COLLEGE READY Strategy &

GEAR UP Southern West Virginia (GEAR UP SWV)

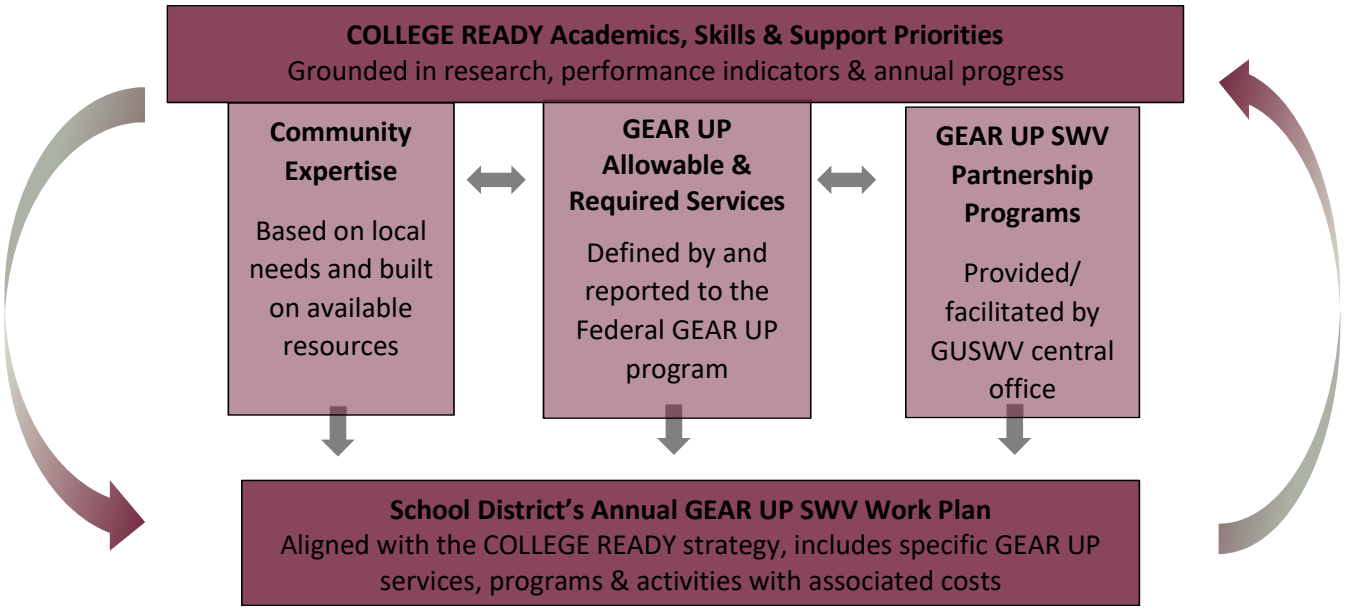
Work Plan Implementation Guide

Grant Year 02

GEAR UP SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA
CONCORD • NEW RIVER CTC

This COLLEGE READY Strategy & GEAR UP Southern West Virginia (GEAR UP SWV) Work Plan Implementation Guide for Grant Year 02 (GY02) provides information and resources to help your school prepare all students and their families to enroll and complete college. Adapted from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guide, Helping Students Navigate the Path to College, this COLLEGE READY strategy should guide annual GEAR UP SWV Work Plans, which may reinforce the school district's mission, as well as school improvement and guidance counseling plan(s). Over the course of the seven-year GEAR UP SWV grant, our hope is that this COLLEGE READY strategy becomes sustainable – with or without direct GEAR UP funds – and makes a positive impact on the lives of students, families, and educators across the Southern West Virginia Appalachian region. Now let's GEAR UP to be COLLEGE READY!

COLLEGE READY Strategy & GEAR UP Work Plan Process



Need a GEAR UP Refresher?
Top 10 Things to Try to Remember!

1. GEAR UP is a federal grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, and established by the 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA).

2. GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

3. GEAR UP is designed to increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education immediately after high school.

4. The U.S. Department of Education provides six- or seven-year grants to states and partnerships to provide GEAR UP services at middle schools where more than 50% of the students in the 7th grade qualify for free and/or reduced lunch and the respective feeder high school.

5. Specifically, GEAR UP grantees serve an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the 7th grade and follows the cohort of both students and their families into and throughout high school.

6. GEAR UP offers both state and partnership grants. Partnership grants consist of one or more local school districts, one or more higher education institutions, and at least two community partners.

7. GEAR UP partners are required to match federal dollars 1 to 1 (dollar to dollar).

8. The GEAR UP objectives for all grantees are:
    - Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students.
    - Increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of GEAR UP students.
    - Increase GEAR UP students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing.
    - Increase the number of students who build and exhibit social, emotional, and academic resilience.

9. GEAR UP serves students and their families through early awareness and academic readiness by providing GEAR UP services tailored to their specific needs. These services range from academic tutoring, summer programs, college visits, career exploration, mentoring, financial aid counseling, academic and career counseling, workshops, and family events. GEAR UP also can provide professional development services to educators and GEAR UP staff.

10. GEAR UP is a data-driven initiative that is evaluated annually throughout the grant project to assess progress toward project goals, objectives, and performance indicators.

For more information:

National Council for Community and Education Partnerships: www.edpartnerships.org/
Federal GEAR UP program: www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html

COLLEGE READY Academics, Skills & Support Priorities – GY02

During GY02, GEAR UP SWV will focus on the following research-based COLLEGE READY priorities that are aligned to the grant's overall goals, objectives, and performance indicators, as well as nationally defined allowable and required GEAR UP services. These priorities are categorized as either academic, skills, or support to prepare students and their families to be college ready. We ask that your school district incorporate these priorities into your COLLEGE READY Strategy and, in turn, the GY02 GEAR UP SWV Work Plan. During the beginning of the seven-year grant cycle, these priorities are more specific, and over the course of the project will evolve based on formative evaluation at the overall project and school district levels. For a more detailed explanation of each priority along with guiding questions and supporting research to assist you in analyzing resources and/or needs in your community, refer to the corresponding appendix in bold below. Additionally, please see the table below for an overview which includes examples of GEAR UP services/programs that can be associated with each priority.

COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	GEAR UP SERVICE/ PROGRAM (EXAMPLES)
Academics	1. Increase access to and completion of a **rigorous academic curriculum** for ALL students. This may be exposure to Algebra I as early as the 8th grade, or any other preparation for future advanced coursework in high school (i.e., honors, AP/IB, dual college enrollment).	• Professional development for educators to increase capacity for teaching algebra in middle school (math circles). • Saturday Academy series (academic tutoring) for math rigor that uses project-based STEM topics with a STEM-based college visit for participants at the end of the series (STEM boxes or STEM lab/class).
Skills	2. **Strengthen academic performance with high expectations for ALL students**, especially for students who may be economically disadvantaged, in the 8th grade math and reading end-of-grade tests.	• After-school tutoring four days a week with transportation included for students who need more assistance in math and reading as designated by benchmark testing and teacher/family requests.
	3. Prepare ALL students and their families as early as the 6th grade with **family-focused college planning, college match, and financial aid knowledge** through counseling/advising/academic planning/career counseling and parent workshop services. Ensure that the family-focused services empower families as leaders in their community to share this information and are accessible to families who speak Spanish.	• Partner with community college financial aid offices to host middle school financial aid/financial literacy workshops around the community. • Identify family members to lead family supportive services/Host a Family Night. • Create CFWV accounts for all students. • Get a Life -Cohort 2 (8th graders) • Everfi-financial literacy
	4. Ensure that ALL students and families have the opportunity to have **exposure through college visits**. These college visits should expose students, their families, and educators to the sincere belief that ALL students can go to college and that with planning you can find the right fit/match, emphasize the need for students to be prepared with a rigorous academic curriculum in secondary school, be interactive, and share college planning and financial aid knowledge. The	• Organize college visits to a local college for the entire cohort that is connected to STEM careers and the curriculum. Math and science teachers work with community college faculty to plan lessons leading up to and during the visit with a "student showcase" while on campus. These teachers and family members are invited to the college visits and have a special session with the financial aid office. CU, NRCTC, WVTECH, etc.

