

**Council on Postsecondary Education
May 21, 2010**

GEAR UP Kentucky Report

GEAR UP Kentucky, administered by the Council on Postsecondary Education, received its first federal six-year grant in 2000 and its second grant in 2005. The program supports seven host sites and partners that coordinate the program for the 80 participating middle schools and high schools.

GEAR UP Kentucky adopted a framework (called the Five Priority AREAS) for developing a college-going culture in schools around which the program is focused. This framework also mirrors the Council's public agenda (2005-2010): college preparation, college affordability, college access and success, and preparation for life and work. The Five Priority AREAS¹, which are rooted in research-based practices, are college awareness, rigor, engagement of parents, financial access, and academic and developmental support. Program objectives and services are all driven by the AREAS.

As the chart that follows shows, GEAR UP Kentucky schools are closing the gap in performance. In science there was a 102 percent improvement over the same students' eighth grade performance, which far exceeds the GEAR UP goal. Similarly, there was an unprecedented increase in the reading performance bringing it to 41 percent of students performing at or above the benchmark. This represents more than a 51 percent improvement, once again far exceeding the GEAR UP goal.

Overall GEAR UP Kentucky is making an impact on the schools it serves and student performance is increasing. Nevertheless, there is a lot more work that must be done to reach the significant percent of students who are not performing well, particularly in mathematics and science.

¹ The GEAR UP Kentucky framework is supported by the American Youth Policy Forum study, which outlines six programmatic elements of success in the monograph *How 23 Programs Support Youth on the Path to College and Beyond*.

Comparison of Student Performance GUK versus Kentucky

EXPLORE AND PLAN ASSESSMENTS (2006-09)

Assessment Subject Areas	Change in Performance GEAR UP Kentucky		
	% of Students at EXPLORE Benchmark 07	% of Students at PLAN Benchmark 2009	Points Increased
English	48	59	11
Math	20	23	3
Reading	27	41	14
Science	7	13	6

Assessment Subject Areas	Change in Performance Kentucky Students		
	% of Students at EXPLORE Benchmark 2007	% of Students at PLAN Benchmark 2009	Points Increased
English	55	59	4
Math	27	23	-3
Reading	33	40	7
Science	10	15	5

