local level drew some negative comments. Many site coordinators said that they had limited or poor working relationships with their county coordinators. Common concerns included lack of contact with and interest from the county coordinator.

*We have no communication with our county director.*

*I don't think that person [the county coordinator] offers any kind of support.*

*Our county coordinator changed . . . that was a horrible change.*

Most contact with county coordinators appeared to concern budget and fiscal issues, but some indicated that this interaction was not always helpful. One county coordinator suggested allocating money in a different way, and the site coordinator reported having responded that, “No, we can't,” because doing so would not meet GEAR UP rules.

Relatively few site coordinators commented positively about their county coordinator. One observed that this individual responded quickly and provided valuable help in budgeting: “Anytime you pick up the phone or email, s/he answers your questions. S/he's very knowledgeable.”

In their interviews, most county coordinators reported communicating at least once a week with site coordinators, although two indicated contact was closer to once a month.

*My interaction with the coordinators, with our coordinators, over the course of the years has been, usually, on a weekly basis. What are they getting ready to do next, we discuss what they want to do next, we talk about their budget piece. I talk with the treasurer about making sure invoices are being sent off to GEAR UP.*

*We have a couple of meetings a year that we are all together going over things, and then I see them when we're at the district or state meetings, but basically it's through email or phone calls. Probably monthly. It just depends on if they have a need.*

Email is the most common form of communication between county and site coordinators, although some report in-person meetings and telephone contact as well. These patterns appear to reflect the focus primarily on budget and finance that county coordinators report, with little programmatic engagement in GEAR UP activities.

#### **4.1.2 Roles and Responsibilities of County and Site Coordinators**

**Site coordinators.** The program engaged several new site coordinators in Year 3 as GEAR UP students moved to ninth grade, which for many involved moving from a dedicated middle school to a separate high school. Some of the new site coordinators said that the responsibilities of the job are daunting as they balance GEAR UP with their regular responsibilities.

*I walk around with a panicked look on my face—I'm just keeping up.*

*I think it's a wonderful program. But taking this on in the first year, I was so overwhelmed..*

Part of the challenge was their unfamiliarity with certain activities, such as organizing a college visit. Most coordinators, whether new or returning, emphasized the need to find and consult regularly with helpful contacts at individual colleges.

*I just called a college and said I have to do a college visit with students.... She walked me through the whole process and said, "Here's what we'll do, here's what you need to do when you get here." She made it very smooth.*

Most liked having the WV GEAR UP work plan as a resource to review GEAR UP activities and responsibilities.

*It keeps me on track. Like I don't know what I would do without it.*

The only suggestion for altering the work plan was to hold College Application Week earlier in the school year. One county already holds college fairs prior to application week, and two coordinators suggested scheduling this event in late September or early October instead of near Halloween.

Regarding lessons learned, two coordinators noted the importance of reaching out to different teachers to help during the school year, rather than constantly relying on the same one or two.

*For the senior survey I reached out to my civics teachers because all seniors are in civics. When I wanted them to fill out the survey for College Decision Day, I reached out to my English teachers because all seniors are in English. I try to spread it out a little bit so I'm not asking the same teachers.*

**County coordinators.** In addition to GEAR UP work, county coordinators interviewed for this report have various other duties: three are directors or coordinators of Federal programs and

others include a director of secondary education, counseling coordinator, coordinator of counseling and testing, superintendent, and coordinator of elementary curriculum. All except one considered that their roles were a good fit for the county coordinator assignment, noting their experience with secondary school issues, counseling, and experience managing multiple assignments and people. One individual commented that in a small county it was not unusual for people to wear many hats and build expertise across many areas.

*I taught [at earlier levels for many years] and so, this is not my good fit. It's been a good experience for me, it really has. I've learned a lot. But it's not my area of expertise, that's for sure.*

Looking at their GEAR UP work, most indicated that they focused primarily on budget and finance matters.

*It's just reconciling the budgets, mainly, what I do here. And figuring out what's allowable and what's not allowable.*

*It really doesn't involve a lot other than signing off some purchase orders and trip requests.*

Most also indicated that they dedicated a very limited amount of time to the role—two hours a month, one reported. None of the county coordinators reported having substantial roles in supporting actual programming for students or parents/guardians, although several mentioned attending events, as time permitted.

*My role is so small. I just try to keep my finger on the pulse. The site coordinators and volunteers, they're the ones that are doing it.*

Although the role emphasized finance, they noted an array of additional managerial and communication skills as important for county coordinators:

*I think they need to develop relationships and listen to people. I think they need to be somewhat innovative and willing to try different things to help students learn. I think they need to be willing to reach outside the parameters of our own little community and find other ways that students can connect. I think they really need to believe in student learning and in teaching.*

*You have to be definitely a team player. Kind of coordinate on the county level what they have decided to do at each individual school, so you have to get along well with people and be a team player, and have the attitude that it's an important program.*

Multi-tasking is essential to success.

*Efficiency is the most important piece. They need to understand budget, need to understand developing advisory groups. Need to understand why relationships are important to be able to get some unique things done.*

When asked about changes that might be helpful to the county coordinator's role, a couple of coordinators suggested a little more flexibility in budgeting. One suggested an "easier transition" for revising budgets, and another discussed the complexity of budgeting for both cohort and priority groups of students across individual schools.

*That means with three schools I have different budgets I have to work with, and if it was only three budgets, it would be much easier.*

*When you have quarterly meetings [with] business and members of the community and things like that, you've got to have good people skills. There's no doubt about that, and managerial skills—overseeing things and keeping a hand in and keeping an eye on the process and things that are going on.*

Seven of the eight coordinators expressed concern about their ability to set up and facilitate meetings of a local college access and success advisory board for their GEAR UP program. These concerns ranged from embarrassment that the board was not operating well to the view that the board was not successful because it is not a practical concept. One described it as “probably the weakest link.” Only one county coordinator cited the advisory board as a success. In that county, the local college access and success advisory board doubles as the superintendent’s advisory council.

Most expressed concern about difficulties in securing members, in arranging meetings, and in making the meetings productive. Three coordinators expressed a mix of not having time to establish the board and regret that they had not succeeded in doing so:

*I just don't have time to do it, and I feel so guilty that we're not meeting regularly, so that's just the hardest part of it...I know it should be done, that bothers me. And it makes me frown sometimes when I'm thinking about GEAR UP because I'm feeling like I'm not doing as good a job as I should, and that bothers me because that's just the kind of person I am.*

*The person at the central office said to have an advisory board, and due to my job changes that's something I have not done.... My schedule does not allow for me to meet this year. I met very little last year. The first year I met every single time, but we didn't really have a task to do. At the meetings we had a few things we could share with them.*

County coordinators also reflected on the difficulty of finding and engaging members in sparsely populated communities. They reported meeting anywhere from four times a year to not at all and a shifting membership of six to ten on the board.

*I would like to have more people. I would like to have more community support, but I don't know how to get that. I did [reach out to] the high school principals, they did not come, and I think, if I don't get the high school principals, then how am I going to get community?*

#### **4.1.3 School Buy-In**

Most site coordinators believed at least some progress occurred during 2016-17 in gaining school and teacher buy-in for GEAR UP. Examples included coordinators who cited more teacher interest and involvement in GEAR UP-sponsored tutoring and College Application and Exploration Week. At one school, math teachers served as tutors either before or after school. Another site reported strong teacher-tutor communication:

*Our teachers constantly communicate about what they're covering with our tutors—what they're covering now and what students need to do.*

Other site coordinators reported that teachers provided positive comments and reinforcement on field trips and did small things like regularly wearing college sweatshirts and t-shirts. Informal conversations between teachers and students about college have increased.

*They're also talking to their kids about college, just those small informal conversations that didn't really happen in our building until we started [with GEAR UP].*

One site brought in a motivational speaker specifically for teachers. The goal was not simply to excite students, but to consider "how teachers can get their students excited and use that as a motivational tool," one site coordinator said. Another coordinator had not considered teacher buy-in as a GEAR UP goal, but noted that more would be done in the future.

*I don't know that buy-in is quite there yet. I hadn't thought about it until we were sitting here...but I do this all myself, and I think there are people I could reach out to.*

#### **4.1.4 Tutoring, Mentoring, and Academic Preparation**

Site coordinators differed greatly in their perceptions about the effectiveness of GEAR UP-sponsored tutoring. In one focus group, many expressed satisfaction with their program and credited its success to constant availability and frequent marketing through public address announcements, letters to home, and publicity via websites. One site coordinator believed the program succeeded because teachers and tutors maintained regular contact.

*The kids have a good relationship with our tutors. We just constantly advertise it. We want parents to be aware of it, students to be aware of it, and teachers to be aware of it.*

Another site coordinator noted that the school's program pulls students out of class for tutoring during the regular school day because it's easier to find and work with students then.

*It's mostly freshmen, but we also have seniors that are teetering on the edge.... We try to get them to the graduation point. Not only is it important for their futures, but it reflects on us. All those things count.*

However, another site coordinator cited only mixed success, with few students taking advantage of math tutoring in particular, because students "are not as engaged" with that subject. Another site coordinator ensures that buses are available for those who stay after school, "but not many take advantage of it." Those who do sometimes stay for personal as well as academic benefits.

*Some would rather stay at school than at their homes...dysfunction awaits them when they get home.*

In one focus group, most site coordinators did not believe tutoring was working well. They said students do not want to stay after school and saw little evidence that access to tutoring helped students effectively transition to high school.

*We've done tutoring after school, and I think I'm going to revamp it next year. It's just not working.*

*I know our participation in our after-school program wasn't great when we had transportation. It's worse now that we don't have transportation.*

Most site coordinators also believed that, because of budget constraints, it was unlikely schools could sustain tutoring after the GEAR UP grant ends.



#### 4.1.5 FAFSA Workshops

Site coordinators said that they are working hard on getting priority students to complete the FAFSA, but that there are challenges. Some objected to a requirement that they provide four workshops on the topic, noting that attendance often flagged by the second or third session.

*I had 15 to 18 at the first one, then I had two or none, and I'm just sitting there for three hours.*

*I sit down with every single one at the first sessions, and then I sit there by myself for the other two.*

On this issue, site coordinators often differed with county coordinators. In their telephone interviews, many county coordinators believed FAFSA completion was one of the most successful activities in schools. Site coordinators had a mixed view, citing low attendance at workshops and the challenges in meeting the goal that 60% of seniors complete the form. Some noted that students would not show up for FAFSA appointments and that the goal was nearly impossible to meet.