	most effective college visits are when students, families, and teachers work together to be prepared for the visit and reflect afterwards.	• Students participate in follow-up virtual sessions with faculty and undergraduate students who they met during the college visits and write about their experiences in letters to their future selves.
Support	5. Provide **non-cognitive support for ALL students,** including students who may be economically disadvantaged, to help with success in standardized tests. Non-cognitive support may be of assistance in improving self-confidence, setting long-term goals, and identifying ways to improve.	In conjunction with college readiness skills: • Provide a brown bag lunch workshop series, in collaboration with the counselors, for students in need of help in specific areas based on survey feedback. Incorporate topics to be included in class-time.
	6. Build and strengthen a **college-going culture** so that EVERYONE, especially teachers, students, and families, believes that ALL students are capable of attending postsecondary education, especially through **"college talk."**	• Incorporate a college-going message, or "college talk," into your school's morning announcements, entrances/ doorways/bulletin boards, in teacher's lesson plans, and during after-school/event events, bus routes, cafeteria, athletics – make it a "We Believe in You/GEAR UP to be COLLEGE READY" campaign that reaches everywhere.
	7. Provide support for 8th grade students and families as they **transition** to the 9th grade during the academic year and in summer programming, especially through clear articulation of courses between the middle and high school levels, and the courses needed to be prepared academically for college.	• Develop a family event for 8th grade students/families that explains the HS course selection process, importance of rigorous courses, and GPA. • Host a summer program where rising 9th grade students experience HS academics and social aspects. • Provide informational workshops on the HS courses needed to meet minimum course requirements for WV 4-year public universities. Admissions 101 WV Graduation Requirements
	8. Establish a **comprehensive mentoring program** for students who are not on track to being promoted to the next grade level, which may involve near-peer mentors, college students, or business/career mentors.	• Expand and train the HS senior leaders to serve as peer mentors to talk to middle school students weekly about the importance of preparing for college early by getting involved and taking academics seriously (National Honor Society).

GEAR UP Allowable & Required Services

As part of the federally funded U.S. Department of Education Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP) program, the GEAR UP SWV Partnership can provide GEAR UP services to students in eligible cohorts, their families, and corresponding educators in designated GEAR UP target schools. The eligible cohorts for GY02 are 7th, and 8th students in the 2023-2024 academic year, and then the same cohort of students in the summer of 2024 as they are rising 8th and 9th grade students. Once GEAR UP services are provided and entered the Performance Insights System (Pi), these services are reported annually to the U.S. Department of Education by Concord University along with progress towards grant goals and objectives. The following table lists the allowable GEAR UP services, as identified by the Higher Education Act and GEAR UP regulations, and required GEAR UP services, as determined by the U.S. Department of Education GEAR UP Annual Performance Report and noted below by the asterisk (*). These definitions are adapted from the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC) in partnership with the National Council on Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP): GEAR UP Student and Parent/Family Definitions: Guidelines for GEAR UP Program Services.

GEAR UP Service Impact

Participated in at least 1 or more of the following GEAR UP service:	Increased likelihood of enrolling in postsecondary education compared to students who did not participate in the service:
Parents on the College Visit	Almost **3x**
Counseling/Advising/Academic Planning/Career Counseling	**2x**
College Visit	More than **1 ½ x**
Parents at a Workshop	More than **1 ½ x**

