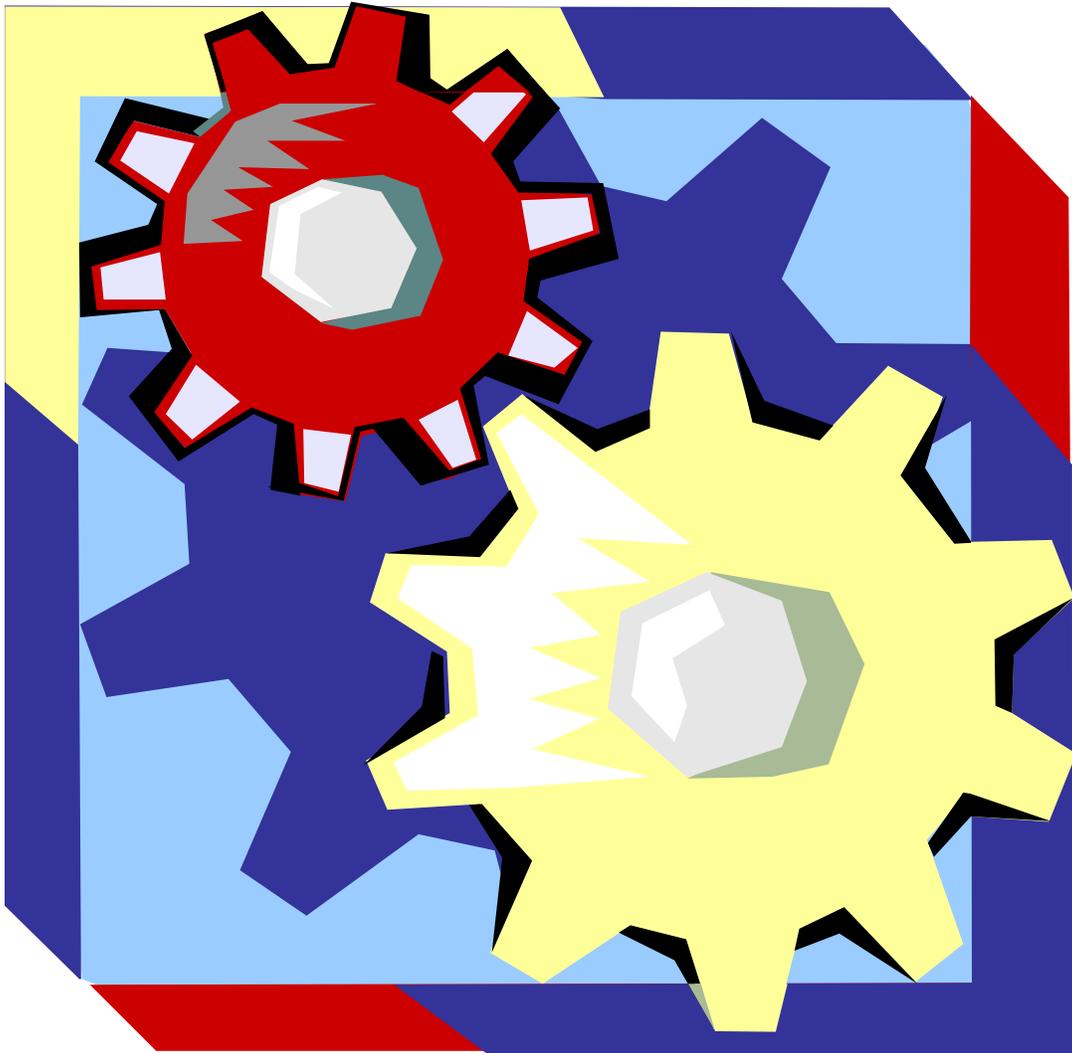


**GEAR UP AUSTIN:
IMPACTING LIVES PROJECT,
2004-2005**



Austin Independent School District
Department of Program Evaluation

January 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Description

The federally-funded Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative is designed to provide intensive college preparation support for low-income, at-risk students who often are underrepresented in post-secondary institutions. Specifically, GEAR UP programs are expected to improve student academic performance; to expand the educational expectations and knowledge of post-secondary options, preparation, and financing for participating students and their families; and to increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in post-secondary education of participating students.

