

Year 6 Framework for Student Success

A guide to 2019–2020 program planning for GEAR UP Iowa schools



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Introduction

The GEAR UP Iowa Framework is a resource to help schools identify academic, social, emotional and behavioral development supports for GEAR UP Iowa students. These supports are necessary for all students to be successful in high school, postsecondary education and their careers. This Framework provides an overview of required services and key components that encompass the GEAR UP Iowa program, and it provides a common language across all GEAR UP Iowa schools. It also demonstrates that GEAR UP Iowa is dedicated to improving student results by preparing them for academic and career success.

This framework supports or guides implementation at the local level, which will help schools build stronger pipelines to college access and success. We value the use of a transparent, inclusive data-driven decision-making process, as well as culturally specific student and parent engagement strategies. GEAR UP Iowa has adopted the three national GEAR UP objectives outlined below.

GEAR UP Objectives

The goal of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. To accomplish this goal, GEAR UP Iowa focuses on the following program objectives:

1. Increase academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education.
2. Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education.
3. Increase GEAR UP Iowa students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing.

In addition to the primary objectives of GEAR UP, 17 performance measures determine the success of the GEAR UP Iowa program. See Appendix A for a complete list.

Year 6/Senior Year Priority: Promote Student Enrollment in Postsecondary

Senior year marks a busy time for students, families and school staff as they prepare for high school graduation and the college journey. To date, our students and families have benefited from a long list of services and activities to prepare them academically, emotionally and financially for college. Our goal moving forward is to make sure our students and families follow the necessary steps to successfully enroll in a postsecondary institution/pathway/college.

The priority for GEAR UP Iowa this year is to promote student enrollment in postsecondary education: The goal is that 69% of students enroll in a two- or four-year college, which represents an increase of 5 percentage points over the baseline of 64%. In addition, we expect many more students will enroll in registered apprenticeships, training programs or the military.

Course to College and Optimal Fit

Several factors at the secondary level are linked to future achievement and postsecondary attainment. The most frequently used indicators, according to the American Institute for Research, are attendance, GPA and test scores. The submission of both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and a college application, coupled with immediate full-time enrollment in a postsecondary academic or career-focused program, are also positively correlated with postsecondary persistence¹.

With this evidence in mind, all GEAR UP Iowa students will engage in Course to College programming, emphasizing the College Application Campaign, the FAFSA Completion Initiative, College Decision Day and Summer Transition.

Throughout this process, we want to ensure that optimal fit—which is also demonstrated to increase the likelihood of success²—is factored into the postsecondary decision process. All GEAR UP Iowa students will spend several hours exploring educational and career options, including their optimal fit for postsecondary education and training.

Role of School Planning Team

We believe a strong GEAR UP team is essential for making real, sustainable change in schools. Therefore, each school will develop a planning team consisting of stakeholders and individuals who are committed to creating a college-going culture throughout the school. **The school planning team will meet regularly to assess, plan and review student data related to the implementation of GEAR UP services, activities and programs.**

School planning teams should represent the people needed to accomplish the work of the implementation plan. Recommended members of school planning teams include the GEAR UP Facilitator, the GEAR UP Coach/Coordinator, advisor, school counselor(s), support staff, a teacher representative, a data leader and the building principal or appointed building administrator. The planning team will meet at a frequency determined by the GEAR UP Facilitator. GEAR UP Coaches will maintain communication with relevant school staff to discuss GEAR UP initiatives and services and report information to the GEAR UP Facilitator.

GEAR UP Iowa emphasizes the use of data-informed decision-making to determine the best course of action for schools and students in the cohort and to determine whether adjustments are needed.

Data-informed decision-making is an evidence based process which incorporates data into the following steps:

1. Define a problem related to each GEAR UP component (see page 6).
2. Discuss potential causes.
3. Determine a course of action.
4. Implement the action.
5. Evaluate the outcome.

The school planning team is essential to the decision-making process and should constantly look through the lens of student needs and future success.

¹ Hein, V., Smerdon, B., Sambolt, M. (2013). "Predictors for Postsecondary Success." College and Career Readiness and Success Center for American Institutes for Research.

² Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., Coca, V., Moeller, E., Roddie, K., Gilliam, J., & Patton, D. (2008). "From high school to the future: Potholes on the road to college." Consortium on Chicago School Research: Chicago, IL.

Grant Compliance

The school planning team is responsible for ensuring compliance with the grant. The assigned GEAR UP Facilitator will provide necessary support to the team to ensure compliance in these primary areas:

1. Implementation of GEAR UP Iowa service components in accordance with the approved plan. All revisions must be approved following program guidelines.
2. Monthly student activity tracking data entry in SCRIBE.
3. Monthly claim and match submission in Iowa Grants.