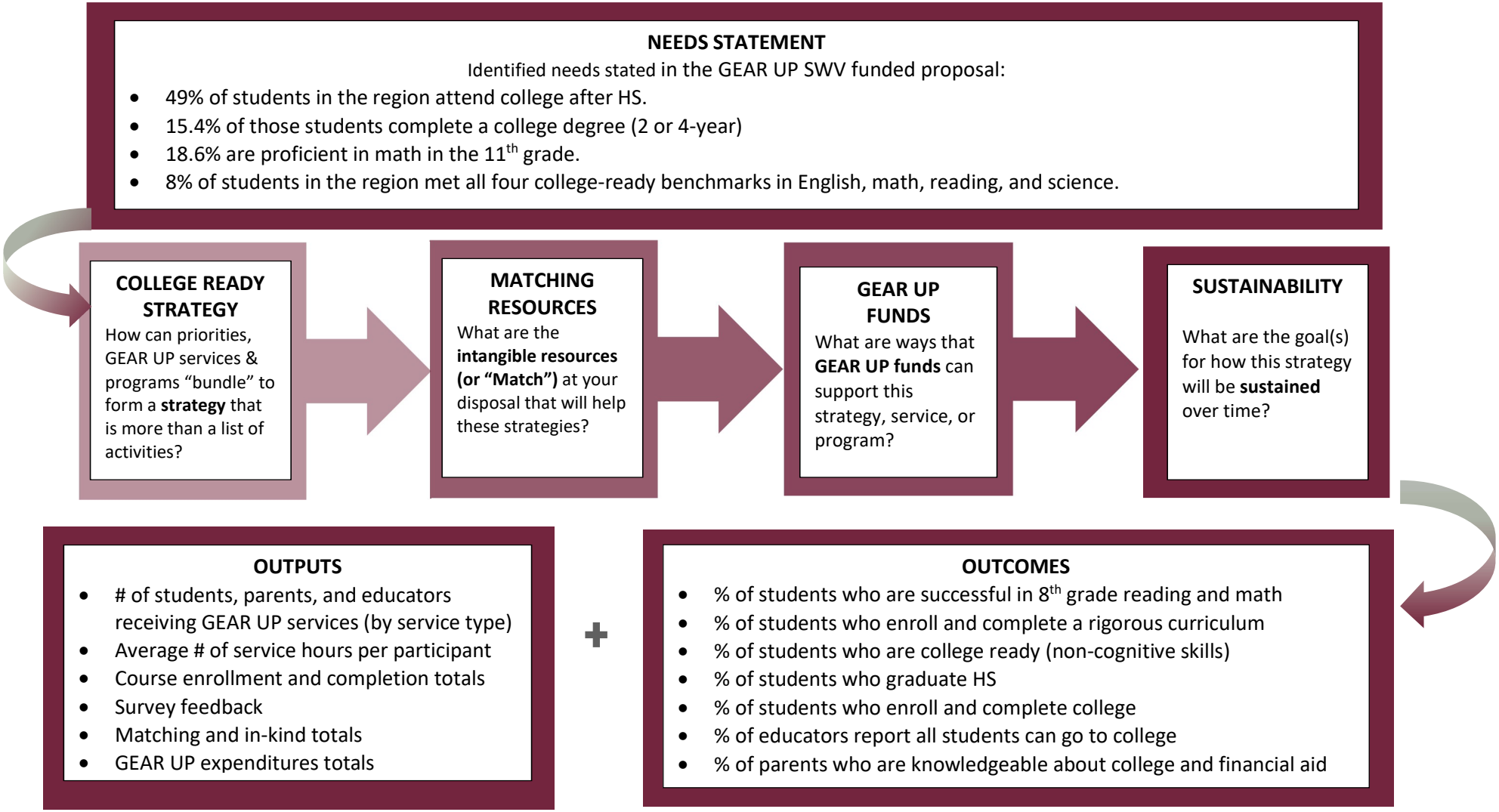
GEAR UP Service Definitions

GEAR UP Service	Definition
Tutoring/Homework Assistance/Academic Enrichment	Provide additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students. Tutoring can occur one-on-one or in small groups before school, during school, after school, during study or lunch breaks, or on weekends and be provided by GEAR UP staff, hired tutors, teachers, trained peers, and/or volunteers.
Comprehensive Mentoring*	Provided when GEAR UP staff, teachers, or other school staff identifies students who would benefit from an ongoing supportive relationship with a trained, caring adult or older student, i.e., "mentor." Typical issues addressed during mentoring meetings include academic, social, organization or life skill development. Per the 2008 HEOA, must provide students with financial aid information, encourage students to stay in school, enroll in rigorous coursework, and apply to postsecondary education.
Financial Aid Counseling/Advising*	Assist students understanding and navigating the complexities of financial aid, including providing hands-on assistance with the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and scholarship applications, presentations on financial aid or literacy, using financial aid or literacy curriculum, and the benefits of participation in college savings plans.
Counseling/Advising/ Academic Planning/ Career Counseling	Services span a spectrum of activities with individual students or small groups of students. *Counseling:* Discussing personal growth issues such as decision making, problem-solving, goal setting, attendance, behavior concerns, or family issues. *Advising*: Assistance on course selection (secondary or postsecondary), college and/or career choices, or college and/or career planning. *Academic planning***:** Assistance on coursework selection, course of study choices, college major selection, assessment advising or interpretation of scores, or assistance with placement tests. *Career counseling:* Assistance with career choices, career planning, internships, or career interests.
College Visit/College Student Shadowing	*College Visit:* A physical visit to a college campus by a student facilitated/supervised/led by GEAR UP SWV staff, teachers, college representatives, or other school staff. College visits should include an official tour, presentation(s) by admissions, financial aid, academic departments, student affairs, residence life, multicultural affairs, or other college departments. *College Student Shadowing:* A one-on-one experience in which a student spends a day on a college campus with an undergraduate student seeing typical college life.

Job Site Visit/Job Shadowing	Offers students exposure to the workplace in an occupational area of interest and reinforces the link between classroom learning, work requirements, and the need for postsecondary education. Students witness the work environment, employability and occupational skills in practice, the value of professional training, and potential career options. *Job site visit:* A physical visit to a local business/work environment facilitated/supervised/led by GEAR UP staff, teachers, or other school staff. Job site visits should include visits to local businesses, employers, and agencies to explore different professions or career selections, and can be followed by job shadowing. *Job shadowing:* A one-on-one experience in which a school student spends a day at a business or work environment with an employee seeing typical job duties.
Summer Programs	Includes an experience over one or multiple days during the summer (or other non-school year time, i.e., for year-round schools). Summer programs could be a local summer camp funded by GEAR UP, a residential GEAR UP program hosted by a college/university/community organization, or another camp attended by a GEAR UP student that supports the GEAR UP mission. These programs include academic enrichment, rigorous academic curriculum, college preparatory programs/camp experience, credit recovery, and/or remediation programs.
Educational Field Trips	Services during which students leave their school or travel to another location and include an academic component that is linked to classroom activities. Examples would include a science demonstration on a college campus (the purpose of the event was the science demonstration not a college visit), a class trip to attend a science or history museum linked to curriculum, academic competitions, cultural experiences such as performing arts, museums, or similar activity, and field trips that complement and enhance existing curriculum.
Student Workshops	Include interactive informational classroom-level or large- or small-group sessions that involve hands-on experience for each student in the workshop. Workshops are offered to groups of students on topics such as secondary school success and college awareness, and general elements of college readiness such as study skills, self-monitoring, goal setting, time management, and problem-solving. This includes guest speakers that motivate students and highlight careers. Workshops are informational in nature and are not intended to provide direct counseling or guidance to individual or small groups of students.
Parent/Family Workshops of College Prep/Financial Aid	Include a parent/guardian or adult family member's attendance with or without their child(ren) at a workshop that demonstrates how to assist their student with college preparation or financial aid information. These services include informational sessions for parents focusing on college entrance requirements and financial aid opportunities.
Parent/Family Counseling/Advising	Services span a spectrum of activities that can include one-on-one or small group advising for parents/guardians/adult family member designed to meet the specific needs of the individuals engaged in the activity. These services include when a parent/guardian or adult family member meets with the GEAR UP school staff or counselor, with or without a student, to discuss student's academic goals, college plans, school progress, etc. *Counseling:* Meeting with parents/guardians to discuss student's personal growth issues such as decision making, goal setting, behavior concerns, family issues, home visits, etc. *Advising:* Providing individual assistance to parents/guardians on their student's college planning.
Parent/Family College Visit	A physical visit to a college campus by a parent/guardian, with or without a student, facilitated/supervised/led by GEAR UP staff, teachers, college representatives, or other school staff. The primary objective of the event would be to conduct a college visit. Should include an official tour, presentation(s) by admissions, academic departments, athletics, student affairs, residence life, multicultural affairs, etc.
Family Events	Services in which parents or families participate. These services may or may not include GEAR UP students. Family events include GEAR UP activities that recognize the role of families in student success and are not defined under a previous category.
Professional Development	Services to educators, district/school administrators, and/or GEAR UP staff on GEAR UP implementation, rigorous academic curriculum, and/or areas connected directly to GEAR UP goals and objectives.

COLLEGE READY Strategy & GEAR UP SWV Work Plan Development Logic Model

Adapted from The Regional Educational Laboratory, the following is a logic model to guide your school district and community team, as you develop your COLLEGE READY strategy and subsequent annual GEAR UP SWV Work Plan. Our goal is that the GEAR UP SWV Work Plan will be grounded in the project's identified need, COLLEGE READY strategy including annual priorities, GEAR UP services, and available GEAR UP SWV programs. Using these inputs (including GEAR UP funds), and in conjunction with your local community expertise on available matching resources, the goal is for the annual work plan to embody a comprehensive – and sustainable – COLLEGE READY strategy for making progress towards the grant project's outputs and outcomes which stands with or without GEAR UP funds.



How to Turn Your COLLEGE READY Strategy → Sustainable GY02 GEAR UP Work Plan

So, how can we think through a COLLEGE READY Strategy for our district and connect it to our community's matching resources and GEAR UP funds, AND with the goal of sustainability? The following table is an example of what this may look like for one COLLEGE READY priority and check out each priority's appendix which includes a table for your use while brainstorming as a district/school team. Our goal is that this brainstorming tool will help your school/district in analyzing how the COLLEGE READY Strategy can turn into a sustainable GY02 GEAR UP Work Plan.

EXAMPLE

COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY	MATCHING RESOURCES	GEAR UP FUNDS	SUSTAINABILITY
SKILLS	**Family-Focused College Planning, Match & Financial Aid Knowledge**	Form a monthly Family Workshop series, or "Family U" that empowers families as leaders in the college planning process and focuses on college knowledge, matching, financial aid information and course planning/transition advising. Use a quick 10 question survey to gauge topics, aligned with GEAR UP performance indicators that parents are requesting more information on. These workshops work to build the community's college-going culture, provide a family leadership network which will increase family participation in at least one GEAR UP service through a word-of-mouth network.	Aligned with the district's mission for family engagement, the School Improvement Plan's objective is to increase family participation in school events, and the School Counseling Department's goal is to provide access to college knowledge beyond the student. Family members share their questions with each other – even if they cannot attend – to help with the planning process. Community mentors from a local business serve as speakers, local university space used for parent meetings, volunteer college admissions directors for mock application workshops.	Printing fliers/posters to spread awareness, individually wrapped snacks and drinks for participants, bus driver salary and gas for bus routes to and from the workshops. Salary for GEAR UP Coordinator to facilitate the parent's ideas, volunteers, space accommodations, and getting the word out through district/school communications, social media, posting fliers/road signs, and submitting requests for free radio and newspaper mentions.	The Parent Leaders' Group uses the momentum of the Family U Workshop Series to develop more workshops on what it means to be college ready and get different community locations and businesses to host the workshops for free and donate food/drinks. By GY03 "Family U" serves as a network for families to take ownership of and share info with each other to better support their students as they plan for college and academically excel in middle and high school. The families who participated in GY02 get the word out to other families who were not previously in attendance and grow the program by this word-of-mouth approach. Through surveys/feedback, the entire "Family U" series is "home-grown and run mostly by the parent group.