*Make an appointment with me and I'll stay, but I'm not going to open up and nobody show up for it.*

*I need nine more FAFSAs completed to hit my 60% mark and I get the list that has all the kids who haven't completed it yet. I emailed [regional PD] and I said, "I can go down through this list and tell you this kid's a dropout, this kid's in alternative ed, not in the building, this kid's homebound, not in the building. I scheduled this kid an appointment but they didn't show up"...I haven't quit, but I'm at my wit's end, and I need you to understand what I'm doing here.*

Some site coordinators cited benefits from the FAFSA initiatives. One marketed the workshops to families of grade 9 cohort students as well as to priority students, with some success. Another coordinator reported receiving more phone calls about FAFSA.

*We have a lot of parent phone calls come to me now. It used to be to the [school] counselor, but now I'm more knowledgeable about it.*

For their part, county coordinators viewed FAFSA activities as among the most successful activities at GEAR UP schools. County coordinators reported more students and parents attending the meetings and adhering to deadlines. One commented on a "jovial" competition among the schools in their county to complete FAFSAs. They commented both on the practical implications—more students securing financial aid for postsecondary education—and its reflection of a shift to a CGC.

*I feel like GEAR UP has helped us focus our seniors and their families on filling out a FAFSA, why it's important. In our area we have a good deal of students who would qualify for higher education grants, and Pell grants and things that—if they didn't fill out the FAFSA, they wouldn't even know that they're eligible. So I think that's a huge positive.*

Another county coordinator noted being impressed by how many parents attended the FAFSA workshop, and their interest in signing up for individual meetings to continue the process.

*I was very impressed that almost all of the parents stayed and signed up for those personal appointments with the workers.*

#### **4.1.6 College Awareness Services (Cohort and Priority)**

Site coordinators expressed especially positive views of GEAR UP University, an event that brought cohort students to a four-day program at West Virginia State University in June 2016, to live on campus, attend college classes, and engage in networking and learning experiences linked to postsecondary preparation. They reported that students enjoyed the program, and parents were supportive as well.

*It built their [student] confidence, and we have them just ready to go again. Everyone that went last year reapplied to go, and then more kids that didn't go were inspired to apply.*

*When they [parents] walked in for GEAR UP U, I was surprised at their comfort level. They walked into the high school—many of them for the first time—and they were comfortable with the concept of giving their kids over to this group and sending them to camp.*

Site coordinators also offered positive views of college visits, the HEROs program, and College Application Week. Concerning college visits, coordinators said that they responded to student suggestions that these visits include more academic information as well as a general tour. New coordinators sometimes needed help to organize the visits.

Reflecting on the HEROs program, several site coordinators reported that students were now asking how they could become HEROs in the future as “they really want to be involved,” one said. Concerning College Application Week, coordinators saw the value of working with students during the day—such as during advisory periods—to finish applications. The goal is “getting as much work done while you have them during the day,” one said. “There are so many activities they [students] may do in the evenings,” such as caring for siblings.

Most site coordinators also cited increased student interest in pursuing some type of postsecondary experience. Some also praised GEAR UP for letting students know that college “doesn't necessarily mean four years of college,” with community college and technical schools other viable options.

*When you talk to students, they are more focused on college. I think they know that there's a way to get there. They don't know exactly how to get there yet, but they know that there's a way to get there.*

Two site coordinators also noted that careers are another hook to interest students in college.

*They're starting to realize that if they want to have a job, they're going to have to have some sort of postsecondary ed.*

However, site coordinators had mixed views of the mentor program. Some thought it was effective. One site coordinator started over after a disruptive student undermined support for the program. As noted above, some coordinators said they were unsure of the mentor roles and responsibilities, since they did not participate in mentor training.

Some schools have a GEAR UP site coordinator for cohort students and another to manage college awareness activities for priority senior students. Most coordinators said that this delineation of responsibilities worked well. However, they expressed mixed views about the

effectiveness of services to priority students. Several noted that services to seniors had become more streamlined this past year, with some positive effects. Said one:

*Take out the fluff, get to the point. I feel like that's how this whole grant has been for the priority.*

Even with these changes, however, some site coordinators noted concerns that priority students were already behind on the college process when first exposed to GEAR UP: "The [college] vocabulary doesn't really sink in with them," one coordinator noted. Another described services to cohort students as a much stronger component of the program.

*It's better this year, and it's better with the cohort students than it is with priority. The cohort, they know the GEAR UP lingo. They have heard the message enough times.*

#### **4.1.7 College and Community Partners**

Site coordinators generally offered positive reflections about their college partners. Several described their partners as welcoming, proactive, and helpful whether or not students planned to attend their institutions.

*Anyone that I've worked with, when I call and say I'm with GEAR UP.... They've just welcomed me with open arms.*

*Whenever a kid comes in, they're not even going to [that college], but they have a question, I go straight to her.*

One site coordinator reported that one of their partner colleges came to the high school often, to meet with students and set up a table during the lunch hour. Other colleges visited the school during College Application and Exploration Week to talk with the priority students. One school has also brought back alumni to talk with students, which teachers helped arrange: "A lot of our teachers have been very good about keeping in touch or have contact with recent alumni."

Another site coordinator noted that her program is working with their college partners to create more "academic" college visits. "We had the general tour, but kids want to know what class is going to be like. What's the admission criteria?"

One of the three focus groups, in contrast, offered several negative comments about their college partners: "I don't really feel like I have a partnership." Several mentioned that they found two-year institutions more responsive than the four-year.

Turning more broadly to other community partners, focus group participants reported that they had few partners to call on, and that it is difficult to find people who can give either time or money.

*There's so few. There's a handful, and they already partner with the schools.*

*They're reached out to so much.*

One noted that their section of the state was experiencing a lot of population outflow, with businesses closing down. Another coordinator acknowledged some diffidence about reaching out to community partners: "That's on me, not on them."

Most county coordinators agreed that business and community involvement was less than anticipated. For county coordinators, this was most evident in the local college access and

success advisory boards, as coordinators said they often had few businesses to call upon in small communities where the same people are always invited to meetings.

One exception came from a county coordinator who said the advisory board was key to attracting business support from the DuPont Company.

*DuPont is close to us and DuPont's interest to us—they came to us and...said, "We want to sit down and talk with educators about what our expectations are." We set that up through our advisory council...and our GEAR UP site coordinator went, our counselor, and they brought it back and had student representatives talking with the person from DuPont.*

#### **4.1.8 Perceptions of GEAR UP Activities**

**What is working well.** As noted earlier, most site coordinators believed that they had a strong relationship with regional PDs and with the Commission. One site coordinator started late and missed orientation and frequently asked for help from the regional PD, who responded quickly. Another agreed that even senior staff at the Commission may answer the phone and offer to help. They are "just super," this site coordinator said.

Many site and county coordinators also viewed field trips positively as these excursions took students to colleges and other places outside their immediate area. With many students coming from families with limited financial resources, these trips can leave a lasting impression, coordinators said.

*Honestly, a lot of our kids have never even left the county except to go on these field trips.*

*We have kids that have never even eaten in a restaurant or been to a hotel because their parents don't take them anywhere. Most of them don't even have cars.*

The visits offer opportunities not only to see colleges or technical schools in which they might be interested, but may have opened their eyes simply to the notion of broader possibilities. Said one county coordinator:

*They always enjoy the campus tours...those are very valuable, especially for students like ours in rural West Virginia who don't generally travel twenty miles from their home. To be able to do that is extremely valuable, and I think students are taking it more seriously.*

Some site coordinators also viewed guest speakers as a successful activity. One noted how a motivational speaker had helped build enthusiasm for GEAR UP among teachers, while another reported that speakers showed ninth grade cohort students the many different postsecondary options available.

*They weren't just [four-year] college graduates—some were from technical programs, too. That's important because you have a lot of students say, "I'm not smart enough to go to college" or "I can't go to college."*

In addition, site coordinators viewed the WV GEAR UP Career Academy and HEROs programs as two other successful activities. They said students enjoyed visiting various career booths and engaging in hands-on activities. Some students also talked with people to find out more about careers. One coordinator praised HEROs because it gave students leadership roles and

emphasized community service. “I've had people ask, what can I do to be a HERO next year? They really want to be involved.”

Most site coordinators believed that the combination of activities, from college visits to HEROs and other in-school GEAR UP events, helped develop greater school-wide interest in college.

*You've created a college-going culture now. You've got sophomores talking about where they think they're going to go, where that conversation never happened prior to GEAR UP. So even just the general conversation, the feel of the building, the feel of the students, it's that conversation that is happening now.*

Unlike site coordinators, who had a mixed view of the issue, as discussed previously, most county coordinators pointed to GEAR UP's emphasis on increasing understanding and completion of the FAFSA as one of the more successful activities.

In addition, both county and site coordinators believed that the support system provided by regional PDs was an effective element of GEAR UP.

**What needs improvement.** With multiple other responsibilities, many new site coordinators said they lacked enough time to conduct GEAR UP work. As one stated, “I think GEAR UP is a wonderful program, but taking it on for the first year, I felt so overwhelmed.” Another site coordinator agreed, even while acknowledging that managing GEAR UP has gotten easier. “The first year is overwhelming. It was like sink or swim.” Among other challenges, one particular issue was figuring out the logistics of managing college visits for 200 or more students.

Despite exceptions, most site coordinators did not believe that GEAR UP-supported tutoring was successful at their schools. One school had four open positions for tutors and never hired anyone. This site coordinator believed that one problem was the emphasis in the job listing on English and math rather than on student support. “We had one person apply in October, but they didn't hire her until the end of March, and by that time she said, ‘I'm not interested anymore.’ So we never got any tutoring and our kids wanted it.” Another site coordinator said students did not want to stay after school to attend tutoring, even with transportation available. “You can offer it, but you can't force them to do it.”

Site coordinators cited other challenges, such as setting up mentoring programs and getting students and parents to complete surveys. Most also acknowledged that parent participation at GEAR UP events was low.

*Typically, it's the same parents. The ones you really need to speak to, they won't return phone calls and they don't show up.*

One site coordinator believed that parent unemployment has had major ramifications for families, with greater poverty, family instability, and drug abuse. One site coordinator found some success by setting up tables at basketball games and other sporting events—although this may not attract parents of students who cannot afford the cost of attending these contests. Another site coordinator invited parents to College Decision Day and welcomed them on stage with their child to do their signing.

Most, however, found parent involvement low in their schools, although somewhat stronger among cohort students.

