



2016-17 GEAR UP Virginia Year in Review Summary

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a national college access initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of this program is to significantly increase the number of students in disadvantaged communities who are prepared for, pursue, and succeed in postsecondary education, whether that is a Bachelor's degree, Associate's degree, or qualified certification. Administered by SCHEV in Virginia, GEAR UP began in the 2014-15 academic year with a cohort of seventh-grade students at 28 middle schools in 15 school divisions.

GUV students matriculated from middle school to high school in 2016-17, the third year of the grant. The program continued its partnership with the original 15 school divisions and transitioned to 24 high schools serving more than 4,500 ninth graders.

Demographics

4,500 students

15 school divisions

24 high schools

- Ethnicity:
 - o 10% Hispanic or Latino
- Race:
 - o 1% American Indian or Alaska Native
 - o 2% Asian
 - o 58% Black or African American
 - o <1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - o 35% White
 - o 4% Two or More Races
- 67% average free/reduced lunch eligibility rate among GUV schools (Range: 35-100%)
- 13% have individualized education programs (IEPs)
- 6% English Learners

In addition to GEAR UP students, GUV programming has served:

- 1200 parents actively participated
- 1306 educators participated in professional development (3,361 hours total)

“This program has really helped our rural school to provide opportunities for students that they wouldn’t typically have. We feel that the impact this grant has on our school will be lasting, not just for the students in the cohort but for the school itself for many years to come.” GUV coordinator, Randolph-Henry HS, Charlotte County, VA

Achieving Objectives

By working with 30 middle and high schools to provide program and equipment funding, professional development for educators, partnership opportunities, and scholarships, GEAR UP Virginia progressed in achieving its three program objectives:

1. Increase academic performance and college preparation of GUV students

- 97% Promotion Rate (cohort)
- Over 40,000 hours of tutoring
- 92% at/above grade level in English
- 85% at/above grade level in Math
- 481 passed at least one AP, IB, or dual enrollment class

Ninth grade GEAR UP algebra passing rates are 5% higher than the baseline comparison group. More than 50% of our Homework Help/Tutor.com usage was in math in 2016-17.

2. Increase high school graduation and college participation rates

- 97% promoted one grade level
- 88% expect to apply to 2 or more colleges
- 92% expect to attend college
- 94% plan to go to college after high school. (45% say that participating in GEAR UP activities helped them decide to go to college.)

“A lot of these students would have no way of visiting some of these college campuses without the assistance of GEAR UP. Getting them to set foot on campus and envision their future selves as college students can be potentially life changing...” GUV Coordinator, E.C. Glass HS, Lynchburg, VA

3. Increase knowledge of college options, preparation, and financial aid among students and their families

- 312 students took the PSAT 8/9
 - o The PSAT connects students with colleges early and helps prepare them for the SAT and other college entrance exams.
- 75% say they are knowledgeable about financial aid and the cost and benefits of going to college
- College Trips:

- 2900 students visited a college campus (64% of cohort)
- 39 colleges and universities visited
 - 12 Virginia 4-Year Public Institutions
 - 7 Virginia 2-Year/Community Colleges
 - 17 Virginia Private Institutions
 - 3 Out-of-state Institutions

Summer Programming

- 192 students attended overnight programs on college campuses
- 178 students attended enrichment programs
- 77 students attended remedial programs

In 2016-17 GUV partnered with the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia 529, Project HOPE, the Virginia Latino Higher Education Network, Old Dominion University, University of Virginia, University of Richmond, James Madison University, CoolSpeak, Student Success Agency, Xcaliber, the Virginia Space Grant Consortium, and the Princeton Review for statewide programming.