Developing Your GEAR UP Work Plan – Nuts and Bolts

Here are some administrative and financial points to consider when creating your GEAR UP SWV Work Plan. They are in accordance with GEAR UP regulations and institutional policies as specified in Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, Concord University Office of Sponsored Programs.

1. Expenditures must be for meeting GEAR UP goals, objectives, and performance indicators.
2. Funds budgeted for GEAR UP programming may not be redirected.
3. All expenditures must support a program outlined in the work plan and budget.
4. Any changes to the work plan must be submitted as an amendment and approved by GEAR UP SWV prior to spending funds.
5. Funds may be used to supplement existing programs, but not to supplant them.
6. Funds must be spent to benefit the most students and families as much as possible.

Name It!

When creating the work plan, please include a name for the service provided (i.e., College Visit). This allows for easy tracking through the reimbursement process. A Work Plan Template is provided on our webpage at https://www.concord.edu/gearup. A description of each activity is required and should include:

- Number of cohort students/families to be served by the activity.
- Grade level of the students/families to be served by the activity.
- Brief description of how the activity addresses the goals of the GEAR UP grant project.

Costs

The breakout column asks for details on the projected costs of the activity, specifically:

- Food
- Transportation (bus mileage, bus gas)
- Stipends and/or salaries
- Cost of materials
- Teacher substitutes when classroom teachers are accompanying a group on a GEAR UP related activity.

Work Plan Amendments

Sometimes, it may become necessary to make changes to the Work Plan to take advantage of opportunities as they arrive and to update programming to best meet the needs of the students and families served. Amendments can be added to the Work Plan in the final section of the template. It is important to note the date of the amendment so that changes can be tracked during the reimbursement process. The amended Work Plan then needs to be submitted to the GEAR UP SWV Director for approval before any funds are expended. The GEAR UP SWV Director will initial and date the amendment once approved. It is important to note that any amendments cannot take projected expenditure beyond the budget set for the year.

Funding and Reimbursements/Match Requirements

GEAR UP SWV will provide an estimate of available funds to the District Liaison in May each year. The GEAR UP SWV Regional Advisory Council develops a work plan for the coming year including a GEAR UP SWV budget for each district school participating in the program. Schools/districts advance approved GEAR UP expenses through the month. Each month, the district finance officer submits a reimbursement claim for funds spent on GEAR UP programming. A reimbursement request/matching documentation form **(doc. 2-reimbursement tab)** needs to be attached for each activity or service included in the month's reimbursement claim. The reimbursement request/matching documentation form should be attached to all documents relating to the coordinating activity, such as bus driver pay, mileage costs, meal purchases, and any other costs. The GEAR UP SWV finance manager will make every effort to process reimbursement claims promptly. The process will be speedier when all required documentation is submitted with the claim. This documentation includes:

- A reimbursement request form for each activity
- An agenda or schedule for the approved activity
- Rosters and/or sign-in sheets indicating participating students and families.
- A list of the names of staff participating
- Costs for registration and/or materials used in the activity.
- Appropriate purchase orders

Database Entry

Reimbursements will not be processed until the activities and services for which the reimbursement is requested have been entered into the early alert database for Performance Insights System (Pi). It is the responsibility of the Local GEAR UP Coordinator to enter this data. The reimbursement request form has a box for the Local Coordinator to check indicating that the appropriate data has been entered into the database.

All GEAR UP SWV policies and forms can be found on our webpage: https://www.concord.edu/gearup

COLLEGE READY GEAR UP SWV Programs & Expectations

Outlined in the funded grant proposal, and in addition to allowable and required GEAR UP services, partner school districts should incorporate the following COLLEGE READY GEAR UP SWV programs and initiatives into their local GEAR UP SWV Work Plan. The expectation outlined next to each program serves as a minimum guideline, and many districts will plan and implement above this threshold. This table also includes U.S. Department of Education requirements for all GEAR UP grant projects.

COLLEGE READY	Program Provided by GEAR UP SWV	Overview	Expectation
Academics	**1. Online Tutoring**	In partnership with The Princeton Review, online tutoring will support students academically in Reading and Math.	Recruit Teachers to participate to introduce their students to Tutor.com
Skills	**2. Developing a College Identity Course Curriculum**	Utilize the developmental curriculum developed by the GEAR UP SWV grant to help students develop a college-going identity.	At least 30 minutes per week instruction to every student
	3. College/ Campus Visits	Initiated by a local school GEAR UP SWV Coordinator and hosted accredited 2- or 4-year postsecondary institution. During these visits, students, their families, and educators can experience college first-hand with information sessions from admissions, financial aid, a campus tour, student services/advising, faculty, and undergraduate/graduate student leaders.	At least 1 college visit per semester for a group of 30 students, parents, and educators
	4. Entrepreneurial Education	Programming includes hosting group campus visits, teaching students' entrepreneurial skills, and facilitating case challenge competitions.	Recruit 1 educator to incorporate the activity into the curriculum and attend with a student group
	5. Resilience		
	6. Summer Programming		Recruit students at each school
	7. Growth Mindset		
Support	**8. Mentoring**	Based on Mentoring.org's Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring the GEAR UP SWV will help provide the infrastructure and framework for local schools to develop a near-peer, college student, and/or community/business mentoring program. Some Concord students will be available and provide professional development to support local GEAR UP mentoring programs.	Establish or further develop a mentoring program that supports at least 10 students who need additional support

	9. Evidence-Based Practices	In partnership with Vela Institute, the Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) is a professional development opportunity. The goal is for participating educators and school administrators to inform the policy-making process by implementing research-based interventions and evaluating their effectiveness.	Identify and recruit 3 schools to participate annually
	10. National GEAR UP for College Week *September 25-29, 2023*	From National Council on Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) colleagues, "Join thousands of students, parents, teachers, partners, and college access professionals from across the nation to celebrate GEAR UP and the successes of your hard work and dedication! National GEAR UP Week is an opportunity for you to raise awareness in your community about the positive impact GEAR UP is having locally. It's a time to engage all your stakeholders – local, state, and federal elected officials, funders, partners, as well as local, state, and regional media – to share your program's accomplishments and to get them more involved with your services to students and families." This annual event is a great time to kick-off the new school year with a positive message about GEAR UP SWV and the importance of planning early through college, as well as incorporate "college talk" throughout the school and community.	During this week, provide at least 1 GEAR UP service to your students and families which may include a college visit, workshop, counseling/advising; Incorporate "college talk" into your school through morning announcements, parent messages, bulletin boards/door decorating, college t-shirts, "Ask Me About It" signs, and more!
U.S. Dept. of Education	**11. GEAR UP Professional Development**	GEAR UP professionals, school leaders, educators, counselors, parents, and students benefit from attending annual national GEAR UP professional development Annual Conference and Capacity Building Workshop hosted by the National Council on Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP). Additionally, GEAR UP SWV will host quarterly meetings to provide professional development on GEAR UP implementation and other college ready topics for GEAR UP Coordinators.	Each county should send a team to NCCEP Annual Conference and Capacity Building Workshop. GEAR UP Coordinators attend quarterly meetings
	12. Student and Parent Surveys	Every two years (including GY02), GEAR UP SWV Partnership is required by the U.S. Department of Education to administer student and parent surveys that include, at minimum, specific questions about college and financial aid awareness and aspirations. GEAR UP SWV Partnership will provide these surveys and then compile results for submission through the Annual Performance Report (Scroll to Appendix A for the questions). GEAR UP SWV may add more survey questions, and these data will be available to school districts to use for program planning.	Provide surveys to every student and parent in the eligible cohort and collect as many completed surveys as possible. Target return rate of 85% for students and 50% for parents