*I noticed that my 9th grade parents are a lot more involved than my senior parents. And I think that it probably stems from being in the GEAR UP program since 7th grade.*

As noted earlier in Section 4.1.2, Roles and Responsibilities, most county coordinators did not believe the local college access and success advisory boards were effective. Coordinators said they lacked the time to plan and organize meetings and had difficulty attracting partners and members to attend regularly. One coordinator noted that their first advisory board meeting was very productive, but with the project well underway, she was no longer sure what the purpose was:

*We came up with some good ideas with the first meeting that we had. The project was new to us. I had never dealt with GEAR UP. Our board gave us some great ideas. But everything is established in the schools. We know what we're supposed to do in September. It's very laid out, extremely well, by the Higher Education Commission. So I don't know what to tell the board at this point except that everything is going like it's supposed to, and I don't see the purpose of pulling people in for that. I would rather have a purpose. It doesn't have an advisory capacity.*

None of the county coordinators who offered negative or mixed reviews of the advisory board saw any ways that HEPC staff could help them make their boards more effective, but they did have alternative proposals:

- Bring news of GEAR UP to the local school board, which meets once or twice a month. It is important that the local board understand that GEAR UP is in the schools, conducting activities that are of benefit to the children in those schools. These meetings would offer a broader community audience to whom to disseminate information about GEAR UP, and often press representatives attend.
- Another county coordinator suggested that GEAR UP ask each school to establish an advisory board and bring those together once a year to constitute a county board.
- Reduce the number of advisory board meetings.

## 4.2 Impact and Outcomes

Looking across the year, most site coordinators believed that WV GEAR UP was having an impact on the attitudes and knowledge that students have about attending college. First, they simply know more because GEAR UP has provided students with a new, greatly increased, intensive level of information, and that has translated into more knowledge about college and understanding of the language and processes associated with it. Second, that knowledge has led to more students believing that college should and could be a realistic option for them to pursue.

*When you bring up college in the classroom, you don't hear, "Well, I can't go to college," "My family's poor," or whatever [that you'd hear in the past]. You don't hear the kids say that because they know there's options out there. I still hear that from my seniors who don't have these services.*

*Even the college lingo, they're understanding that better...hopefully by the time that they become seniors [they will] be able to make very good decisions for themselves about what the next step is after graduation. I think this group will be [referencing the cohort group], because they've been in it the longest. I think they'll have a much better outcome.*



Many site coordinators believe that they are seeing a culture change in their schools, and use that language to describe it: “This year it is literally a daily thing I’m talking about college to my students. I feel like it’s been a big culture change.” One coordinator reported that they are required to complete Personalized Education Plans with all ninth graders, and that, coupled with GEAR UP, has made them much more aware of their graduation requirements early in high school.

Part of the culture change is the impact of GEAR UP on teachers, too, and one spoke to the importance of encouraging this.

*One thing I’ve tried to do to involve other teachers is to invite them as chaperones on the college visits. Every single teacher that has come has their eyes opened about GEAR UP and what it offers just by seeing the kids’ experience and seeing what they get to see and the kinds of programs that are offered at colleges that a lot of times the teachers didn’t even know existed.*

Two county coordinators agreed that the program’s impact is evident through culture changes at the school. Parents/guardians and teachers are more interested in talking about college, and the county is emphasizing it, not just for GEAR UP students, but for non-GEAR UP students as well.

*The culture in the schools has changed because of GEAR UP. [College is] something that’s repeated daily. And the message is shared, not just with seniors or ninth graders, who are in the cohort group, but with the entire student population.*

*We are very excited about what GEAR UP does for our kids, and the kids will tell you that, too.*

Site and county coordinators both agreed that the program conveys the “college-is-possible” message for rural, low-income students as well as those “in the middle” who may not have considered college previously. Two county coordinators noted how this message resonates within school communities:

*It doesn’t matter who you are, you can go to postsecondary. And we’re helping you take the steps, and our kids are seeing that, and how important the ACT is, and how important it is to do better on it.*

*I think it provides opportunities for students to get involved and keeps them on schedule, realizing the importance and things, especially coming into their senior year.... It kind of opens up their eyes...and gets them excited like wow, I’d like to go here, you know.*

County coordinators noted that they want students to learn about a variety of institutions, not simply four-year institutions offering bachelor’s degrees. Technical schools and community colleges are other important options for many rural students.

*When we say we want you to have a postsecondary experience, we are saying an adult technical school, a two-year associate degree, or a three-year baccalaureate...we’re looking at the entire gamut, whether you’re going to get a certificate in a skill or you’re going to do an apprenticeship or you’re going to get a bachelor’s and head to grad school.... What we’re doing better is expanding our definition of postsecondary experience.*

With its consistent messaging plus support services, GEAR UP provides valuable help to at-risk students as well as those “in the middle” who may fall through the cracks otherwise. By reaching all students in a particular grade, the program has a powerful effect—something particularly evident in high school graduation rates. One county coordinator cited positive data supporting this view:

*The difference that it has made for us is probably seen best in both our graduation rate, which is above 93%, and in our college-going rate. We well exceed and already exceed our 60% of students with their FAFSAs completed. We exceed the state average on the amount of kids going to college, even though we're small. I think that it's a very successful program.*

Students' new knowledge is translating into a sense that their personal actions have consequences for the likelihood that they can attend college. Site coordinators observe:

*It just seems to make them more open and aware of the things being asked of them and the things they are going to have to do. They're more knowledgeable. And they've put more thought into what they want to do following high school.*

*One boy, he failed math.... He was like, "If I fail it again, I'm not going to get the credit. Then I might not get this class when I'm a junior." The wheels are turning.*

Site coordinators mentioned a couple of activities as especially powerful. Speaking of GEAR UP University, one stated, “It built their confidence, and we have them just ready to go again. Everyone that went last year reapplied to go, and then more kids that didn't go were inspired to apply.” Others pointed to the “HEROs” opportunity as something that students eagerly became involved in. Another site coordinator thought mentoring had helped, noting that at their school, teachers, career counselors, teacher aides, and a principal took part.

### 4.3 Sustainability

Several county and site coordinators expressed cautious optimism that their schools could continue some GEAR UP services after the end of the grant. Several noted that as school personnel gain GEAR UP experience, many teachers, counselors, and families have strong knowledge of the program—a factor that should help in sustaining activities for non-GEAR UP students. Said county coordinators:

*I have not found anyone that was not supportive of their site coordinators at the schools. I have not found a coordinator who wasn't interested in helping students.*

*These are teachers who give up a tremendous amount of hours to provide services for kids for relatively little reimbursement. They are the second most important piece to the entire process. I firmly believe that their ability to have that support makes them successful in getting kids out to see colleges, out to see work sites.*

One site coordinator noted that the college-going culture generated by GEAR UP could persist in their school, because many middle school teachers were continuing conversations related to college, even though the cohort had moved on. Schools also may sustain GEAR UP activities because the services offered by the program closely follow school goals. Said one county coordinator:



*The objectives are all the same. Academic performance and preparation. Increased rate of high school graduation, which is something that I do anyway. Educational expectations, which is something that I do anyway. And then educators' knowledge to improve student achievement.*

Several county coordinators identified college visits as the type of high-impact activity that the county could sustain after the end of the grant.

*It's not real expensive to do that, and we feel it's something we can do even if schools are going to have to put money aside to do that. We have lots of students who would be first-time college graduates, and I think a visit to a college is enough to spur those kids on.*

However, several site coordinators expressed doubt about their school's capacity to continue such visits, even though they acknowledged how enthusiastic students are about them. "There's no money to cover buses and field trips." They noted that if colleges were willing to step up, it would help:

*Theoretically if they were on the ball then they would be like, "Okay, we'll fund you this year, or we'll comp you this or we'll comp you that, we'll send a bus, right." They'll do a little tour with us and try and target students that they know are building up this culture and starting to get dependent upon the relationship that they have with the universities. That is frustrating.*

Other site coordinators observed that they might be able to continue some other activities, even if on a more modest scale.

*Like the career day, we were talking, asking the local university if we could have a big room and just call people we know from the different careers: "Hey, come set up a table for the day." Then getting our county high schools for the region to come together.... I think we can take ideas from these different events that we do.*

Others suggested that they could continue the College Application and Exploration Week and FAFSA workshops, although the school could not offer refreshments. Another coordinator observed that college sweatshirt/colors day had a real impact, inspiring students to research other options: "I've had kids say, I thought there were only two colleges in West Virginia."

One county coordinator noted how GEAR UP has built capacity by working with a program in central West Virginia called Hidden Promise Scholars that has some of the same aims as the Federal WV GEAR UP program. Administered by Glenville State University, Hidden Promise Scholars provides camps, mentors, and scholarships to students in grades 8-12. After outreach to Glenville State, the county coordinator said Hidden Promise Scholars will identify WV GEAR UP students on its campus and include them in activities after they finish their time in GEAR UP.

## V. Discussion

The following section provides the ICF evaluation team's interpretation of key findings from this report. We have organized the discussion under four headings that correspond with the four components of the evaluation: (1) implementation, (2) outcomes, (3) impact, and (4) sustainability.



## 1. Implementation

**Interaction with students and faculty involvement in GEAR UP.** Student and personnel survey data described in this report provide evidence that substantive interaction is occurring among GEAR UP staff, school personnel, and students served by the program. Moreover, we showed compelling evidence that PSE-focused interactions with students may even be occurring earlier than with previous groups of students. For example, this report illustrated that, as of grade 8, cohort students were significantly more likely than those grade 8 students who came before them (i.e., R-Comp) to have spoken with GEAR UP staff or someone from their school about the topics of college entrance requirements and the availability of financial aid to help pay for college. As of grade 8, the cohort was also more likely than those students who came after them (F-Comp) to have spoken with someone about these topics. The differences between the cohort and each comparison group for both topics were statistically significant and substantively important. County and site coordinators provided supporting narratives, with several noting they have seen more conversations about college among teachers, students, and parents.

School personnel data show more involvement in GEAR UP is also occurring among school faculty. For example, the percentage of faculty members who reported they *never or seldom* participated in GEAR UP activities declined from nearly half of all respondents in Year 1 to just over one-third in Year 3. We also found the percentage of faculty who indicated specific GEAR UP activities were either *not offered* or *did not apply* to their school was less than 50% for all categories in Year 3, and, in most cases, less than 33%. Taken together, these findings indicate that a plurality of school personnel have at least some familiarity with and involvement in GEAR UP activities. Regarding the types of activities in which staff are involved, we found the largest improvements in areas that involve direct interaction with students around the topic of PSE. For example, from Year 2 to Year 3, involvement among faculty improved primarily in two areas: (1) providing supplemental instructional support to help students prepare for postsecondary options and (2) talking with students about their future plans. Interview data from site and county coordinators also supported the fact that school buy-in and participation in GEAR UP activities is improving among faculty.

**Serving priority students.** Surveys appeared to confirm that some positive changes are occurring regarding outreach to priority group students. For example, Year 3 priority students showed a small improvement over Year 1 priority students in terms of the percentage who had spoken with someone from GEAR UP or their school about college entrance requirements and the availability of financial aid to help pay for college. Many site coordinators in focus groups also echoed this theme, saying that services to high school seniors had become more streamlined during the year with positive effects. Some schools had one site coordinator for cohort students and another for priority students and believed this structure worked well to target specific services to students.