Developing Implementation Plan and Budget

Each GEAR UP Iowa school is responsible for submitting a yearly implementation plan and budget detailing the service components and activities for the year. The implementation plan should articulate how your team plans to address the Year 6 priority, promoting postsecondary college/training enrollment, within the service components, along with targeted students, measures of success and budget.

Implementation plans must be completed and uploaded into Iowa Grants **no later than April 12, 2019**. Your GEAR UP Facilitator is your consultant for the development of these documents and will ensure ease of the process for your team and assist you with submitting quality, measurable plans. Before submitting a plan and a budget in Iowa Grants, ensure that your facilitator has reviewed the plans and you have discussed/incorporated any feedback.

Per federal guidelines, all budget requests must be reasonable, allowable and allocable. See the [Expenditure and Match Documentation Guidelines](#) for a list of acceptable budget categories and documentation requirements. Contact your facilitator with any questions.

If you need to make amendments during the year, follow the [Guidelines for Budget Amendments](#) on the GEAR UP Iowa website.

GEAR UP Iowa Partner School Requirements

GEAR UP Iowa schools are required to participate in the following activities and events during the 2019–2020 school year. Iowa College Aid or GEAR UP Iowa will cover the cost of most events, but schools might need to budget for some expenses.

Partner Site for Course to College**	<p>Each school must sign-up as a partner site for Course to College through Iowa College Aid and fully participate in these initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Application Campaign • FAFSA Completion Initiative • College Decision Day • Summer Transition <p>Find more details in the College Exposure Section, page 7.</p>
Student and parent survey*	<p>With data-informed decision-making as our focus, GEAR UP Iowa must collect information to assess progress on our performance measures. One way is through annual surveys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools are required to have 70% of students complete the survey once by the end of September 2019 and once by April 15, 2020. • Schools are required to assist with collection of parent survey responses by March 2020 with a completion goal of 40%.
National GEAR UP Week*	<p>National GEAR UP Week is an opportunity for you to raise awareness in your community about GEAR UP’s local impact. Schools must offer at least one service that promotes National GEAR UP week, which occurs in September 2020. Schools can utilize the GEAR UP Week Toolkit for ideas and activities.</p>
GEAR UP Iowa staff professional development*	<p>Participate in GEAR UP Iowa staff professional development opportunities. These include the annual GEAR UP Iowa conference and quarterly GEAR UP Iowa trainings. GEAR UP Iowa staff must participate in at least two professional development opportunities during the year. Tentative professional development dates are August, November, February and May.</p>

*Items or services paid for by GEAR UP Iowa or Iowa College Aid

+Items or activities that might require funding from the school’s GEAR UP budget

GEAR UP Iowa Service Components

Each GEAR UP Iowa school is required to provide services in all three service components of the GEAR UP Iowa Framework. GEAR UP Iowa funds can be used to develop new services or build on existing services, unless otherwise noted. Our three service components are:

- Academic Support
- College and Career Exposure
- Noncognitive Skill Development

The service components section of this Framework outlines services within the three service components that will positively impact GEAR UP Iowa objectives and goals with a focus on students postsecondary enrollment and attainment.

Academic Support

This component focuses on ensuring students are academically prepared for postsecondary education. Academic support refers to a wide variety of instructional methods and supplemental services that support students in their learning process. As schools engage students around high school graduation requirements, GEAR UP Iowa's role is to support the interventions already in place at the school. Limited GEAR UP Iowa funds can be used to address gaps in academic assistance programs.

Supporting high school academic assistance programs and/or remedial academic assistance	Academic assistance for students in need of remediation or additional support. Advise students to be sure they are on track for graduation requirements.
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Academic support services

GEAR UP Iowa goal target(s)

This component addresses performance measures 3, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

- 75% of students will take two years of math beyond Algebra I by the end of 12th grade.
- 92% of students are on track to graduate at the end of 12th grade.
- 32% of students are prepared to place in college-level English and math without remediation by the end of 12th grade.

General best practices for academic support

1. Students build a rigorous academic foundation and develop academic behaviors that are vital to preparing for postsecondary pathways.
2. Schools create academic support opportunities during the school day, such as learning labs or tutoring, to increase instructional time for students who struggle academically.
3. Academic advising ensures students are on track to high school graduation and postsecondary education.

Suggested data documenting need for academic support

- Iowa Assessments
- List of students not on track to graduate
- Current list of D/F grades

College and Career Exposure

This component focuses on ensuring students and families take the steps necessary to successfully enroll in postsecondary education, an apprenticeship, a training program or the military. The emphasis will be to transition students from exposure to enrollment and further exploration of the college-going process.

Services provided under this component allow students and families to learn about the options for funding postsecondary education, determine optimal college fit, understand financial aid requirements (including completing a FAFSA) and comprehend college admissions criteria and application processes.