In its fifth year of implementation, the GEAR UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project operating within Akins, Crockett, Johnson (LBJ), Johnston, Lanier, McCallum, Reagan, and Travis high schools continued to be funded by the Department of Education for almost \$2.5 million and received additional funds and services from project partners. Focusing on post-secondary enrollment preparation, GEAR UP provided intensive academic and enhanced guidance and counseling services for cohort students and provided selected project services for other students not originally included in the GEAR UP cohort. GEAR UP Austin also provided professional development for teachers and intensive support services for the parents of GEAR UP students.

Summary of Findings

The results of the 2004-2005 evaluation revealed consistently positive outcomes for GEAR UP cohort students.

- The GEAR UP project positively influenced advanced course enrollment for GEAR UP students. Across school years, GEAR UP students earned higher ratios of advanced course credits to regular course credits than their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP within the same schools.
- In 2004-2005, GEAR UP students performed as well as or better on the TAKS English/language arts and social studies tests than did their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP. GEAR UP student performance on the TAKS mathematics and science tests was mixed, compared to non-GEAR UP students. Across school years, the rate of gain in TAKS scale scores for GEAR UP students was similar to that of non-GEAR UP students.
- GEAR UP students who were determined to be moderately or highly engaged with the program consistently outperformed their GEAR UP peers with lower

engagement ratings in the areas of advanced course enrollment, TAKS performance, grade level promotion, and avoiding significant discipline issues.

- GEAR UP students and their parents were informed about college preparation processes and were making plans for post-secondary enrollment after high school graduation.
- The relationships between the GEAR UP students and GEAR UP staff were found to be a key factor in student academic and college preparation success. Students strongly valued these relationships. GEAR UP staff, teachers, school counselors, and assistant principals also emphasized the importance of those relationships.

Recommendations

While the results of the evaluation were consistently positive for GEAR UP students and best practices for post-secondary preparation and enrollment were identified, the program is in jeopardy of being discontinued. Federal funding for the GEAR UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project will end at the end of the 2005-2006 school year. With program funding concerns in mind, the following recommendations are provided:

- The school district should use a three-tiered intervention model to provide intensive academic advising and academic support services for first generation college students, as well as guidance and counseling support services focused on preparation for post-secondary enrollment upon high school graduation for first generation and low-income middle and high school students.
- The school district should institutionalize the positions of college advisors/guidance counselors and parent support specialists at each high school campus whose sole purpose is to prepare all students for to post-secondary enrollment. This recommendation would require that the district employ 11 counselors and 11 parent support specialists.
- The school district should find long- and short- term funding sources that can be used to employ the counselors and parent support specialists necessary for the continuance of post-secondary preparation services identified as best practices through the GEAR UP Project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In Spring 2004, the SBC Foundation contributed \$5 million to the National Council of Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) in support of the GEAR UP program. A portion of the SBC grant funds was designated to help evaluators utilize increasingly rigorous techniques and technology to measure student achievement and program impact. Austin ISD's Department of Program Evaluation was awarded \$37, 975 by SBC to increase the rigor and quality of the 2004-2005 GEAR UP evaluation. These grant funds were used to purchase data analysis software for Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM), to provide related HLM training for an AISD evaluator supervising the GEAR UP evaluation project, and to contract with an external evaluator to design the first round of HLM statistical analysis models, assist with qualitative data collection, analyze program data, create a comprehensive technical report, and conduct a report debriefing session.