**Site/county coordinator relationships.** Interviews and focus groups in Year 3 continued to show some strain in the relationships that exist between site and county coordinators. Some site coordinators cited lack of contact and interest from the county coordinator. Most communication focused on budget and fiscal issues, but some site coordinators questioned the accuracy of information they received from their county coordinators. County coordinators said they had myriad responsibilities as directors of Federal programs, counseling, or secondary education, and

many acknowledged they had little time to devote to GEAR UP because of these other responsibilities.

**County coordinator assistance.** Several county coordinators recommended having more options to learn from their counterparts in other regions and a forum to exchange ideas. They believed this would increase knowledge of GEAR UP and college access activities, particularly among new county coordinators.

**State/local relationships.** Effective communication between site coordinators and the Commission's regional PDs is a success factor in WV GEAR UP. In focus groups, site coordinators said that regional PDs quickly answered questions on programming and financial issues, providing accurate information. These relationships were especially critical during Year 3, when many districts deployed new site coordinators as cohort students moved into high schools. County coordinators also agreed that the Commission and regional PDs provide valuable input to help them oversee the program.

**Partner involvement varied.** In focus groups, most site coordinators indicated that they had established strong relationships with college and university partners. In some cases, new coordinators said they had little knowledge about how to create college visits and reached out to postsecondary institutions who helped them from start to finish. However, many site coordinators had little or no business and community involvement, as they cited the presence of few partners, particularly in economically depressed areas.

**Advisory board functions.** Most county coordinators believed that their local college access and success advisory boards did not perform as intended. Only one of eight county coordinators cited their board as a success. Others noted that they did not have time to recruit members or hold regular meetings. In some cases, finding community members to participate was a daunting task. Some coordinators also said they felt guilty that they had not had regular meetings; many hoped to improve in the future while others questioned whether the advisory board concept could work. In one county viewed as a success, this advisory board also served as the local superintendent's advisory council.

**Challenges with tutoring.** Despite considerable effort by site coordinators, GEAR UP-sponsored tutoring drew only mixed reviews from site coordinators in 2017 focus groups. While some cited success due to constant availability and frequent marketing and communication efforts, most said students are not taking advantage of opportunities, especially after school. Another school had four open positions for tutors but made no hires due to difficulties in getting the program off the ground. Most coordinators did not believe their schools would continue tutoring programs after GEAR UP.

## 2. Outcomes

**Educational goals, aspirations, and academic confidence.** As of grade 8, cohort and F-Comp students were both slightly more likely than R-Comp students to aspire and expect to achieve at least a two-year degree. This is an interesting finding given that R-Comp students completed grade 8 before GEAR UP was in place in schools, while cohort and F-Comp students went through grade 8 after this point. Interestingly, Year 3 and Year 1 priority students showed no differences in these outcomes.



We did not find substantive differences in self-reported academic confidence ratings for R-Comp, cohort, or F-Comp student samples. However, Year 1 priority students were slightly more confident than Year 3 priority students in their math abilities and in their ability to pass end-of-year tests. This finding could be partially attributed to the fact that the Year 3 priority student sample reported that their families were slightly poorer and less educated.

**Knowledge of financial aid/costs and benefits of college.** As of grade 8, cohort group students were more likely than R-Comp and F-Comp students to report being knowledgeable about financial aid and the costs/benefits of college; however, the effects were small. We also found Year 3 priority students were slightly more likely to reply affirmatively when asked if they knew about these topics. These findings are not particularly surprising, given that cohort students received intensive support on these topics while R-Comp and F-Comp students did not. Furthermore, Year 3 priority group students likely received more refined services than Year 1 priority group students, as schools amassed more experience in working with priority students.

We did not see substantive differences in the percentage of students who could accurately estimate the true cost of tuition for public college options in West Virginia, and relatively few students knew how much money was available to help pay for college through state and Federal scholarship and grant programs. This was true for cohort, F-Comp, and R-Comp students, and for Year 1 and Year 3 priority students. Notably, when comparing F-Comp students with cohort students, the difference in the percentage who could correctly respond to certain questions may have been influenced by differences in demographics—F-Comp students came from slightly more educated and affluent families.

**Perceptions of affordability and cost.** Cohort group students in grade 8 differed significantly from R-Comp students with respect to their perceptions of the affordability of all three public college options, but they only differed from F-Comp students on the perceived affordability of public career/technical college options. This finding provides some tentative evidence that the lessons learned by schools may possibly be becoming institutionalized. That is, the R-Comp students who completed grade 8 before GEAR UP was in place are showing the poorest affordability perceptions, while cohort and F-Comp students did not differ substantively in their perceptions. No major differences were found among Year 1 and Year 3 priority students with respect to perceived affordability.

**Awareness of PSE topics.** As of grade 8, cohort students differed significantly from R-Comp students in their awareness of eight of the 11 PSE topics included on our survey. Notably, the largest differences were found with respect to financial aid topics such as FAFSA, the WV HEGP, Federal Pell grants, Federal loans, and Federal work-study. Cohort students differed from F-Comp students in their awareness of several of these same topics, but the effect size for those differences were generally smaller than for the difference among cohort and R-Comp students. This finding lends more credibility to the hypothesis that GEAR UP schools are beginning to institutionalize practices that support earlier intervention related to PSE.

When comparing Year 1 and Year 3 priority students, we found the Year 3 sample was more aware of eight of 11 PSE topics—although some topics differed from those that were most significant in comparisons of Cohort and R-Comp students. Most notably, we again found the most substantive differences in reported awareness of financial aid topics, including FAFSA, Federal work-study, the WV HEGP, and Federal Pell grants. The effect size for the difference in

awareness of FAFSA approached the threshold for a moderate effect. Further bearing out this relationship, we found Year 3 priority students were less likely than Year 1 priority students to report they needed additional support or information about completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA). And, in focus groups, several site and county coordinators identified FAFSA awareness as a successful GEAR UP activity. Site coordinators also identified FAFSA awareness as one of their core objectives for Year 3 of the program, and school personnel identified assistance with FAFSA as among the most effective GEAR UP-sponsored activities. This is an important finding, especially since some site coordinators reported challenges in meeting FAFSA goals.

**Importance of various sources in gathering information about PSE options.** When measured at grade 8, cohort students found all 16 PSE information sources to be more important in helping them gather information about their options for college than did R-Comp students. Not surprisingly, the largest difference was found for the importance of GEAR UP staff. When examining differences between cohort and F-Comp students, we found the cohort group provided higher importance ratings for only six of 16 sources. Moreover, the differences between these two groups were generally smaller than those between cohort and R-Comp students—with the exception of the importance of GEAR UP staff. Again, this provides more evidence about the potential institutionalization of GEAR UP services, in that a successive group of grade 8 students (F-Comp) are achieving more positive results than students who completed grade 8 prior to the program being in place (R-Comp).

When considering priority students, we found the Year 3 sample rated 13 of the 16 PSE information sources to be more important in helping them gather information about their college options than did Year 1 priority students. The difference was again largest for the importance of GEAR UP staff. But we also found a small but substantively meaningful difference in the importance ratings of college fairs.

**Knowledge of PSE topics and involvement in college-related activities.** From Year 1 to Year 3, school personnel have reported consistently increasing levels of comfort with their knowledge to assist students with PSE topics. In fact, results in this report showed personnel respondents' self-reported comfort levels for all 10 topics included on the survey increased significantly from Year 1 to Year 3 and from Year 2 to Year 3. For the Year 1 to year 3 comparison, the average effect size approached the threshold for a moderate effect, evidence of a practically important difference over baseline. Though effects were smaller from Year 2 to Year 3, we found increases in comfort levels for all 10 topics, with the largest related to personnel members' ability to assist students with college selection (match and fit) and high school graduation requirements.

We also saw modest increases in personnel survey respondents' involvement in five college-related activities offered at GEAR UP schools. Most notably, personnel respondents reported increases in the extent to which they offered supplemental instructional support to help prepare students for college and talked to students about their plans for college or work after high school.

It is worth noting that it is unclear how much of the positive difference in personnel respondents' comfort to assist students with PSE topics and involvement in college-related activities is attributable to the fact that the Year 3 survey was administered only to grade 9-12 educators, while the Year 1 and Year 2 surveys were administered to educators of grades 6-12. It would stand to reason that the Year 3 population of survey completers would naturally be well-versed in these topics and more involved in college-related activities than the Year 2 and Year 1 samples,

which included middle schools. Additional analysis, excluding middle school respondents from the Year 1 and Year 2 data, could help test this hypothesis.

**College-going self-efficacy and outcomes-expectations.** We found no difference among grade 8 cohort and F-Comp students with respect to self-reported perceptions of CGSE or CGOE. Unfortunately, data were not available to measure these concepts for R-Comp or Year 1 priority students because the CGSE and CGOE scales were not included on the student survey until one year after these students completed it. We were, however, able to examine Year 2 to Year 3 differences in how school personnel perceived their student's college-going efficacy. Interestingly, we found relatively few differences. Personnel reported a small decline in their perceptions of the extent to which students could get good grades in their high school math classes, and a small increase in the perception that all students will be eligible to apply to a postsecondary institution.

Notably, when the Year 4 student survey has been completed, the evaluation team will be able to compare CGSE and CGOE outcomes as measured at grade 10 for cohort and R-Comp students.

**College-going culture.** Overall, this report showed that personnel respondents' perceptions about the presence of a school- and classroom-level CGC have increased significantly from Year 1 to Year 3. For both levels, the largest gains have been illustrated with respect to the visual cues/material resources component of CGC. More modest increases have occurred with respect to expectations/rigor. As noted in previous reports, this is not surprising in an era where increasing student expectations have been a component of several iterative cycles of national, state, and local education reforms. Moreover, and as noted above, it is difficult to disentangle how much of the increase in CGC perceptions is associated with the fact that Year 3 survey respondents were educators of grade 9-12 students while the Year 2 and Year 1 samples included educators of grades 6-12. Nevertheless, interviews with site coordinators also supported these views about a changing CGC. Many site coordinators said they are seeing a culture change within their schools, typified by more college conversations among students and between students and teachers. Other coordinators also cited smaller items such as teachers regularly wearing college sweatshirts and t-shirts.

**Satisfaction with and effectiveness of GEAR UP activities.** School personnel reported the most positive differences across time in their perceptions of the effectiveness of providing information about college entrance requirements, College Application and Exploration Week, and mentoring opportunities (e.g., Student Success Societies). It may be that Year 3 personnel found these activities more relevant than they did in previous years based on the target grade levels moving from middle to high school. Or it could be that site coordinators and school staff executed activities better than in previous years, making them more relevant and useful. Personnel also reported less involvement in teacher professional development, although those who participated reported increased effectiveness.

