

GEAR UP Idaho: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



What is GEAR UP?

GEAR UP (**G**aining **E**arly **A**wareness and **R**eadiness for **U**ndergraduate **P**rograms) started in 1999. This national discretionary grant program funded by the US Department of Education is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serve cohorts of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are used to provide early intervention postsecondary preparation services and scholarships to low-income students.

GEAR UP Idaho

GEAR UP Idaho will focus on early intervention strategies to assist students in becoming academically prepared for meeting the standards necessary for high school graduation, and in providing them with the readiness skill necessary for success in postsecondary programs.

GEAR UP students will be encouraged to take a common college and work-preparatory curriculum, which will include additional and/or more rigorous math, English, and science courses.

The GEAR UP program will advise students of accelerated learning options available in Idaho, and will encourage and support participation in these options while still in high school.

GEAR UP will provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate the ability to succeed in postsecondary education.

The early intervention plan for GEAR UP Idaho will provide mechanisms to communicate with family members, and to assist families in understanding the benefits, as well as the necessary steps to succeed in both secondary and postsecondary programs.

GEAR UP: The Goal

The goal of GEAR UP Idaho is to provide comprehensive early intervention college access programs for selected students and their parents that will inform them of postsecondary opportunities, and prepare students to succeed in secondary school and postsecondary programs.

GEAR UP: The Mission

The mission of GEAR UP Idaho is to inspire students to become active in their educational experience, to ensure they are academically prepared for advancement to postsecondary education; and to increase the economic development and quality of life of Idaho residents by offering avenues to post-secondary education.

GEAR UP: Objectives

1. Increase academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education
2. Increase rate of high school graduation and postsecondary participation
3. Increase educational expectation of participants
4. Increase students' and families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing

GEAR UP: The Beneficiaries

The GEAR UP program provides early intervention activities in selected schools in Idaho where 50% or more of students are eligible to receive free or reduced lunch under the National School Lunch Act.

GEAR UP IDAHO

GEAR UP Provides

- Regional and Site Coordinators to aid in the implementation of program activities and services and reduce impact on existing school staff;
- Funds available to reimburse for costs associated with in-school specific training and programs, activities, and college visits;
- Consideration of a 4-year renewable scholarship of up to \$4,000/year, prioritized based upon financial need and completion of rigorous course-work and full participation in the GEAR UP program; and
- Funding for GEAR UP students to prepare for and take the ACT.

How GEAR UP Schools Were Selected

Schools with over 50% free or reduced lunch population in 2005-2006 that included a seventh grade were eligible to apply. GEAR UP schools were then selected based on a completed application process, equal demographic and geographic distribution, level of need, and willingness to participate in the program. The majority of GEAR UP students come from rural communities in Idaho.

How GEAR UP Cohorts Work

All students despite income level are eligible (but not required) to participate in GEAR UP. GEAR UP will follow each cohort from seventh grade to senior year. Seventh grade students will begin the GEAR UP program in the 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years.

GEAR UP School Expectations

Each selected school will be required to create a GEAR UP school team that includes a Site Coordinator and may include the superintendent, principal, counselors, teachers, parents and community members. A full commitment by school teams will be required. Success of the program will depend on the collaborative effort between school teams, Regional Coordinators, and the expectations of the grant.

School teams and school districts will review and sign a partnership agreement, as well as a contract with GEAR UP Idaho. These documents will clearly outline expectations and benchmarks that are to be met by each school team. School teams will then create a program plan and budget, approved by the GEAR UP Program Manager, who will set programming that works toward achieving GEAR UP statewide goals and objectives.

All GEAR UP participating schools will design a program plan that includes early intervention, college access activities and services. Early intervention activities may include: mentoring, tutoring, parent classes, career development classes, college counseling, financial counseling, goal setting classes and professional development activities for school staff and community members. All activities will cater to the specific needs of cohorts at each school. GEAR UP schools will also develop programming in conjunction with existing programs the regional postsecondary institutions.

GEAR UP Student Expectations

Each GEAR UP student will have a parent approved student-learning plan for high school and a post high school plan that includes a career goal, related post-secondary program objective, colleges of interest, and knowledge of financial aid resources. All GEAR UP students will participate in at least two GEAR UP activities each year.



GEAR UP Funding

Each year GEAR UP school districts will receive funding determined by a base amount, plus a per student allocation. Schools are then eligible to receive funding by reimbursement of costs specified in the school's program plan and budget. Funds will not be reimbursed if benchmarks specified in the contract and program plan have not been met.

Why GEAR UP?

By offering a comprehensive program designed to meet the needs of participating schools, students and parents, GEAR UP Idaho will:

- o Increase the academic performance of students;
- o Increase postsecondary preparation;
- o Increase graduation rates and post-secondary attendance rates in Idaho;
- o Increase the ability to plan for the future, set goals and accomplish goals;
- o Increase the knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing; and
- o Increase family involvement in school.



GEAR UP Support

OSBE: The Office of the State Board of Education is fully committed to the success of GEAR UP Idaho.

GEAR UP Program Manager: The Program Manager will also monitor the progress of the personnel and schools in implementing the program, make suggestions for improvement, and evaluate program personnel. The GEAR UP Program Manager will support GEAR UP schools as the liaison to the State Board of Education and postsecondary institutions.

GEAR UP Regional Coordinators: The GEAR UP Regional Coordinators will assist participating GEAR UP schools in designing their local programs. The Regional Coordinators will provide technical assistance to schools as they progress through the program, and help schools align their program to state program goals and standards. GEAR UP Regional Coordinators will act as a resource for Site Coordinators and assist in planning early intervention activities and each school within their region. Regional Coordinators will work to establish a social marketing plan, design and produce all promotional materials for GEAR UP, manage all communications, and organize regional meetings and events,.