With funding provided by the SBC Foundation, Austin Independent School District's (AISD) Department of Program Evaluation awarded the contract to Academic Information Management (AIM), Inc. to help evaluate the GEAR-UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project. AIM staff provided a high level of expertise in conducting HLM analyses and perspectives external to the district. AIM staff worked closely with AISD evaluation staff to design a comprehensive program evaluation and to determine the best use of various software programs and data analytic techniques to analyze college and career preparation programs in AISD. AIM assisted with data collection and management; performed a series of data analyses; completed school site visits; interviewed project staff, school counselors, and GEAR UP students; and interpreted findings from the evaluation. Understanding the challenges to conducting rigorous research and evaluation within a public school setting, AIM staff also identified and articulated recommendations for the improvement of the evaluation of GEAR UP Austin project and other AISD programs. AISD evaluation staff incorporated the suggested improvements into the 2004-2005 evaluation of GEAR UP Austin.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	IV
LIST OF FIGURES	V
LIST OF TABLES	VI
INTRODUCTION	1
National GEAR UP Context	1
GEAR UP Austin Project Description	1
Academic Intervention	2
Enhanced Guidance and Counseling	3
Professional Development	4
Parent Involvement	6
METHODOLOGY	8
Purpose	8
Program Participants	9
Data Collection	9
Data Analysis	11
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	12
Completion of Advanced Courses	12
TAKS Performance	16
Promotion Rates	22
Discipline Issues	24
Influence of Student Engagement	24
Parent Involvement	27
Focus on Post-Secondary Enrollment	28
Influence of Relationships	31
Capacity Building and Program Sustainability	32
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	34
Conclusions	34
Recommendations	35
Significance of the Evaluation	38
APPENDICES	39
APPENDIX A: GEAR UP AUSTIN PROJECT PARTNERS, 2004-2005	41
APPENDIX C: GEAR UP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY, 2004-2005	43
APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY FOR GEAR UP AND NON-GEAR UP HIGH SCHOOLS IN AUSTIN ISD, 2004-2005	44
APPENDIX E: GEAR UP STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY, 2004-2005	45
APPENDIX G: GEAR UP TEACHER SURVEY, SPRING 2005	56
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	57
REFERENCES	59

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Average Number of Advanced Courses Taken by 11th Graders at All Austin ISD High Schools, 2004-2005	14
Figure 2: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS English/Language Arts Test, Spring and Summer 2005	16
Figure 3: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS Math Test, Spring and Summer 2005.....	17
Figure 4: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS Social Studies Test, Spring and Summer 2005	18
Figure 5: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS Science Test, Spring and Summer 2005.....	18
Figure 6: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS English/Language Arts Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2002-2003	20
Figure 7: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS English/Language Arts Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2003-2004.....	20
Figure 8: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS English/Language Arts Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2004-2005.....	20
Figure 9: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS Math Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2002-2003	21
Figure 10: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS Math Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2003-2004	21
Figure 11: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS Math Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2004-2005	22
Figure 12: Probability of 2002-2003 Students Being Promoted from 9 th to 10 th Grade in All AISD High Schools	23
Figure 13: Increase in TAKS English/Language Arts Scale Scores Based on Student Engagement in the GEAR UP Program, 2003-2005	26
Figure 14: Probability of GEAR UP Students Being Promoted from 9 th to 10 th Grade Based on Self-Reported Level of Engagement in GEAR UP.....	26

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Comparison of Advanced Course Ratios Between AISD GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Enrolled in AISD High Schools.....	12
Table 2: Comparison of Advanced Course Ratios for Highly Engaged GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Enrolled in GEAR UP High Schools.....	13
Table 3: The Average Number of Advanced Courses Taken by 11th Grade, Economically Disadvantaged Males in GEAR UP High Schools, 2004-2005.....	15
Table 4: Percentages of GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS English/ Language Arts and Mathematics Tests by Engagement Levels, Spring 2005.....	19
Table 5: Average Number of Advanced Courses Taken by GEAR UP Students Based on High Versus Low Student Engagement Levels, 2004-2005.....	25
Table 6: Summary of GEAR UP Parent Participation for Multiple Project Years.....	27
Table B1: GEAR UP Project Objectives, 2004-2005.....	42
Table C1: GEAR UP Austin: Professional Development Participation, 2004-2005.....	43
Table C2: Multi-Year Comparison of GEAR UP Professional Development Participation, School Year 2000-2001 Through School Year 2004-2005.....	43
Table D1: Demographic Summary for All Students Enrolled in Austin ISD High Schools, 2004-2005	44
Table D2: Demographic Summary for GEAR UP Students Enrolled in Austin ISD High Schools, 2004-2005	44
Table E1: GEAR UP Student Survey Results Summary, 2001-2005.....	45
Table FA: GEAR UP Parent Survey Results Summary, 2001-2005.....	51