### 3. Impact

**School buy-in.** GEAR UP program staff have intentionally empowered school personnel to work directly with students on college-related topics—financial aid and college entrance requirements—creating the beginnings of a long-term support system for each school's students. In fact, personnel reported increased knowledge/comfort with postsecondary topics, reflecting the



investment of time and resources provided by GEAR UP staff. From Year 2 to 3, although personnel reported no significant differences in the rigor and expectations component of CGC, ratings indicated a sustained effort from the initial gains made from Year 1 to Year 2. Additionally, personnel reported stronger CGC related to visual cues and material resources, which represents how well schools integrate messaging to communicate a vision of the importance of PSE, and the extent to which schools provide or receive support and professional development to further that vision.

These findings reveal the impact and strength of ongoing efforts by site and county coordinators to solidify a CGC in schools. Focus groups with site coordinators also revealed similar information, as most cited at least some progress in gaining school and teacher buy-in. Examples included greater involvement in tutoring and in College Application and Exploration Week. Two coordinators also said they had success in recruiting many teachers to participate in activities, rather than relying on only one or two, as they had in the past.

Depending upon the activity in question, no more than one-third to half of school personnel reported they either did not participate in GEAR UP activities in Year 3 or that activities were not offered at their school. When asked about their roles in supporting CGC, many personnel reported that, at the very least, they should be discussing with students their college options and/or future aspirations and ensuring that students have guidance.

**College visits and trips.** In focus groups, site coordinators identified several positive activities such as GEAR UP University, in which cohort students spent four days at West Virginia State University to attend college classes and live on campus. They also viewed college visits as a significant success, because visits often brought students to new places and exposed them to a variety of options from technical schools to two- and four-year colleges and universities. Site coordinators said that many students reacted positively to the message that college is not simply a four-year pursuit of a bachelor's degree, since many may opt for shorter-term occupational programs.

## 4. Sustainability

**College visits.** Nearly three-fourths of school personnel respondents in Year 3 were confident they would continue some of the GEAR UP services and activities after the grant ends. As in the previous year, many personnel indicated they wanted to continue college visits because of their popularity and effectiveness in engaging students in college and career reflection. Although last year, personnel were least likely to mention financial aid literacy as a sustainable service, indicating it as “not applicable,” this year personnel reported financial aid literacy as one of the top three activities that would be sustained. In fact, personnel perceived financial aid literacy, partnerships with institutions of higher education, access to college professionals, and college application weeks as the most likely services to be sustained. Again, it is possible this difference is related to the fact that the Year 3 survey was administered to educators of grades 9-12, while in previous years, grade 6-12 educators completed the survey.

Despite such positive findings in the school personnel survey, many GEAR UP site coordinators in focus groups did not share strongly positive views of sustainability. While citing the popularity of college visits, these coordinators said their schools lacked the funding to pay for buses and



field trips. They also believed that sustaining these visits might be possible if colleges and universities were willing to help fund such activities.

**Differences among cohort, R-Comp, and F-Comp student samples.** As noted above, we found several survey outcomes for which the grade 8 cohort and F-Comp student samples differed significantly and positively from R-Comp students. In other cases, the cohort group and F-Comp group did not differ substantially. These patterns are interesting, given that R-Comp students represent a group who completed grade 8 before GEAR UP services had any opportunity to become institutionalized in participating schools. Meanwhile, the cohort and F-Comp groups represent students who completed grade 8 at a time when their schools had considerable experience with GEAR UP. The fact that survey outcomes for the F-Comp group often did not differ substantively from the cohort group could be seen as a negative finding since so many resources are targeted to the cohort. However, it also potentially signifies that a future group of grade 8 students benefitted from the sustained presence of GEAR UP services in previously participating middle schools.

## VI. Recommendations

- Celebrate the successes that have occurred with respect to student and personnel outcomes from Year 1 to Year 3 of the program. Particular emphasis could be placed on improvements related to FAFSA awareness. Site coordinators noted FAFSA as a priority and as a challenge, but Year 3 priority students have showed better outcomes than Year 1 priority students.
- Continue offering college visits, but present guidance for schools to consider alternatives to sustain similar opportunities once the grant ends. Begin sustainability conversations now.
- Find additional ways to convey information about the average costs of tuition and benefits of financial aid. Adopt creative solutions to ensure that students, teachers, and parents know about the real costs associated with college and the amounts of aid that students can apply for.
- Provide opportunities to engage and inform teachers, in addition to those who serve cohort and priority students, about the activities, presence, and purpose of GEAR UP.
- To support customized solutions for attracting commitments from local business and other partners, the Commission might allow county coordinators more flexibility in how they accomplish the intended purpose of the local college access and success advisory board. Options could include maintaining the current approach or creating another engagement strategy such as making GEAR UP presentations on a regular basis to the local school board. Operating advisory boards within each school, and holding an annual county meeting of the school boards, is another potential strategy. GEAR UP could promote the engagement of advisory board members by encouraging student presentations to these boards about their experiences in the program.
- The Commission may want to consider offering additional opportunities for communication among county coordinators, such as a forum early in the program year or regular teleconferences. Commission staff also could develop a promising practices document or encourage the sharing of best practices among these coordinators. Such activities could reduce the burden on county coordinators to initiate or create from scratch their own strategic plan, timelines, or outreach efforts.

- GEAR UP staff should continue to work directly with personnel in both new and returning schools to make sure they feel included and involved in promoting a CGC. One approach is to inform everyone about both opportunities to work directly with GEAR UP and opportunities to play a role as a resource or mentor for students. School staff generally understand the role of GEAR UP, but several comments suggested that some perceive that GEAR UP is not intended for them or their students.

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## VIII. Appendix A



## West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2016-17 Parent/Guardian Permission Form

Date: September 1, 2016

Dear Parent or Guardian:

*We are writing to ask you to complete a short survey and to give your permission for your child to complete a short survey during school this year. The surveys are about education and training after high school. **If you DO NOT give your permission for 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 (WV) 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](http://www.wvgearup.org). A company called ICF International is doing a study of WV GEAR UP for the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV HEPC) to learn if GEAR UP is achieving its goals.

**Who is part of GEAR UP?** GEAR UP works with 50 schools in 10 counties in WV. This includes your child's school. Only some grades are getting GEAR UP support, because the money for GEAR UP is limited. This year, all Grade 9 students and most Grade 12 students in GEAR UP schools are getting GEAR UP support.

**What is the Student Survey?** GEAR UP is asking all students in your child's grade to do a 15- to 20-minute survey every year. This year we are doing the student survey from November 2016 to January 2017. The student 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. It asks what they think about other options after high school. It asks about your child's goals for high school and beyond. Knowing about your child's plans for college helps us know if GEAR UP is working.

**Who is doing the Student Survey?** We are asking all students in your child's grade to complete the student survey.

**Is there a Parent/Guardian Survey?** Yes, but only if your child is in grade 8, 9, or 10. If your child is in one of these grades, in November 2016, your child will bring home a link to an online parent/guardian survey. We would like all parents/guardians to complete the survey by January 4, 2017. We will send you a few reminders about it after you get the link from your child's school.

**What is the Parent/Guardian Survey about? How long will it take?** The parent/guardian survey asks questions just like the ones on the student survey and takes 15 to 20 minutes. Having your feedback lets us know if there are ways we can do more to support families.

**Will you keep the information we provide private?** Yes! 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 will NEVER link this number to your name or to your child's name. 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 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 give your child 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 all the privacy laws that protect you if we request this information. We will ask for your permission if it is needed.

**Are there any risks or benefits to participating in the surveys?** There are no risks. We will not identify parents/guardians or children who take the surveys. The only risk is that the surveys may take some time from your day

## West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2016-17 Parent/Guardian Permission Form

and your child's normal school day. We made the surveys short to avoid this problem. If you decide to give your permission for your child to take the survey, it will help us figure out how to support students better. If you take the parent/guardian survey, it will help us support families. WV GEAR UP schools might also use the surveys to change their programs.

**Are the surveys required?** No. You can decide if you or your child want to take them or not. There are no penalties to you or your child if you decide not to take the parent/guardian survey or if you don't give your permission for your child to take the student survey. There are also no penalties if you give your permission, but your child decides not to take the student survey. You and your child will not give up any support or programs you would normally get.

Even if you give your permission for 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/guardians who take the parent/guardian survey.

**What do I need to do?**

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

If you **DO NOT** give your permission for your child to complete the survey, just complete and sign the form on the next page and return it to your child's school by *September 30, 2016*. 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 call him at (304) 342-0037 or email him at [nate.hixson@icfi.com](mailto: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 call him at (304) 558-0655 or email him at [adam.green@wvhepc.edu](mailto:adam.green@wvhepc.edu). Thanks for helping make GEAR UP a success!

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

**West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2016-17  
Parent/Guardian Permission Form**

\* \* \* \* \*

If you give your permission for your child to take the November 2016/January 2017 GEAR UP survey, you do not need to do anything with this form. Just keep it for your records. If you **DO NOT** give your permission for your child to complete the survey, please complete, sign, and return this form to your child's school no later than *September 30, 2016*.

**I DO NOT WANT** my child, \_\_\_\_\_, (please print full student name) to participate in the West Virginia GEAR UP survey in November 2016/January 2017.

Name of your child's school: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**This section for school and GEAR UP staff use ONLY:**

Student's 9-digit WVEIS ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade Level (circle one):    08    09    10    11    12

Site Coordinator/School Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ICF Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2016-17 Student Assent Form**

Welcome!

Your school is part of a program called West Virginia GEAR UP that helps middle and high school students get ready for college or other education options after high school. The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WV HEPC) has asked a company called ICF International to do a study of GEAR UP.

Because GEAR UP has a limited amount of money, only a few grades in your school are getting GEAR UP support this year. If you are a grade 9 or grade 12 student, your grade is part of GEAR UP this year. That means you can get free services to help you get ready for college or other training after school. If you are in grade 8 or grade 10, we still want to hear from you about your experience at your school.

**What are you asking me to do?** We are asking you to take a 15-20 minute online survey during the school day. The survey asks questions about what you know about college. It asks what you think about other options after high school too. It asks about your goals for high school and beyond. It also asks if you go to tutoring or after school events.

**Why are you doing the survey?** Knowing about your plans for college helps us know if GEAR UP is working.

**Who else is doing the student survey?** We are asking all students in your grade to do the survey.

Please read the rest of this message carefully. When you are done, you can decide if you want to take the survey.