GEAR UP Site Coordinators: GEAR UP Site Coordinators will coordinate the implementation of GEAR UP activities within each school. As part of the school team, Site Coordinators will develop a GEAR UP program plan and budget for their school, facilitate the tracking of GEAR UP data, and work with local business and organizations to gain in-kind support for GEAR UP Idaho.

IHE Liaison: Postsecondary representatives will be identified at each regional Institute of Higher Education to assist teams in planning on-campus activities, and provide information and materials for programs already in place as part of each postsecondary institution's awareness programming.

GEAR UP Idaho Staff

Program Manager:

Decker Sanders (208) 332-1595
decker.sanders@osbe.idaho.gov

Regional Coordinator:

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Regional Coordinator:

Carina Christiani (208) 332-1593
carina.christiani@osbe.idaho.gov

GEAR UP Site Coordinators

Priest River Junior High

Priest River Lamanna High School SD#83

Paula Langager (208) 448-1118

Clark Fork Junior/Senior High SD#84

Dawn Schatz (208) 266-1131

Culdesac School SD#342

Jackie Alboucq (208) 843-5413

Highland School SD#305

Suzi Eaton (208) 924-5211

Kellogg Middle School

Kellogg High School SD#391

Carol Roberts (208) 784-1348

Lakeside Middle School

Lakeside High School SD#44

Stefani Hoffman (208) 686-2204

Prairie Middle School

Prairie High School SD#242

Nancy Uptmor (208) 962-3521

Project CDA SD#271

Shannon Gabby (208) 667-7460

St. Maries Comm Ed/UpRiver

St. Maries High School SD#41

Helen Kevo (208) 245-5543

Emmett Junior High

Emmett High School SD#221

Julie Best (208) 365-6301



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Homedale Middle School

Homedale High School SD#370

Carri Lauson (208) 337-4611

Lapwai Jr/Sr High SD#341

Candace Hoisington (208) 843-2622

Aberdeen Middle School

Aberdeen High School SD#58

David Vaughn (208) 397-3280

Buhl Middle School

Buhl High School SD# 412

Byron Stutzman (208) 543-8292

Burley Junior High

Burley High School SD#151

Jamie Larsen (208) 878-3710

Harold B. Lee Middle School

West Side High School SD#202

Ashley White (208) 747-3303

Raft River Jr/Sr High SD#151

Dawn Higley (208) 645-2443

Robert Stuart Junior High SD#411

TBD (208) 733-4949

S. Fremont Junior High

Fremont High School SD#215

TBD (208) 624-7542

Salmon Middle School

Salmon High School SD# 291

Jackie Sabo (208) 756-2415

William Thomas Middle School

American Falls High School SD#381

Jennifer Simpson (208) 226-5203

GEAR UP

Idaho 

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ABOUT GEAR UP!

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) started in 1999. This national discretionary grant program is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. National **GEAR UP** provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools.

- GEAR UP focuses on early intervention strategies to assist students in becoming prepared for post-secondary education.
- GEAR UP will help students meet standards necessary for high school graduation and provide them with the skills to succeed beyond high school.
- GEAR UP students will create a personalized learning plan and take common college and work-preparatory classes. Course work will include additional and/or more rigorous math, English, and science courses.
- GEAR UP will advise students of advanced learning opportunities available in Idaho and will encourage them to participate in these options while still in high school.
- GEAR UP will guide students through programs that encourage self knowledge, promote career exploration and lead students to make informed decisions about life after high school.
- GEAR UP employs partnerships committed to serving and accelerating the academic achievement of cohorts of students through their high school graduation.
- GEAR UP differs from other college access programs in that it uses a cohort approach that works with entire grade levels and becomes a systemic vehicle for change and innovation. GEAR UP serves as the federal government's initial approach to supporting K-16 education models.
- Currently, GEAR UP is serving more than 1.5 million students in 47 states, the

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District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Republic of Palau.

- GEAR UP programs and services not only serve students, but also the educational needs of low-income families through academic and college counseling, parent involvement programs, and other activities that draw families into the educational process.
- Nationally, GEAR UP has helped to transform the relationship between colleges and universities and K-12 public schools. The program has provided university faculty and college administrators with opportunities to develop a closer working relationship with their K-12 colleagues.

State Successes -


Since the inception of GEAR UP in Texas, the percentage of the student population taking Algebra in 8th or 9th grade has increased from 69.3% to 90.4%.

In the Salinas, California GEAR UP project, the Academic Performance Index scores for Math and Language rose from 17 points to 47 points, a 176% increase.

In Massachusetts, GEAR UP students have fewer missed days than other students representing an 80% increase in attendance for GEAR UP students.

GEAR UP

Idaho



The mission of GEAR UP Idaho is to inspire students to become active in their educational experience and to ensure they are academically prepared for advancement to post-secondary education; and to increase the economic development and quality of life of Idaho residents by offering avenues to post-secondary education.

- The GEAR UP Idaho program receives \$2.9 million in federal funds per year (a total of just under \$18 million over six years), half of which are held in a trust fund to provide scholarships for GEAR UP students.
- The Higher Education Act requires that at least 50 percent of the *total cost* of a GEAR UP project to be matched from State, local, institutional, or private sources (*i.e.*, for each dollar of Federal funds, at least one dollar of value in State or private resources must be contributed).
- The GEAR UP Idaho program is currently providing support and technical assistance to 22 low-income schools throughout Idaho and will serve more than 6,000 students during the six-year term of the grant.
- GEAR UP Idaho provides support for schools to provide rigorous coursework and college-prep instruction that are crucial to a student's ability to get into and succeed in postsecondary education.

Click here to find out how to Support GEAR UP Idaho