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 1

Priority	COLLEGE READY Academics – Rigorous Academic Curriculum
Overview	Increase access to and completion of a **rigorous academic curriculum** for ALL students. This may be exposure to Algebra I as early as the 8th grade, or any other preparation for future advanced coursework in high school (i.e., honors, AP/IB, dual college enrollment).
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	**1.** The percentage of students completing Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade will increase by 5% annually in years 3 and 4. (Federal Performance Measure) **2.** The average daily attendance will increase to 95%- baseline 93.1% **3.** The percentage of cohort students promoted to the next grade will be maintained at 99.7%

Supporting Research	• Research shows that it is important for students to master several content areas and skills before college:
	  ○ Content Areas: Math higher than Algebra II, English, lab science courses, foreign language, history and social studies, Computer science, and at least one AP course (Adelman)
	  ○ Skills: Reading and writing skills, formulating problems, conducting research, interpreting conflicting evidence, communicating conclusions and findings, completion of work with precision and accuracy (Conley)
	• "Exposure to a rigorous curriculum is a better predictor of academic success in college than such variables as the education level of parents, test scores, class rank, GPA, or family background." (Jobs for the Future, 2008)
	• "The academic intensity of the student's high school curriculum still counts more than anything else...in providing momentum toward completing a bachelor's degree." (Adelman, 2006)
	• "Students who take a challenging curriculum, beginning in the middle school, tend to perform better academically in high school and are better prepared for college than those who take less rigorous courses." (ACT, 2004)
	• "MS students who take rigorous courses such as Algebra I can enroll in advanced and higher-level courses in high school, and students in these higher-level courses are likely to get information about postsecondary opportunities and likely to apply to a four-year college." (Atanda, 1999)
	• "Many students underestimate what classes they will need to adequately prepare for college, and many middle school students do not take the courses prerequisite for advanced high school classes" (Wimberly & North, 2005)
	• "Schools that have implemented a rigorous curriculum ensure teachers are well prepared to teach high quality college prep courses by aligning hiring practices and professional development directly to college readiness goals." (Ed Trust, ACT)
	• More reading:
	  ○ Examples of College Preparatory Course Requirements (starting at page 13 from Institute of Education Sciences Practice Guide, Helping Students Navigate the Path to College: What High Schools Can Do (Tierney, 2008)
	  ○ Bridging the Gap: Academic Preparation and Postsecondary (Warbur, Bugarin, Nuñez, 2001)
	  ○ The Characteristics of a Rigorous Classroom (Blackburn, 2009)
	  ○ A Rigorous Curriculum Really Matters (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2013)
	  ○ SAT Benchmarks: Development of a College Readiness Benchmark and its Relationship to Secondary and Postsecondary School (Wyatt, Kobrin, Wiley, Camara & Proestler, 2011)

Guiding Questions	• What rigorous academic courses are available to our middle school students?
	  ○ How can more students access these courses? How could all courses be rigorous?
	• Does our district offer Algebra I to students in the 8th grade?
	  ○ If yes, then how are students identified to take this course? How could more students have this opportunity?
	  ○ If not, then what are the barriers/gaps? How could GEAR UP bridge these gaps?
	• What does the academic transition for registering for HS courses look like?
	  ○ How could more students and families become aware of the HS course selection process and offerings?
	• What professional development is already available to educators for increasing academic rigor in the classroom?
	  ○ How could GEAR UP help supplement this?

Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Saturday Academy series (tutoring) for math rigor that uses project-based STEM topics with a college visit for participants. • Academic tutoring for additional enrichment, homework help, standardized test prep • Professional development for educators for teaching advanced coursework, including for teaching Algebra in the Middle School • Workshops and family events to raise awareness of rigorous academic coursework options. • Academic advising/counseling on steps needed to prepare and register for advanced courses in the 9th grade. • Summer programs for additional enrichment and pre-Algebra support – especially for rising 9th grade students • College visits and career exploration that are specialized in areas of math and reading. • Mentoring with near pears who have been successful in advanced rigorous courses. • Incorporate academic rigor to additional district and school strategies, especially in the middle school including professional development for teachers/administrations on strategies to increase academic rigor within the classroom.

How to Turn Your COLLEGE READY Strategy → Sustainable GY02 GEAR UP Work Plan

COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY How can priorities, GEAR UP services & programs "bundle" to form a **strategy** that is more than a list of activities?	MATCHING RESOURCES What are the **intangible resources (or "Match")** at your disposal that will help these strategies?	FUNDS What are ways that **GEAR UP funds** can support this strategy, service, or program?	SUSTAINABILITY What are the goal(s) for how this strategy will be **sustained** over time?
ACADEMICS	**1. Rigorous Academic Curriculum**				

Appendix

COLLEGE READY Priority 2

Priority	COLLEGE READY Academics – Strengthen Academic Performance with High Expectations for ALL Students
Overview	Strengthen academic performance with high expectations for ALL students, especially for students who may be economically disadvantaged, in the 8th grade Math and Reading End-of-Grade tests.
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	**1.** The percentage of students completing Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade will increase by 5% annually in years 3 and 4. (Federal Performance Measure) **2.** The average daily attendance will increase to 95%- baseline 93.1% **3.** The percentage of cohort students promoted to the next grade will be maintained at 99.7%

Supporting Research	• Early math skills have the greatest predictive power for later achievement, for both high and low socioeconomic backgrounds. (Duncan, 2008)
	• High expectations should be communicated in concrete ways and what matters is the concrete, demanding but achievable goal that makes it real for all students. (Kannapel & Clemments, 2005)
	  ○ Example: "We believe that all students will go to college and in order to do so they must be academically ready so they should complete two years of math beyond Algebra I, so that means being successful in middle school math starts now."
	• "If teachers demand high expectations from their students and engage them in tasks that interest and involve them, they will promote self-esteem and build students' confidence and academic performance." (Brophy, 2008, 2010)
	• Teachers' beliefs about student potential – either through high or low expectations – becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, and this is especially powerful for students from poor families. (Ferguson, 2002)
	• "Understanding and mastering key content knowledge is achieved through the exercise of broader cognitive skills embodied within the key cognitive strategies – intellectual openness, inquisitiveness, analysis, reasoning argumentation, proof, interpretation, precision and accuracy, and problem solving." (Conley, 2007)
	• "Improvement in 8th grade academic achievement and being on target for college and career readiness in 8th grade are more beneficial than any high school-level academic enhancement." (ACT, "The Forgotten Middle," 2008)
	• More reading:
	  ○ High-performing, high-poverty schools: Research review (Center for Public Education)
	  ○ High Expectations: A Key to Success for All (Pathways to College Network)
	  ○ Reading and College Readiness (Educational Leadership)

Guiding Questions	• How do we have high expectations for all students in math? In reading? • In what ways could we strive for even higher expectations? • What goals are set by leaders in our schools? How do these goals "trickle" to everyone in the school? The students? Parents? Teachers? • What are our strengths as a school when building a culture of math achievement? In reading achievement? • How can we strengthen even more to reach every single learner in math? Reading? • In what ways can GEAR UP supplement the math curriculum – either during or after school tutoring or through college visits that will support math achievement? Reading curriculum? • How could these GEAR UP supplements be sustained overtime? How will these GEAR UP supplements be evaluated for effectiveness?
Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Academic tutoring for additional enrichment, homework help, standardized test prep • Professional development for educators on teaching concrete, high academic expectations to all kinds of learners • Family Events for literacy and math-focused project presentations by students (Read Across America, PI Day, Book Reading Jam, etc.) • Workshops and family events to raise awareness of the importance of early math skills.