College and career exposure services

Initiative	Suggested timeframe	Services can include
College Application Campaign	September through December	<p>Event(s) where all seniors can apply to one college during a class or at a computer lab.</p> <p>Small group activities before, during or after school where students apply to at least one college.</p> <p>Individual meetings with a counselor, teacher, college admissions officer or coach to apply to college.</p>
FAFSA Completion Initiative	October through end of school year	<p>Community event(s) where all seniors can complete the FAFSA with a family member.</p> <p>Small group activities before, during or after school where students and families complete the FAFSA.</p> <p>Individual meetings with a counselor, teacher, college admissions officer or coach to complete FAFSA.</p>
College Decision Day	May	<p>Engaging GEAR UP Iowa students in Iowa College Decision Day at your school.</p> <p>Inviting families to your Iowa College Decision Day event.</p>
Targeted college/career visits	Completed by December	Targeted for students who are uncertain about their postsecondary plans.

GEAR UP Iowa goal target(s)

This component addresses performance measures 8, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17.

- 64% or more of students complete the FAFSA by March of 12th grade.
- 69% or more of students complete at least one college application by March of 12th grade.
- 73% or more of families understand their options for paying for postsecondary education by the end of 12th grade.

General best practices for college and career exposure

1. Advise students on college options that align with their career interests.
2. Connect students to colleges where they can succeed by educating them on college fit.
3. Help students understand their financial aid eligibility so they know college can be affordable.
4. Provide hands-on FAFSA assistance to students and families.

Suggested data documenting need for college and career exploration

- National Student Clearinghouse
- FAFSA completion data
- College fit survey results (College Greenlight)
- GEAR UP Iowa 2018–2019 family survey
- 11th grade ACT Engage, if applicable
- GEAR UP Iowa annual student survey

Noncognitive Skill Development

This component focuses on building students' noncognitive skills to prepare them to better advocate for themselves and believe that they are postsecondary-ready. According to the [The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2017](#), students with higher scores on the ACT Engage in academic discipline, commitment to college and social connection are more likely to attain a postsecondary degree within four years of college than students with lower scores. The noncognitive curriculum is designed to continue to develop students' noncognitive skills. The optimal college fit lesson and GEAR UP Success Plan should have a positive impact on academic discipline, commitment to college and social connection.

This year, the noncognitive curriculum includes a robust section on optimal college fit. These lessons can be conducted before, during or after school. In addition, schools can run other sections of the noncognitive curriculum or the entire curriculum.

Noncognitive skill development services

Optimal college fit lesson plans	GEAR UP Iowa students should complete these lessons no later than the end of October 2019 .
Noncognitive curriculum	Using data and professional judgment, identify students likely to benefit from developing their noncognitive or social emotional skills. Deliver appropriate lessons from the noncognitive curriculum.
GEAR UP Success Plan	<p>As part of the noncognitive curriculum, every student will complete the GEAR UP Success Plan before graduation. The goal is that virtually 100% of students complete their GEAR UP Success Plan by the end of April 2020.</p> <p>The GEAR UP Success Plan is an individualized personal development plan developed by students to identify the skills, habits and attitudes they want to develop to support their educational and career goals. The plan should be developed in concert with regular senior year career planning activities in the school. The Success Plan will add a dimension as it integrates noncognitive/social emotional skills with students' plans.</p>

GEAR UP Iowa goal target(s)

This component addresses performance measures 13 and 16.

- 69% or more of students understand their optimal college fit.
- 19% or more of students enroll in an optimal fit college.
 - This will be captured during year 7 in college.

Suggested data documenting need for noncognitive skill development

- GEAR UP Iowa annual student survey
- Learning attitudes survey from the noncognitive curriculum

Appendix A:

GEAR UP Performance Measures

Objective 1: Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP Iowa Students.

PM 1: 92% of GEAR UP Iowa students will pass Pre-Algebra (8th grade math) by the end of 8th grade (GPRA #1).

PM 2: 78% of GEAR UP Iowa students will pass Algebra I by the end of 9th grade (GPRA #2).

PM 3: 75% of GEAR UP Iowa students will take two years of math beyond Algebra I by the end of 12th grade (GPRA #3).

PM 4a: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who perform at or above benchmark on Iowa Assessments for reading will increase 2 percentage points each year of the program until reaching 79% by the end of 11th grade.

PM 4b: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who perform at or above benchmark on Iowa Assessments for math will increase 2 percent each year of the program until reaching 82% by the end of 11th grade.

Objective 2: Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP Iowa students.

PM 5: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who are on track to graduate will increase 2 percent each year until reaching 92% at the end of 12th grade (GPRA #9).

PM 6: 58% of GEAR UP Iowa students will complete the ACT by the end of 11th grade (GPRA #10).

PM 7: 85% of GEAR UP Iowa students will graduate from high school (GPRA #4).

PM 8: 69% of GEAR UP Iowa students will enroll in a postsecondary institution after graduating from high school (GPRA #5).