**Will you keep the information I provide private?** Yes! We have to keep your information private. We will only write reports about groups of students. We will never write a report about your personal survey answers. The survey does not ask for your name. We only ask for your lunch/WVEIS number. We will NEVER link this number to your name. We ask for your lunch/WVEIS number so we can make sure the same student takes the survey over time. We also use it to connect your survey results to parent/guardian survey results. We might also use it to connect your results to other information like class grades.

Right now, we are only asking you to take a survey. If we ask more information about you in the future, we will make sure everything is private. We will ask for your parents' permission if needed.

**Are there any risks or benefits to taking the survey?** There are no risks. We will not identify students who take the survey. So, the only risk is that the survey may take some time from your school day. We made the survey short to avoid this problem. If you take the survey, it will help us figure out how to help more students. Your school might also use surveys to change their programs.

**Do I have to take the survey?** No. You can decide if you want to take it or not. There are no penalties to you if you decide not to take it. Your school will not take away any support or programs if you decide not to. If your grade is part of GEAR UP this year, you will still be able to get free help to get ready for college or other after high school training even if you don't take the survey. You can also skip any questions you do not want to answer. You can stop taking the survey at any time. There are really no penalties.

**Does my parent or guardian know about this?** Yes. We sent your parent or guardian a letter telling them that we would ask you to do a survey at school. We told them to send our letter back if they did not want you to take the survey. If you are reading this message, it means your parent or guardian did not return our letter. That means you can take the survey.

## West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey 2016-17 Student Assent Form

**What if I have questions?** If there is a teacher or program coordinator helping you take the survey, you can always raise your hand and ask questions if you have technical problems. If you have any questions about the study, you can call Nate Hixson. He is a researcher who is in charge of the survey. You can call him at (434) 205-0478. You can also email him at [nate.hixson@icf.com](mailto:nate.hixson@icf.com). If you have questions about GEAR UP, you can call Dr. Adam Green. He is the person in charge of GEAR UP. His phone number is (304) 558-0655. You can also email him at [adam.green@hepc.edu](mailto:adam.green@hepc.edu).

Thanks for helping make GEAR UP a success!

If you agree to participate in this survey, please click the "I agree to take this survey" button below.

- I agree to take this survey.
- I do not agree to take this survey.

# West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey - 2016-17 School Year

## Grade 8, 9, and 10

**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

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<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"/>
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**Your lunch/WVEIS number:**

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2. What is your current grade level?  8  9  10

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.

- |  |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| \$30,000<br>or less<br><input type="radio"/> (A) | \$30,001-<br>\$60,000<br><input type="radio"/> (B) | \$60,001-<br>\$100,000<br><input type="radio"/> (C) | \$100,001 or<br>more<br><input type="radio"/> (D) | Don't know or<br>I'd rather not say<br><input type="radio"/> (E) |
|--|--|---|---|--|

8. What is the highest level of education of your **father or male guardian** (*bubble only one answer*)?

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

9. What is the highest level of education of your **mother or female guardian** (*bubble only one answer*)?

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

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

- |                                |                                |                                |                                |                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 0<br><input type="radio"/> (A) | 1<br><input type="radio"/> (B) | 2<br><input type="radio"/> (C) | 3<br><input type="radio"/> (D) | 4<br><input type="radio"/> (E) | 5 or more<br><input type="radio"/> (F) | I don't have brothers or sisters<br><input type="radio"/> (G) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|

**Section II: Your Educational Goals**

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

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

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

13. If you answered "no" to question 12, 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

14. What is the highest level of education that you **would like** to get (bubble only one answer)?

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

15. What is the highest level of education that you **expect** to get (bubble only one answer)?

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

16. How sure are you about being able to do the following?

	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Not at all Sure</i>	<i>Somewhat Sure</i>	<i>Sure</i>	<i>Very Sure</i>
I can find a way to pay for college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get accepted to a college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can have family support for going to college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can choose a good college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get a scholarship or grant for college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can make an educational plan that will prepare me for college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can make my family proud with my choices after high school.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can choose college courses that best fit my interests.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can pay for college even if my family cannot help me.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get good grades in my high school math classes.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get good grades in my high school science classes.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can choose the high school classes needed to get into a good college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I know enough about computers to get into college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can go to college after high school.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

17. **If you do go to college**, how sure are you about being able to do the following?

	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Not at all Sure</i>	<i>Somewhat Sure</i>	<i>Sure</i>	<i>Very Sure</i>
I could pay for each year of college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get A's and B's in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get my family to support my wish of finishing college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could take care of myself in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could fit in at college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get good enough grades to get or keep a scholarship.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could finish college and receive a college degree.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could care for my family responsibilities while in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could set my own schedule while in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could make friends at college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get the education I need for my choice of career.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get a job after I graduate from college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I would like being in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could be smart enough to finish college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could pick the right things to study at college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could do the classwork and homework assignments in college classes.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

**Section III: College Entrance Requirements, Cost, and Financial Aid**

18. 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)

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

(Y) (N)

20. 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?

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

21. On average, how much do you think it costs for one year of in-state tuition at a **4-year public college in West Virginia** (*bubble only one answer; your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books*)?

Up to \$4,000	\$4,001-\$8,000	\$8,001-\$11,000	\$11,001-\$16,000	\$16,001-\$21,000	\$21,001-\$26,000	More than \$26,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)

22. On average, how much do you think it costs for one year of in-state tuition at a **public community/technical college in West Virginia** (*bubble only one answer; your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books*)?

Up to	\$4,001-	\$8,001-	\$11,001-	\$16,001-	\$21,001-	More than
\$4,000	\$8,000	\$11,000	\$16,000	\$21,000	\$26,000	\$26,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)

23. How aware are you about the following topics?

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

24. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for a **Federal Pell Grant** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to	\$1,001-	\$2,001-	\$3,001-	\$4,001-	\$5,001-	\$6,001-	More than
\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

25. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for the **West Virginia Higher Education Grant** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to	\$1,001-	\$2,001-	\$3,001-	\$4,001-	\$5,001-	\$6,001-	More than
\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

26. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for the **West Virginia PROMISE Scholarship** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to	\$1,001-	\$2,001-	\$3,001-	\$4,001-	\$5,001-	\$6,001-	More than
\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

27. 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)

28. 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*

Thank you for your time!

**Please return this survey to your teacher or school.**

# West Virginia GEAR UP Student Survey - 2016-17 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"/>
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**Your lunch/WVEIS number:**

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2. Are you currently a grade 12 student?  Y  N

3. What is your gender?  
 A Male  B Female  C Other

4. What is your race?  
 A White  B Black or African American  C Asian  D American Indian or Alaska Native  E Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  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.

- |  |  |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| \$30,000<br>or less<br><input type="radio"/> (A) | \$30,001-<br>\$60,000<br><input type="radio"/> (B) | \$60,001-<br>\$100,000<br><input type="radio"/> (C) | \$100,001 or<br>more<br><input type="radio"/> (D) | Don't know or<br>I'd rather not say<br><input type="radio"/> (E) |
|--|--|---|---|--|

8. What is the highest level of education of your **father or male guardian** (*bubble only one answer*)?

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

9. What is the highest level of education of your **mother or female guardian** (*bubble only one answer*)?

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

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

- |                                |                                |                                |                                |                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 0<br><input type="radio"/> (A) | 1<br><input type="radio"/> (B) | 2<br><input type="radio"/> (C) | 3<br><input type="radio"/> (D) | 4<br><input type="radio"/> (E) | 5 or more<br><input type="radio"/> (F) | I don't have brothers or sisters<br><input type="radio"/> (G) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|

### Section II: Your Educational Goals

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

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

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

13. If you answered "no" to question 12, 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

14. What is the highest level of education that you **would like** to get (bubble only one answer)?

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

15. What is the highest level of education that you **expect** to get (bubble only one answer)?

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

16. How sure are you about being able to do the following?

	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Not at all Sure</i>	<i>Somewhat Sure</i>	<i>Sure</i>	<i>Very Sure</i>
I can find a way to pay for college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get accepted to a college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can have family support for going to college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can choose a good college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get a scholarship or grant for college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can make an educational plan that will prepare me for college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can make my family proud with my choices after high school.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can choose college courses that best fit my interests.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can pay for college even if my family cannot help me.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get good grades in my high school math classes.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can get good grades in my high school science classes.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can choose the high school classes needed to get into a good college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I know enough about computers to get into college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I can go to college after high school.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

17. **If you do go to college**, how sure are you about being able to do the following?

	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Not at all Sure</i>	<i>Somewhat Sure</i>	<i>Sure</i>	<i>Very Sure</i>
I could pay for each year of college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get A's and B's in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get my family to support my wish of finishing college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could take care of myself in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could fit in at college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get good enough grades to get or keep a scholarship.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could finish college and receive a college degree.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could care for my family responsibilities while in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could set my own schedule while in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could make friends at college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get the education I need for my choice of career.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could get a job after I graduate from college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I would like being in college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could be smart enough to finish college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could pick the right things to study at college.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
I could do the classwork and homework assignments in college classes.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

**Section III: College Entrance Requirements, Cost, and Financial Aid**

18. 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)

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

(Y) (N)

20. 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?

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

21. On average, how much do you think it costs for one year of in-state tuition at a **4-year public college in West Virginia** (*bubble only one answer; your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books*)?

Up to \$4,000	\$4,001-\$8,000	\$8,001-\$11,000	\$11,001-\$16,000	\$16,001-\$21,000	\$21,001-\$26,000	More than \$26,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)

22. On average, how much do you think it costs for one year of in-state tuition at a **public community/technical college in West Virginia** (*bubble only one answer; your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books*)?

Up to	\$4,001-	\$8,001-	\$11,001-	\$16,001-	\$21,001-	More than
\$4,000	\$8,000	\$11,000	\$16,000	\$21,000	\$26,000	\$26,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)

23. How aware are you about the following topics?

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

24. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for a **Federal Pell Grant** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to	\$1,001-	\$2,001-	\$3,001-	\$4,001-	\$5,001-	\$6,001-	More than
\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

25. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for the **West Virginia Higher Education Grant** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to	\$1,001-	\$2,001-	\$3,001-	\$4,001-	\$5,001-	\$6,001-	More than
\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

26. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for the **West Virginia PROMISE Scholarship** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to	\$1,001-	\$2,001-	\$3,001-	\$4,001-	\$5,001-	\$6,001-	More than
\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

27. 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)

28. 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**

29. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) can be completed as early as October 1, 2016. Have you completed your FAFSA yet?

- A No, and I do not plan to complete it this academic year.
- B No, but I plan to complete it this academic year.
- C Yes

30. Have you taken the SAT or ACT tests?

- A No, and I do not plan to take either this academic year.
- B No, but I plan to take SAT and/or ACT this academic year.
- C Yes

31. How many college applications have you completed?

- A 0, and I do not plan to complete any this academic year.
- B 0, but I plan to complete one or more this academic year.
- C 1
- D 2 or more

Thank you for your time!