	• Academic advising/counseling to share the belief that all students are capable of attending college and gain knowledge of the students' interests and how it relates to college and career. • Summer programs for literacy enrichment and math support – especially for students who may need help with transportation. • College visits and career exploration that are specialized in areas of math and reading.

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COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY How can priorities, GEAR UP services & programs "bundle" to form a **strategy** that is more than a list of activities?	MATCHING RESOURCES What are the **intangible resources (or "Match")** at your disposal that will help these strategies?	FUNDS What are ways that **GEAR UP funds** can support this strategy, service, or program?	SUSTAINABILITY What are the goal(s) for how this strategy will be **sustained** over time?
ACADEMICS	**2. Strengthen Academic Performance with High Expectations for ALL Students**				

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 3

Priority	COLLEGE READY Skills – Family-Focused College Planning, College Match & Financial Aid Knowledge
Overview	Prepare ALL students and their families as early as the 6th grade with **family-focused college planning, college match, and financial aid knowledge** through counseling/advising/academic planning/career counseling and parent workshop services. Ensure that the family-focused services empower families as leaders in their community to share this information and are accessible to families who speak Spanish.
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	4. The percentage of cohort students' enrollment rate will increase by an average of 5% in grant years 6 and 7. 7. Seniors who complete the FAFSA will increase by 10% annually in grant years 6 and 7. 8. Students and their families will report increased knowledge and expectations for postsecondary education beyond high school in years 2,4, and 6.
Supporting Research	• "Strong encouragement and support from parents is the most significant factor affecting whether students aspire to and enroll in college." (Hossler, 1999) • "First generation students report receiving less encouragement and support, and to some extent discouragement, from their parents to go to college." (Billson & Terry, 1982; Horn & Nunez, 2000; London, 1989, 1992; Terenzini et all, 1996; York-Bowman, 1991) • "Parents may lack pertinent information or have misperceptions about the college-going process, particularly about college costs and financial aid, which may lead them to discourage their children from pursuing postsecondary education." (Vargas, 2004) • Rural Appalachian HS students were more likely to expect to attend college if they felt they had parental support. (Ali and Saunders, 2006) • The degree to which Latina/o parents can assist students in this [college-going] process is limited by their own lack of college knowledge (Ceja, 2001, 2006; Tornatsky, Cutler & Lee, 2002), although they help nurture and greatly share student college aspirations. (Gandara, 1995). • More reading: o School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action (Epstein, et all, 2002) o School, Family, and Community Partnerships in the Middle Grades (Epstein, 2005) o Engaging Families at the Secondary Level: What Schools Can Do to Support Family Involvement (Ferguson & Rodriguez, 2005) o Parental Involvement in Children's Education: Considerations for School Counselors Working with Latino Immigrant Families (Gonzalez, Border, Hines, Villalba & Henderson, 2013) o Helping Latina/o Students Navigate the College Choice Process: Considerations for Secondary School Counselors (Martinez, 2013) o Parent Expectations and Planning for College (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008) o From High School to College: Potholes on the Road to College (Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2008) o The College Match Program (MDRC)
Guiding Questions	• How are families involved in the sharing of information to support their students? • How do families share their feedback/input with the school? • What types of evening workshops or events are parents invited into the school for? • Are there events for parents related to school/academics at other community-based locations? • Are these events available in Spanish? • How could GEAR UP help spread the word or empower families to spread the word about the benefits from attending these events? • What types of college planning, matching, or financing info is shared by the district/school to students and their families? • How could it be shared as a supplement to pre-existing schools, districts, or community events? o For example, how could GEAR UP be a part of a school-wide math night and share financial aid information?

	• How could this information be shared through a workshop series just dedicated to building college knowledge?
Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Host middle school college knowledge workshops that include financial aid planning by partnering with the local SECU, community college financial aid offices, and CFWV Regional Representatives and Spanish-language services. • Identify family members who have participated in GEAR UP services to lead the sessions and train each other on what they gained from the services they participated in, collect questions/input from other parents. • Create a series of student showcases (evening workshops) connected to the classroom math and literacy with families invited and information shared about the importance of going to college. • Host a Family Night early in the school year, preferably with a Q&A dialogue and student showcase that aims to create an open and safe network for future information sharing sessions.

How Turn Your COLLEGE READY Strategy → Sustainable GY02 GEAR UP Work Plan

COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY How can priorities, GEAR UP services & programs "bundle" to form a **strategy** that is more than a list of activities?	MATCHING RESOURCES What are the **intangible resources (or "Match")** at your disposal that will help these strategies?	FUNDS What are ways that **GEAR UP funds** can support this strategy, service, or program?	SUSTAINABILITY What are the goal(s) for how this strategy will be **sustained** over time?
SKILLS	**4. Family-focused college planning, college match, and financial aid knowledge**				

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 4

Priority	COLLEGE READY Skills – Exposure through College Visits
Overview	Ensure that ALL students and families have exposure through college visits. These college visits should expose students, their families, and educators to the sincere belief that ALL students can go to college and that with planning you can find the right fit/match, emphasize the need for students to be prepared with a rigorous academic curriculum in secondary school, be interactive, and share college planning and financial aid knowledge. The most effective college visits are when students, families, and teachers work together to be prepared for the visit and reflect afterwards.
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	4. The percentage of cohort students' enrollment rate will increase by an average of 5% in grant years 6 and 7. 8. Students and their families will report increased knowledge and expectations for postsecondary education beyond high school in years 2,4, and 6.
Supporting Research	• Students who are from low-income, underrepresented, and underserved communities often lack the social capital needed to succeed in postsecondary education. Social capital can be understood as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." (Bourdieu, 1986) o Therefore, the social capital gained by students who may be the first in the family to go to college and/or students who are from rural areas where there are low college attainment rates – is integral by physically experiencing the college community as early as possible. • In a study of rural Appalachian students in Mississippi, factors listed by the greatest number of respondents as having the most impact on college-going rates were college campus visits – with an average of 4 college visits per student. Here is one voice: o "Our students desperately need exposure to different college environments. While the local community college is ideal for most of our students, others would thrive in bigger school settings. Just being able to visit the other colleges around the state helped many of our students want to attend college." (King, 2012) • Recommended by the IES Practice Guide to "Engage and assist students in completing critical steps for college entry, including coordinate college visits." (Tierney, et all 2008) Specifically: o "These trips should be more than a campus tour – students should have a chance to explore campus resources, observe campus life, and interact with college students." • Based on research on the summative impact of GEAR UP services, students who participated in at least one GEAR UP college visit were 1 ½ times more likely to attend college as compared to their peers who did not participate in a college visits, and even more striking is that when the parents attended college visits, the students were 3 times more likely to enroll in college. (Tillery, 2012)
Guiding Questions	• Does our district/school take students and their families on day-long (9am-2pm) college visits? If so, where? • Are there other colleges that would be beneficial for students and families to experience outside of the immediate area? • What challenges are there to taking students and families on college visits? • What are the benefits of exposing our students and families (and educators) to college campuses, students, and faculty? • How can the district support students and families prior to the college visit so that they can get the most out of the experience? How can GEAR UP help get every student and as many families as possible on a college visit this year?
Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Ensure that the college visit is INSPIRATIONAL, and not just informational – this can be done by identifying students, faculty, and staff on the campus who can reach out to your students, parents, and teachers and motivate them to believe that they DO belong at college. • Organize 4 day-long college visits to a local community college for the entire 7th grade class (30 students for each visit) that is connected to STEM careers.