PM 9: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who are prepared to place into college-level math without remediation will increase 1 percentage point each year until reaching 32% by the end of 12th grade (GPRA #6)

PM 10: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who are prepared to place into college-level English without remediation will increase 1 percentage point each year until reaching 33% by the end of 12th grade (GPRA #6).

PM 11: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students enrolled in a postsecondary institution who are on track to graduate from college (GPRA #7).

Objective 3: Increase GEAR UP Iowa students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

PM 12: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who have in-person or electronic contact with a current college student to learn about college will increase by 4 percentage points each year until reaching 75% by the end of 12th grade.

PM 13: 19% of GEAR UP Iowa students will enroll in an optimal fit college (Priority #2).

PM 14: 64% of GEAR UP Iowa students will complete the FAFSA by March of 12th grade (GPRA #8).

PM 15: The percentage of parents/guardians of GEAR UP Iowa students who actively engage in activities to help their student's academic preparation for college will increase 4 percentage points each year until reaching 28% at the end of 12th grade (GPRA #11).

PM 16: The percentage of GEAR UP Iowa students who understand their optimal college fit will increase 3 percentage points each year until reaching 79% at the end of 12th grade (Priority #2).

PM 17: The percentage of parents/guardians of GEAR UP Iowa students who understand their options for paying for postsecondary education will increase 3 percentage points each year until reaching 73% by the end of 12th grade.

Appendix B:

GEAR UP Iowa’s Commitment to Course to College

Iowa College Aid supports schools statewide through the Course to College program. GEAR UP 1.0 (2008–2014) schools reported that the College Application Campaign was among the most effective activities for engaging students in the college-going process. GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 (2014–2021) is committed to the implementation of Course to College across all seven years of the grant.

College Application Campaign

College Application Campaign is a national effort to help high school seniors, especially those from underserved and underrepresented populations, navigate the college admissions process and ensure they apply to at least one college. College Application Campaign events usually take place after October 1 and coincides with the FAFSA Completion Initiative.

FAFSA Completion Initiative

Through partnerships with the U.S. Department of Education, Iowa Department of Education and AEA Postsecondary Readiness and Equity Partnership (PREP), Iowa College Aid provides high schools an automated FAFSA report that identifies seniors who have not submitted or completed the FAFSA, assisting school counselors in providing targeted follow-up assistance. To participate, schools designate a “local access manager,” usually a school counselor. The local access manager completes an electronic authorization form on an annual basis. Each week from November through May, the local access manager receives an automated email report of students’ FAFSA completion status. FAFSA completion takes place after October 1.

College Decision Day

College Decision Day recognizes high school seniors for postsecondary plans and encourages the aspirations of underclassmen. College Decision Day is held on or around May 1 to coincide with the date most seniors must inform a college of their plans to enroll.

Summer Transition

Once students choose a college, they still have tasks to complete throughout the summer before they arrive to class in the fall. These barriers can cause “summer melt”—students do not make it to their first day on campus. Summer melt prevention strategies ensure that students overcome these barriers and are set up for success by their first day.

Appendix C:

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do schools determine what services to include in the Implementation Plan?

Using the data elements provided in each section, schools determine the level of services needed. Services need not be provided for every student in the cohort. It is best to offer services for small groups of students based on their needs.

2. Can plans be changed once they have been approved?

Yes. The school planning team can make amendments to the Implementation Plan and/or budget throughout the year. Amendments must be approved before services are carried out and purchases are made.

3. Is professional development allowed?

Professional development may be approved on a limited basis during the 2019–2020 grant year. Considerations will be made for schools with limited professional development opportunities in prior years. However, professional development must be directly tied to GEAR UP goals and objectives. Expenses for professional development must be minimal and must show a direct impact on the cohort. An [out-of-state travel request form](#) requires prior approval by the GEAR UP Iowa coordinator.

4. Are purchases of supplies and equipment allowed?

Supplies are allowed as long as they align with a GEAR UP Iowa service and costs are minimal. Keep in mind that all supplies, including technology items, must move with the GEAR UP cohort. Equipment is considered a large-scale purchase of one item costing \$5,000 or more, and such purchases are not allowable with GEAR UP funds. For more information on purchasing procedures, refer to the [Procurement Guidelines](#) on the GEAR UP Iowa website.

5. What type of reporting is required?

Schools are required to track services on a monthly basis in the SCRIBE system provided by GEAR UP Iowa. SCRIBE will be used to generate reports for school planning meetings as well as to inform the annual performance report required by the U.S. Department of Education.

6. What happens if a school does not provide a required service?

Schools will experience a reduction in funding if required services are not provided. In some instances, a school might already provide the exact service required by GEAR UP. In those cases, GEAR UP Iowa may request documentation. GEAR UP Iowa facilitators will work with each school to determine the best course of action.