**Please return this survey to your teacher or school.**

# West Virginia GEAR UP Parent Survey - 2016-17 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 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 checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>					
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>						
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>								

2. What is the grade level of the student that brought this survey home?  8  9  10

3. What is your gender?  
 Male  Female  Other

4. What is your relationship to the child who brought this survey home?  
 Parent or guardian  Grandparent  
 Step or foster parent  Other

5. What is your race?  
 White  American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Black or African American  Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
 Asian  Two or more races

6. What is your ethnicity?  
 Hispanic or Latino  Not Hispanic or Latino

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

- (A) English      (B) Spanish      (C) Other

8. 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.

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

9. What is the highest level of education of your child's **father or male guardian** (bubble only one answer)?

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

10. What is the highest level of education of your child's **mother or female guardian** (bubble only one answer)?

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

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

- |     |     |     |     |     |           |                              |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|------------------------------|
| 0   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5 or more | I don't have other children. |
| (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) | (F)       | (G)                          |

**Section II: Your Child's Educational Goals**

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

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

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Agree    Strongly Agree

*Attending college is important to my child's career goal and future.*    (A)    (B)    (C)    (D)

*It's too early to think about my child going to college.*    (A)    (B)    (C)    (D)

14. What is the highest level of education that you **would like** your child to get (*bubble only one answer*)?

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

15. What is the highest level of education that you **expect** your child to get (*bubble only one answer*)?

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

**Section III: College Entrance Requirements, Cost, and Financial Aid**

16. 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)

17. 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)

18. 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)

19. On average, how much do you think it costs for one year of in-state tuition at a **4-year public college in West Virginia** (*bubble only one answer; your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books*)?

Up to \$4,000    \$4,001-\$8,000    \$8,001-\$11,000    \$11,001-\$16,000    \$16,001-\$21,000    \$21,001-\$26,000    More than \$26,000

(A)    (B)    (C)    (D)    (E)    (F)    (G)

20. On average, how much do you think it costs for one year of in-state tuition at a **public community/technical college in West Virginia** (*bubble only one answer; your estimate should not include the cost of food, housing, or books*)?

Up to \$4,000	\$4,001- \$8,000	\$8,001- \$11,000	\$11,001- \$16,000	\$16,001- \$21,000	\$21,001- \$26,000	More than \$26,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)

21. How aware are you about the following topics?

*Not at All   Slightly   Moderately   Extremely*

<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)

22. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for a **Federal Pell Grant** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to \$1,000	\$1,001- \$2,000	\$2,001- \$3,000	\$3,001- \$4,000	\$4,001- \$5,000	\$5,001- \$6,000	\$6,001- \$7,000	More than \$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

23. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for the **West Virginia Higher Education Grant** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to \$1,000	\$1,001- \$2,000	\$2,001- \$3,000	\$3,001- \$4,000	\$4,001- \$5,000	\$5,001- \$6,000	\$6,001- \$7,000	More than \$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

24. What do you think is the maximum amount of money **per academic year** that is available to help pay for college if a student qualifies for the **West Virginia PROMISE Scholarship** (*bubble only one answer*)?

Up to \$1,000	\$1,001- \$2,000	\$2,001- \$3,000	\$3,001- \$4,000	\$4,001- \$5,000	\$5,001- \$6,000	\$6,001- \$7,000	More than \$7,000
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)

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

*Not at All   Slightly   Moderately   Extremely*

<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)

26. 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.**

# WV GEAR UP Year 3 School Personnel Survey

## FINAL VERSION – UPLOADED TO SCRIBE

We are looking for your feedback about the college-going culture— that is, promoting a school culture that encourages all students to consider any “college” options including certificate programs, two-year degree programs, four-year degree programs, or military training after high school graduation and prepares them to make informed decisions about these and other available postsecondary educational opportunities— at your school.

1. What is your current primary position at your school?                      Administrator    Counselor    Teacher
2. What current grade level(s) do you serve (check all that apply)?    9    10    11    12
3. In which school(s) are you currently working?                              [DROPDOWN MENU]
4. Are you a GEAR UP site coordinator?    Yes        No
5. For items a - s please rate your level of agreement twice for each of the statements: once for your level of agreement that the statement accurately reflects your SCHOOL and once for your level of agreement that the statement accurately reflects your own CLASSROOM.

<i>The following set of items ask about areas related to Rigor and Expectations.</i>	In My School				In My Classroom			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Creativity and original thinking are highly valued.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
b. Teachers expect all students' to succeed academically.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
c. Students are encouraged to do their best.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
d. Teachers regularly talk to students about the importance of college.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
e. Students care about learning and getting a good education.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
f. Students are encouraged to set future college and career goals.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
g. Students are learning effective problem solving skills.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
h. Teachers are able to engage students in a rigorous curriculum	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
i. Advanced (i.e. honors, pre-AP, etc.) courses are appropriately rigorous.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1
j. The curriculum appropriately challenges most students.	4	3	2	1	4	3	2	1

## WV GEAR UP Year 3 School Personnel Survey

<i>The next set of items ask about areas related to Visual Cues and Material Resources.</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
k. College pennants, banners, and posters are visible.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
l. Parents are included in the college preparation process.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
m. School staff are provided with professional development on the topics of college readiness and success.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
n. Students have access to the information and resources they need to support their college attendance decisions.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
o. Teachers include visual cues to encourage discussions about their college experience	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
p. Teachers are provided information about the school's college-going rate and FAFSA completion rates.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
q. College messaging is integrated into events, including sports events or arts performances.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
r. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development about ways to promote college readiness.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1
s. Teachers are equipped with the knowledge to assist students in the transition from high school to college.	4	3	2	1		4	3	2	1

6 How comfortable do you feel about your level of knowledge *to assist students with the following college topics?*

	<i>Not at all Comfortable</i>	<i>Slightly Comfortable</i>	<i>Moderately Comfortable</i>	<i>Extremely Comfortable</i>	<i>Rather not say</i>
<i>FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>College savings plan/529</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>ACT/SAT</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>WV Higher Education Grant</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>Federal grants, loans, and work-study</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>College Selection (Match and Fit)</i>	1	2	3	4	99

## WV GEAR UP Year 3 School Personnel Survey

<i>Scholarships (e.g., PROMISE or Institutional)</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>Requirements for college acceptance</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>The importance/benefit of a college education</i>	1	2	3	4	99
<i>High school graduation requirements</i>	1	2	3	4	99

7. Please rate the level of your involvement in the college-related activities presented below.

	Not Applicable	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
a. I participate in the college preparation activities of my school (e.g., chaperoning college visits).	99	1	2	3	4	5
b. I have individual discussions with students about what they want to do with their futures.	99	1	2	3	4	5
c. I talk with students about their plans for college or work after high school.	99	1	2	3	4	5
d. I offer students supplemental instructional support to prepare them for postsecondary options.	99	1	2	3	4	5
e. I offer or incorporate class time to support college preparation efforts at my school.						
f. I talk with parents about their ability to help prepare their student(s) for postsecondary education.	99	1	2	3	4	5

8. In your opinion, what is the most important aspect to building a college going culture at your school?

9. Also, please explain what you see as your role in building a college going culture at your school?

**The next few questions ask specifically about your GEAR UP experiences.**

10. Please indicate how effective participation in GEAR UP sponsored activities available at your school has been in helping your students to succeed in school/prepare for college:

	<i>It was not offered/does not apply</i>	<i>I did not attend</i>	<i>Not at all effective</i>	<i>Slightly effective</i>	<i>Moderately effective</i>	<i>Extremely effective</i>
a. <i>Tutoring and homework assistance</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
b. <i>Opportunities to participate in college visits</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
c. <i>Summer activities</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
d. <i>College Application and Exploration Week</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
e. <i>Provide information about college entrance requirements</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
f. <i>Career exploration activities</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
g. <i>Test preparation (e.g., ACT/SAT)</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4

## WV GEAR UP Year 3 School Personnel Survey

	<i>It was not offered/does not apply</i>	<i>I did not attend</i>	<i><u>Not at all effective</u></i>	<i><u>Slightly effective</u></i>	<i><u>Moderately effective</u></i>	<i><u>Extremely effective</u></i>
h. <i>Assistance with the college entrance process</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
i. <i>Assistance with completing financial aid forms (e.g., FAFSA)</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
j. <i>Teacher professional Development about College awareness and success strategies</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4
k. <i>Student Success Societies/Mentoring opportunities</i>	99	999	1	2	3	4

11. In general, how often do you participate in GEAR UP activities?

Never 1	Seldom 2	Sometimes 3	Often 4	Always 5
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Please elaborate:

12. The next set of items ask about your level of agreement related to the overall experience provided to you through GEAR UP.

	<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
a. I think GEAR UP is making a positive impact on students in my school.	99	1	2	3	4
b. I think GEAR UP is making a positive impact on my colleagues in my school	99	1	2	3	4
c. GEAR UP activities are likely to be sustained after the grant ends.	99	1	2	3	4

13. Thinking about the future when GEAR UP services and activities are no longer at your school, to what extent will your school promote the following elements related to a college-going culture?

	<i>Does Not Apply</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Slightly</i>	<i>Moderately</i>	<i>Extremely</i>
Family Involvement	99	1	2	3	4
Mentoring	99	1	2	3	4
Academic Support	99	1	2	3	4
Financial Aid Literacy	99	1	2	3	4
Partnership with Institutions of Higher Education	99	1	2	3	4
Community Support	99	1	2	3	4
College Visits	99	1	2	3	4

## WV GEAR UP Year 3 School Personnel Survey

Access to College Professionals	99	1	2	3	4
Life Skills Development	99	1	2	3	4
College Application and Exploration Week	99	1	2	3	4

Please elaborate:

14. This last question asks about your belief in students' ability to prepare for and succeed in college. How sure are you that the majority of students...