	○ Math and Science teachers work with community college faculty to plan lessons leading up to and during the visit. These teachers and family members are invited to the college visits and have a special session with the financial aid office. • Students participate in follow-up skype sessions with faculty and undergraduate students who they met during the college visits and write letters to their future selves. • Require students to set up and use a CFWV.com account prior to and after the college visit to research the university, create a list of questions, and then enter information into the account as notes for later reflection. Setting up accounts in a computer lab may be a "workshop" or during one-on-one "counseling/advising."

How Turn Your COLLEGE READY Strategy → Sustainable GY02 GEAR UP Work Plan

COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY How can priorities, GEAR UP services & programs "bundle" to form a **strategy** that is more than a list of activities?	MATCHING RESOURCES What are the **intangible resources (or "Match")** at your disposal that will help these strategies?	FUNDS What are ways that **GEAR UP funds** can support this strategy, service, or program?	SUSTAINABILITY What are the goal(s) for how this strategy will be **sustained** over time?
SKILLS	**5. Exposure through College Visits**				

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 5

Priority	COLLEGE READY Support – Non-Cognitive Support for ALL Students
Overview	Provide **non-cognitive support for ALL students,** including for students who may be economically disadvantaged, to help with success in standardized tests. Non-cognitive support may be assistance in improving self-confidence, setting long-term goals, and identifying ways to improve.
Corresponding Performance	8. Students and their families will report increased knowledge and expectations for postsecondary education beyond high school in years 2, 4, and 6.

Indicators for GY02	9. Resilience will increase in cohort students.
Supporting Research	• "Up to a point, more math and other courses are useful in preparing students for higher education. Beyond that point other variables become more important to student success." These non-cognitive areas (see list) are important predictors for college success particularly for low-income and first-generation students. (Sedlacek, 2011) 1. *Positive Self-Concept:* Demonstrates confidence, strength of character, determination, and independence. 2. *Realistic Self-Appraisal:* Recognizes and accepts any strengths and deficiencies, especially academic, and works hard at self-development. Recognizes the need to broaden his/her individuality. 3. *Understands and Knows How to Handle Racism (the System):* Exhibits a realistic view of the system based upon personal experience of racism. Committed to improving the existing system. Takes an assertive approach to dealing with existing wrongs, but is not hostile to society, nor is it a "cop-out." Able to handle racist system. 4. *Prefers Long-Range to Short-Term or Immediate Needs:* Able to respond to deferred gratification, plan ahead and set goals. 5. *Availability of Strong Support Person:* Seeks and takes advantage of a strong support network or has someone to turn to in a crisis or for encouragement. 6. *Successful Leadership Experience:* Demonstrates strong leadership in any area of his/her background (e.g., church, sports, non-educational groups, gang leader, etc.). 7. *Demonstrated Community Service:* Participates and is involved in his/her community. 8. *Knowledge Acquired in or about a Field*: Acquires knowledge in a sustained and/or culturally related ways in any field.

Guiding Questions	• What does the achievement gap look like (or is there one) between economically disadvantaged students and others for the reading and math WVGSAs across 6th, 7th, and 8th grades?
	  ○ What ways have we tried to bridge this gap? What works and what has not worked?
	  ○ How can GEAR UP support us in this?
	• In what ways would our students, especially those who are economically disadvantaged and/or would be the first person in their family to attend college, benefit from supporting/developing their non-cognitive predictors of success?
	  ○ How can these non-cognitive predictors support students in the standardized test-taking process?
	  ○ How do we as a school community help develop positive self-concept? Long-term goal setting? Leadership?
	  ○ How can GEAR UP support us in this?

Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Use a survey/assessment tool to gauge students' non-cognitive variables and needs. • Provide a lunch brown bag workshop series, in collaboration with the counselors, for students in need of help in specific areas based on survey feedback. • Incorporate topics in the weekly GEAR UP 101 class. • Connect students with leadership potential to Summer Programs or any other leadership development programs. • Empower students to be leaders as near-peer mentors to younger students about the importance of going to college, creating a community services/social entrepreneur group, and/or GEAR UP Leaders Club. • Provide counseling/advising services on goal setting with students using resources available on CFWV.com.

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SUPPORT	**6. Non-Cognitive Support for ALL Students**				

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 6

Priority	COLLEGE READY Support – College-Going Culture & "College Talk"
Overview	Build and strengthen a **college-going culture** so that EVERYONE, especially teachers, students, and families, believe that ALL students can attend postsecondary education, especially through "**college talk**."
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	10. Schools will increase their college going culture.

Supporting Research	• Using the research-based definition (McDonough, 2004), and very much aligned to the other COLLEGE READY priorities, the following are principles of building a college-going culture: 1. *College Talk:* Clear, ongoing communication about college, so that all students develop a college-going identity. 2. *Clear Expectations*: Explicit goals of college preparation must be defined and communicated clearly, consistently, and in a variety of ways by families and all school personnel. 3. *Information & Resources:* Students must have access to up-to-date, comprehensive college information and schools must build college knowledge infrastructure. 4. *Comprehensive Counseling Model:* All counselors are college counselors and all student interactions with counselors are college advising opportunities. 5. *Testing & Curriculum:* Students must be informed about necessary tests, must be given the opportunity to prepare for these tests, and testing fees must be considered. 6. *Faculty Involvement:* Faculty must be active, informed partners with counselors, students, and families and professional development opportunities must be available. 7. *Family Involvement:* Family members must have opportunities to gain college knowledge and understand their role. 8. *College Partnerships:* Have active links between K-12 schools and local colleges and universities that can lead to field trips, college fairs, and academic enrichment programs. 9. *Articulation:* Students should have a seamless experience from Kindergarten through HS graduation, with ongoing communication among all schools in a feeder group, and work at one school site should connect with activities at other levels. • For a research-based tool to assess your school community: College-Going Culture Rubric. • "Across all our analyses, the single most consistent predictor of whether students took steps toward college enrollment was whether their teachers reported that their high school had a strong college climate … and students who attended high schools in which teachers reported a strong college climate were significantly more likely to plan to attend a four-year school, apply, be accepted, and enroll." (Roderick, Nagaoka, Coca & Moeller, 2008) • More reading: o Realizing the College Dream: Teacher Advisor Guide and more guides o Straight from the Source: What Works for First-Generation College Students
Guiding Questions	• Where are we in the College-Going Culture Rubric? o In what areas are we strong? In what areas do we have room for improvement? o How can GEAR UP services help us improve in these areas, especially with "college talk"? • How can we incorporate all school professionals – from the teachers to the cafeteria employees and bus drivers? • How can we empower students and their families to believe they can go to college and start planning now?
Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Incorporate a college-going message, or "college talk," into your school's morning announcements, entrances/ doorways/bulletin boards, in teacher's lesson plans, and during after-school/event events, bus routes, cafeteria, athletics – make it a "We Believe in You/GEAR UP to be COLLEGE READY" campaign that reaches everywhere. • Incorporate college talk into the school's communications – newsletters, announcements, emails, calendars, website, social media, etc. • Initiate essay contests based on college application questions. • Have teachers post "Ask Me About It – I Graduated From" posters outside of their classrooms, and to display their college diplomas in the classroom and decorate college. • Encourage college t-shirt day and host t-shirt drives lead by student leaders to distribute so that all students have.