GEAR UP Kentucky II

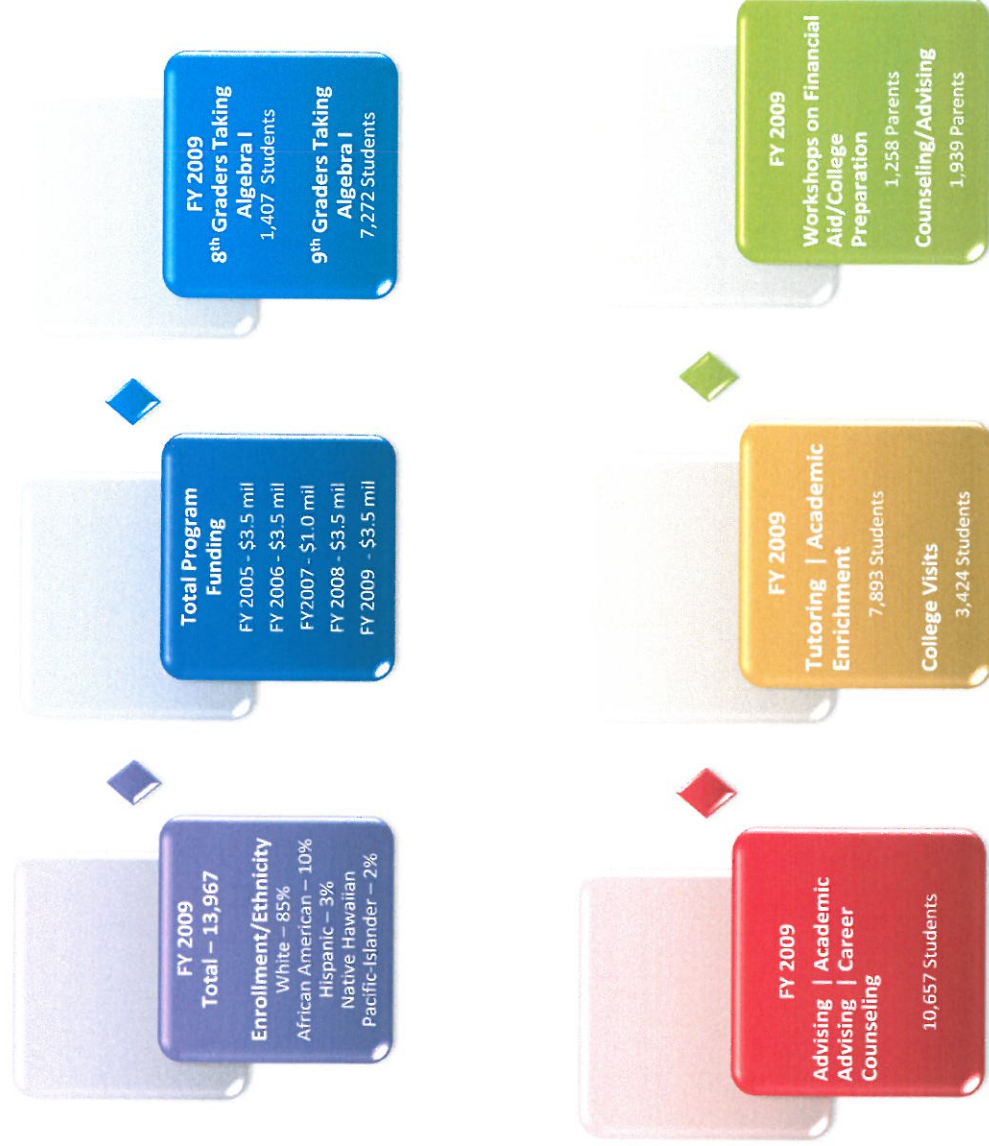
Grant Period: 2005 - 2011

The Council on Postsecondary Education has provided grant funds to support various activities in schools selected to participate in the GEAR UP Kentucky (GUK) program. GEAR UP Kentucky staff work with schools to create a climate of inclusion that allows students to aspire to pursue education beyond high school, and provide activities to inspire students to go to college and make concrete plans to get there.

Students Served—The current grant is working with three cohorts of seventh-grade students. The first group of students began the seventh grade in 2005; the next group of students began in 2006, and the last began in 2007. The current enrollment is just under 14,000. Compared to Kentucky, GEAR UP nationally is nearly evenly distributed amongst the three primary ethnic groups. Nationally in FY 2009 there were, 35% Hispanic, 30% African American and 26% White students served by the GEAR UP program.

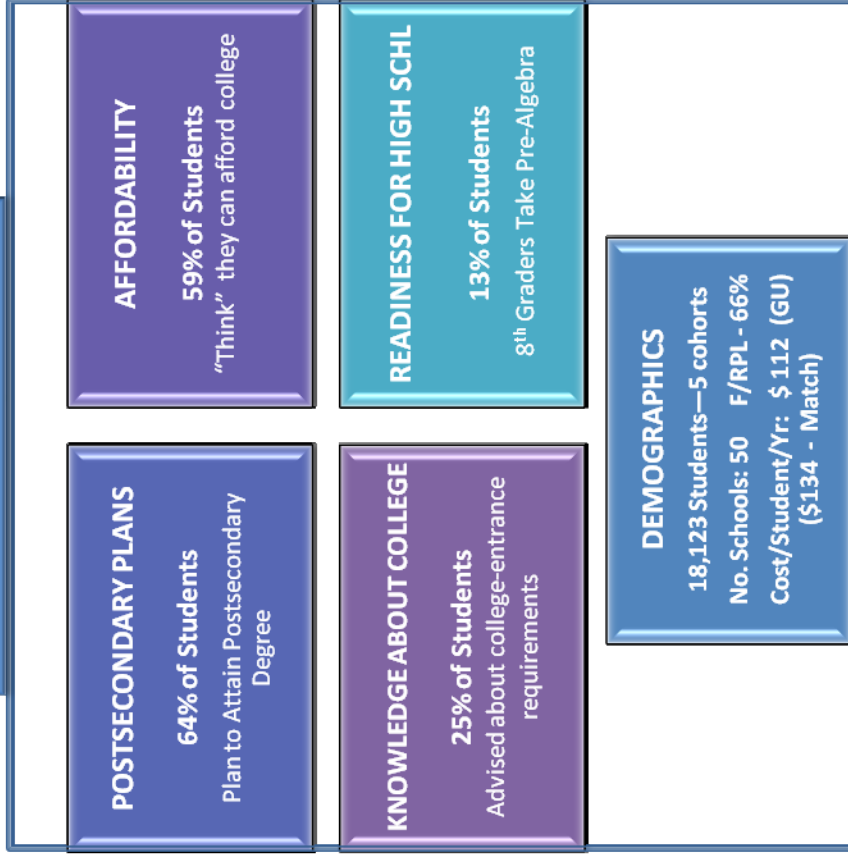
Seven Host Sites—Work with the Council to support the participating schools. (There are seven host sites: *Western Kentucky University, Hazard Community and Technical College, Northern Kentucky Council of Partners, Fayette County Public School District, University of Louisville, Murray State University, and Morehead State University.*) Host sites coordinate grant activities and provide fiscal oversight for the schools in their geographic areas of responsibility. GEAR UP Kentucky continues to provide services to the same cohorts of students who are now enrolled in 29 high schools across the state.

Essential Activities—Participating schools provide key activities to ensure that students and parents are advised about critical information to plan for college. These activities are: college readiness assessment; college/career awareness events; college visits; academic planning and advising, including use of the Individual Learning Plan; college planning activities, including financial aid and admissions requirements, and application procedures.



GEAR UP Kentucky: Creating a College-going Culture

2000 Snapshot



2010 Snapshot