	Not Applicable	Not at All Sure	Somewhat Sure	Sure	Very Sure
a. will not attend college but will seek a job or enter the military.	99	1	2	3	4
b. will be eligible to apply to a postsecondary institution.	99	1	2	3	4
c. can make an educational plan that will prepare them for college	99	1	2	3	4
d. can get good grades in their high school science classes	99	1	2	3	4
e. can get good grades in their high school math classes	99	1	2	3	4
f. can choose the high school classes needed to get into college	99	1	2	3	4
g. know enough about computers/technology to get into college	99	1	2	3	4
h. can go to college after high school	99	1	2	3	4
i. could get A's and B's in College	99	1	2	3	4
j. could finish college and receive a college degree	99	1	2	3	4

15. Please use this space for additional comments, questions, or concerns:



## West Virginia GEAR UP Evaluation

### Adult Interview and Focus Group Consent Form

West Virginia postsecondary leaders and public schools in 10 counties are participating in a federal grant to implement and assess the effectiveness of the GEAR UP program to promote college awareness and enrollment among low-income students across the state. The grant's fiscal agent, the West Virginia Higher Education Postsecondary Commission (The Commission), has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of this grant program to better understand strategies used to meet program goals. As part of this important research, you are being asked to participate in an interview that should take approximately 45-60 minutes. The discussion will include questions about your opinions and experiences with GEAR UP. Please consider the details below prior to deciding to participate in this interview:

- **Confidentiality:** The session will be recorded either by audio files or written notes. The recordings of what you share will only be used by researchers. Data will be stored in a secure area accessible only to the researchers. Your answers to these questions will be kept confidential. Summary reports may indicate particular individuals by the roles they describe but challenges and successes will be reported confidentially.
- **Risks:** The study presents minimal risk to you. You will not be required to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer and reports will not identify you by name. If you feel uncomfortable while answering questions you may cease participation at any time without penalties and without loss of any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.
- **Benefits:** Study participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students in building momentum for postsecondary education success. Where appropriate, the Commission and participating postsecondary institutions can use the information learned to adjust GEAR UP programming.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation is voluntary, meaning that you do not have to participate in this interview if you do not want to; you may stop participating at any time. We hope you will participate in the conversation, but you do not have to share information that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your decision to participate or withdraw from the study at any time will not affect your employment status or performance review. By providing your verbal consent, you are consenting to participate.

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a study participant, you can contact Nate Hixson, ICF, at (434) 205-0478.



## West Virginia GEAR UP Evaluation

### Adult Interview and Focus Group Consent Form

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- **Confidentiality:** The session will be recorded either by audio files or written notes. The recordings of what you share will only be used by researchers. Data will be stored in a secure area accessible only to the researchers. Your answers to these questions will be kept confidential. Summary reports may indicate particular individuals by the roles they describe but challenges and successes will be reported confidentially.
- **Risks:** The study presents minimal risk to you. You will not be required to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer and reports will not identify you by name. If at any time you feel uncomfortable while answering questions or want to talk with someone after the discussion, please let the interviewer know.
- **Benefits:** Study participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students in building momentum for postsecondary education success. Where appropriate, HEPC and participating postsecondary institutions can use the information learned to adjust GEAR UP programming.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation is voluntary meaning that you do not have to participate in this interview or focus group if you do not want to; you can stop participating at any time. We hope you will participate in the conversation, but you do not have to share information that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your decision to participate or withdraw from the study at any time, will not affect your employment status or performance review. By answering questions and signing below, you are consenting to participate.

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a study participant, you can call Nate Hixson, ICF, at (434) 205-0478.

**To indicate your consent to participate in this interview, please sign your name below in black/blue ink pen.**

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Sign your name here

---

Date

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Clearly print your name here

# West Virginia GEAR UP Evaluation

## 2017 County Coordinator Interview Protocol

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### Interviewer Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself as a representative of ICF and describe your role.
- Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: Explain that the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (the Commission) has contracted with ICF to conduct an independent evaluation of the West Virginia GEAR UP program. The purpose of this interview is to learn more about the program's operation and activities. Explain that this is not an evaluation of county coordinators or other GEAR UP personnel. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes.
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: Remind them (1) The interview is voluntary; (2) they can decline to answer any questions or stop participating at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence, to the extent permitted by law, by the evaluation team, who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) ICF maintains data in secure areas.
- Ask for an individual's verbal consent to participate and ask if they have any questions before you begin. As the interviews will be conducted by phone, ICF will rely on verbal consent.
- Ask permission to record the interview: State that: "In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the interview. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify you will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared." **START RECORDER**

**1. We'd like to learn more about your responsibilities outside of GEAR UP. What is your job title and what tasks do you perform for your county?**

*Do you think your position is a good fit for the County Coordinator role? Why?*

*If you could recommend any person or any county position to be the GEAR UP county coordinator, who would you choose? Why? What qualities are important in performing the County Coordinator role well?*

**2. Please tell us what you do as a county coordinator for GEAR UP. What is a typical month like for you in this role?**

*Probe for breadth of responsibilities as well as their frequency.*

*What are the primary tasks you complete related to budgeting and finance? Can you describe the programmatic tasks you complete for GEAR UP?*

*Which of the tasks you just described are part of the GEAR UP workplan and which are not? Are there any tasks you think it would be helpful for the Commission to add to the workplan for county coordinators?*

# West Virginia GEAR UP Evaluation

## 2017 County Coordinator Interview Protocol

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3. **How, if at all, has your GEAR UP role or workload changed since Year 1 of the grant?**
4. **Looking at GEAR UP in your county, what do you think is working well? Why? What is not working well or could be improved?**

*Probe for specific examples – both fiscal and programmatic.*

5. **What, if anything, do you need to be more effective as a county coordinator?**

*Probe for resources/communication from the Commission, schools, community and higher education partners, advisory board members.*

6. **How often and using what methods do you communicate with your county's GEAR UP site coordinators? With GEAR UP regional program directors? With other Commission staff? Are you satisfied with the current levels of communication? How could they be improved?**

7. **How would you describe the work of the county's College Access and Success Advisory Board? Your role with the board? What are your board's successes and challenges?**

*Probe for information about the number of meetings that they have held, how many members make up their board, who is part of their board, and what type of actions or projects have they completed up to this point. What can GEAR UP do to support this board and aid its growth?*

8. **GEAR UP is reviewing the role of county coordinators and would like feedback from those who've served in this role before revising the workplan for next year. What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county coordinator role?**

*Probe for what is working in the role and what is not.*

9. **Is there anything else we should know to better understand the GEAR UP program in your county or identify ways to improve GEAR UP's service to your county or participating schools?**

**Thank you for your time.**

# West Virginia GEAR UP Evaluation

## Spring 2017 Focus Group Guide for Site Coordinators at High Schools

### Facilitator Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself and colleagues as representatives of ICF and describe your roles (i.e., facilitator, note taker).
- Briefly discuss the focus group’s purpose: Explain that the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (the Commission) has contracted with ICF to conduct an independent evaluation of the West Virginia GEAR UP program. The purpose of this focus group is to learn more about the program’s operation and activities. Explain that this is not an evaluation of site coordinators, their schools, or other GEAR UP personnel. They can agree or disagree with comments, but only one person speaks at a time. The session will take approximately 45-50 minutes.
- Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: Remind them (1) The focus group is voluntary; (2) they can decline to answer any questions or stop participating at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by the evaluation team, who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) ICF maintains focus group data in secure areas; and (5) please respect each other’s confidentiality by not sharing any information outside of this focus group.
- Ask if they have any questions before you begin. Hand out consent forms, review, and ask them to sign before the focus group begins.
- Ask permission to record the focus group: State that: *“In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses not to have the focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify an individual will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared.”* **START RECORDER NOW!**

Time	Questions	Facilitator’s Activity
<b>5 min</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> Please introduce yourself, your school, how long you’ve been with GEAR UP, and your role at the school in addition to GEAR UP (teacher, counselor, etc.).	Probe: Are you the only GEAR UP site coordinator at your school or part of a team of site coordinators? If part of a team, what is your specific responsibility in the school?
<b>5-7 min</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION AND BUY-IN</b> Could you talk about how GEAR UP is going in your school this year? What activities were provided to students, parents, and teachers? How have you built awareness and buy-in throughout your school for GEAR UP? For those of you who have been involved for more than one year, how has buy-in changed since the first year of the grant?	Probe for college application week, financial aid/awareness workshops, student leadership academy, college decision days, tutoring.  Probe for trends across sites, any barriers/challenges, and lessons learned on school buy-in.
<b>5 min</b>	<b>INTERACTION</b> In what ways and how often do you interact with Commission personnel about the work you are doing through GEAR UP (e.g., regional program directors, project director)?  In what ways and how often do you interact with your county coordinator about GEAR UP? For those of you	Identify common threads across the schools.  Probe whether contact is ongoing and consistent.  Probe for differences in participant views and possible reasons for this.

## West Virginia GEAR UP Evaluation

Spring 2017 Focus Group Guide for Site Coordinators at High Schools

	<p>who have been involved for more than this past year, how has this changed over time?</p> <p>How satisfied are you with the information and resources you receive related to GEAR UP? How could they be improved?</p>	
<b>5 min</b>	<p><b>PARTNERS</b></p> <p>How have local <i>college and university</i> partners been involved in GEAR UP at your school over the past year, and what resources have they provided?</p> <p>What <i>community partners</i> have you worked with on GEAR UP over the past year, and what resources have they provided?</p>	<p>Probe for satisfaction with level and extent of involvement by postsecondary partner institutions as well as other partners.</p> <p>Probe for strategies perceived as successful in achieving support from college/university and/or community partners?</p>
<b>5 min</b>	<p><b>PARENT INVOLVEMENT</b></p> <p>How involved are parents in GEAR UP at your school? How, if at all, has this improved since your school became involved in GEAR UP?</p>	<p>Probe for strategies perceived as effective or ineffective and new strategies designed for parents of high school students.</p>
<b>3-5 min</b>	<p><b>PRIORITY STUDENTS</b></p> <p>For coordinators currently working with high school seniors, how have services for priority students evolved this year? What strategies have worked/not worked?</p>	<p>Probe for promising practices and lessons learned.</p>
<b>5 min</b>	<p><b>HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION</b></p> <p>What role do you think GEAR UP played in helping students prepare for the transition to high school? What were your major successes and challenges in serving 9<sup>th</sup> graders this year?</p>	<p>Probe for GEAR UP role in registering for courses, learning about high school graduation requirements. Probe for lessons learned and best practices.</p>
<b>7 min</b>	<p><b>IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY</b></p> <p>What do you think has been working well in GEAR UP at your site over the past year? What could be improved?</p> <p>If your school was involved in GEAR UP before this year, what, if any, services have been sustained for younger students after the cohort moved onto ninth grade?</p> <p>For those of you who are new to GEAR UP, what services do you believe can be sustained for future 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in your school?</p>	<p>Probe for views on the impact on homework completion, test scores, course completion, grades, high school graduation, etc.</p> <p>Probe for other impacts (financial aid knowledge, impact on staff/faculty, parent involvement, etc.) and for impact on priority as well as cohort students.</p> <p>Probe for which services may most difficult to sustain.</p>
<b>2 min</b>	<p><b>CLOSING</b></p> <p>Is there anything else we should know to understand the GEAR UP program at your school?</p>	

*Thank you very much for your time.*