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COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY How can priorities, GEAR UP services & programs "bundle" to form a **strategy** that is more than a list of activities?	MATCHING RESOURCES What are the **intangible resources (or "Match")** at your disposal that will help these strategies?	FUNDS What are ways that **GEAR UP funds** can support this strategy, service, or program?	SUSTAINABILITY What are the goal(s) for how this strategy will be **sustained** over time?
SUPPORT	**7. College-Going Culture, especially on "College Talk"**				

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 7

Priority	COLLEGE READY Support – Transition
Overview	Provide support for 8th-grade students and families as they transition to the 9th grade during the academic year and summer programming, especially through clear articulation between the middle and high school levels. Help students develop 4-year plans for high school.
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	**1.** The percentage of students completing Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade will increase by 5% annually in years 3 and 4. (Federal Performance Measure) **2.** The average daily attendance will increase to 95%- baseline 93.1%. **3.** The percentage of cohort students promoted to the next grade will be maintained at 99.7%.
Supporting Research	• Recommended by the IES Practice Guide to "Ensure that students understand what constitutes a college-ready curriculum and develop a four-year course trajectory with each 9th grader that leads to fulfilling a college-ready curriculum." (Tierney, et all 2008) ○ "There is substantial evidence that students do not understand the curricular requirements for college entry and success, even those for community colleges. High Schools should clearly communicate with students and families to ensure that they understand the courses needed for college (and that students are on track to complete them), *before they enter high school.*" (Tierney, et all, 2008) • The first year of high school is pivotal, but the transition to high school is characterized as a time when students experience a decline in grades and attendance (Barone, Aguirre-Deandreis & Trickett, 1991)

	○ "Most high school dropouts fail at least 25% of their 9th grade courses, while 8% of high school completers experiences the same difficulty (Letgers & Kerr, 2001) ○ "More than one semester "F" in core subjects and fewer than five full course credits by the end of freshman year are key indicators that a student is not on track to graduate." (Allensworth & Easton, 2007) ○ "In schools in which transition programs are fully operational, researchers saw a dropout rate of 8%, while schools without transition programs averaged 24%." (Reents, 2002) ○ "Middle grades schools that successfully prepare students for college-preparatory courses in 9th grade provide extra help and link students with an adult mentor." (Cooney & Bottoms, 2002) • "Yet, substantial numbers of future dropouts can be identified in as early as 6th grade (attendance <85-90%; behavior – "unsatisfactory in at least one class; course performance – final grade of "F" in Math and/or English) – with 6th grade students with one or more of the indicators have only a 15% to 20% chance of graduating from high school on time or within one year of expected graduation." (Balfanz, 2011) ○ By tracking these "ABC" early warning indicators, it is possible to identify when students are beginning to fall off track (between grades 6-9), and provide time to intervene and alter the students' path through school and beyond to postsecondary education (Balfanz, 2011) • More reading: ○ Ninth Grade Co9unts: Strengthening the Transition into High School (Abbott & Fisher, 2012) ○ Using Data to Keep All Students On Track to Graduation: Team Playbook ○ Easing the Transition to High School: Research (Kennelly & Monrad) ○ Middle School Moment, a PBS Frontline series based on Balfanz's research
Guiding Questions	• Do our schools/district have 9th grade transition programs? If so, what does this entail? ○ Who is involved? When are the programs? What is the target audience for these programs? Is there anything in the summer? ○ How are families involved in the process? Teachers? Counselors? ○ What is needed to support students and families that don't already exist? Teachers? Counselors? • When and how are students involved in their course selection process for 9th grade? ○ How are families involved in the process? Teachers? Counselors? ○ How do we share information about the HS courses needed to be prepared academically for college?
Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Use student data, such as the ABC's early warning system from Balfanz to identify students most in need of interventions. • Develop a family event for 8th students/families that explains the HS course selection process, the importance of taking rigorous courses, GPA, the Promise Scholarship, and ACT/SAT preparation. • Provide informational workshops on the HS courses needed to meet Minimum Course Requirements for WV 4-year public universities and help students and families develop a five-year education plan, as early as the 7th and 8th grade. • Host a summer program where rising 9th grade students experience HS academics and social aspects. • Create a "Book Reading Contest" or some type of school-wide program to encourage reading books in the 8th grade, summer, and 9th grade transition either in academic tutoring and/or summer enrichment programs. • Introduce students in 8th grade to Algebra through project-based learning outside of the classroom, either in academic tutoring and/or summer enrichment programs. • Identify students who in the 7th or 8th grade are having difficulty completing a challenging curriculum and take steps to increase their instructional time in reading and math to support their transition to high school, possibly through summer enrichment programs. • Organize vertical teams of middle grades and high school teachers in English and mathematics to align curriculum needed for challenging high school studies, and convene panels of teachers to identify what students need to know and be able to do for college-preparatory work in the 9th grade, to answer questions such as, "What skills do students need to be successful in 9th grade mathematics?"

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SUPPORT	**8. Transition**				

Appendix
COLLEGE READY Priority 8

Priority	COLLEGE READY Support – Comprehensive Mentoring Program
Overview	Establish a **comprehensive mentoring program** for students who are not on track to being promoted to the next grade level, which may involve near-peer mentors, college students, or business/career mentors.
Corresponding Performance Indicators for GY02	4. The percentage of cohort students' enrollment rate will increase by an average of 5% in grant years 6 and 7. 8. Students and their families will report increased knowledge and expectations for postsecondary education beyond high school in years 2,4, and 6. 9. Resilience will increase in cohort students.
Supporting Research	• "As early as the 8th grade, first-generation students have low expectations about the highest level of education they will receive." (Choy, 2001) • "The presence of at least one caring person – someone who conveys an attitude of compassion, who understands that no matter how awful a child's behavior, the child is doing the best he or she can give his or her experience – provides support for healthy development and learning." (Benard, 1995)

	• Recommended by the IES Practice Guide to "Surround students with adults and peers who build and support their college-going aspirations, including provide mentoring for students by recent high school graduates who enrolled in college or other college-educated adults." (Tierney, et all 2008) Specifically:
	  ○ Provide mentoring for students by recent high school graduates who enrolled in college or other college-educated adults to serve as college-going role models, assist with the college entry process, monitor academic progress, and listen and advise.
	• More reading:
	  ○ How-To Guide for Starting a Mentoring Organization: Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, 3rd Edition (from the National Mentoring Partnership)
	  ○ Research in Action: School Based Mentoring
	  ○ What It's Like to be the First Person in Your Family to go to College, The Atlantic

Guiding Questions	• Are there any mentoring initiatives in our school to support students who may be at-risk of not being promoted to the next grade?
	  ○ If so, who is involved?
	  ○ If not, how can GEAR UP support students in this way?
	  ○ How could we incorporate near-peers? (i.e., high school students and/or college student mentoring middle school students)
	• How does the school/district respond to students who may be at risk of not being promoted to the next grade?
	  ○ By attendance, course grades, discipline records?
	  ○ What interventions are currently used? How could mentoring supplement this?

Potential GEAR UP Services for GY02	• Perform a community assessment of the mentoring programs available to students in the eligible cohort using the How-To Guide for Starting a Mentoring Organization, then use GEAR UP to supplement a need and/or potentially develop a pilot initiative. • Identify – through data, teacher, and parent input – students who would benefit from mentoring, and who may not be on track to being promoted to the next grade level. • Expand and train the GEAR UP leaders' group to serve as peer mentors who talk to middle school students weekly about the importance of preparing for college early by getting involved and taking academics seriously. • Connect alumni who succeeded in college and can relate to students to serve as "one caring adult" and share their experiences. • Use the mentoring services to inspire and motivate students that they can achieve success and go to college, then identify action items for small steps they can take now to get "on track" and believe that they deserve to and can go to college. • Use mentoring services to set up, maintain, and use CFWV.com for college planning and career exploration.

How Turn Your COLLEGE READY Strategy → Sustainable GY02 GEAR UP Work Plan

COLLEGE READY	PRIORITY	STRATEGY How can priorities, GEAR UP services & programs "bundle" to form a **strategy** that is more than a list of activities?	MATCHING RESOURCES What are the **intangible resources (or "Match")** at your disposal that will help these strategies?	FUNDS What are ways that **GEAR UP funds** can support this strategy, service, or program?	SUSTAINABILITY What is (are) the goal(s) for how this strategy will be **sustained** over time?
SUPPORT	**9. Comprehensive Mentoring Program**				