INTRODUCTION

NATIONAL GEAR UP CONTEXT

The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative was conceptualized in 1998 during the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965. This federal program provides five-year grants for the development of partnerships between schools, local colleges, universities, businesses, and community organizations for the provision of intensive college preparation support for low-income, at-risk students who are often underrepresented in post-secondary institutions. Student support begins early in the middle school years and continues through high school graduation. Explicitly, GEAR UP programs are expected to improve student academic performance; to expand the educational expectations and knowledge of post-secondary options, preparation, and financing for participating students and their families; and to increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in post-secondary education of participating students.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the Department of Education provided funding for GEAR UP programs working within their 5-year grant period. The Department of Education also extended grant funding periods to include a sixth year, enabling the programs to serve the GEAR UP students through their final year of high school. In 2004-2005, approximately \$298,230,000 was appropriated for 317 GEAR UP programs across the United States, the District of Columbia, and three territories serving 1,483,763 students (U. S. Department of Education, 2005).

GEAR UP AUSTIN PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In its fifth year of implementation, the GEAR UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project operating within Akins, Crockett, Johnson (LBJ), Johnston, Lanier, McCallum, Reagan, and Travis high schools continued to be funded by the Department of Education at \$2,476,845. GEAR UP Austin garnered another \$1, 781,212 in matching funds and services from project partners (Appendix A). The program provided support services in the following areas: academic interventions, enhanced guidance and counseling, teacher professional development, and parent involvement.

Overall, the project served 2,243 GEAR UP students with an average of 31 contact hours per student. GEAR UP also extended selected project services to 3,199 students not originally included in the GEAR UP cohort, providing an average of 5 hours of service per non-GEAR UP student (GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, 2004- 2005). The following section of this report provides a detailed description of the GEAR UP project components. Related program objectives are provided in Appendix B.

Academic Intervention

To better meet the varying needs of GEAR UP students and to improve student academic achievement during the school year, GEAR UP Austin expanded its tutor-training program in 2004-2005. A tutor trainer was hired in September 2004 to work with tutors on increasing skill levels on topics such as Questioning Strategies, Multicultural Diversity, Note-taking, Test-taking Tips, Learning Styles, Ethics and Professionalism in Tutoring, and Time Management. These training sessions were developed by the trainer, and are part of a nationally certified tutor-training program recognized by the National Tutoring Association and the College Reading and Learning Association. GEAR UP tutors were required to attend at least two training sessions per semester.

The GEAR UP Austin Tutoring Initiative provided intensive academic support throughout the school year to GEAR UP students with failing grades or to those not meeting minimum expectations on TAKS. In addition, it provided support to students enrolled in Pre-AP or AP courses. Tutoring services were provided within and outside of the classroom, in the form of small group or one-on-one instruction, both during and outside of the official school day. GEAR UP Austin worked collaboratively with higher education partners and district personnel to establish structures and procedures that enabled the project to employ approximately 82 tutors during the 2004-2005 school year, many of whom were federal work-study students attending higher education partner campuses. In 2004-2005, 1,301 GEAR UP students were provided with an average of 19 hours of tutoring services each student (GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, 2004- 2005).

GEAR UP Austin also worked with its project partner, Austin Community College (ACC), to encourage students to engage in rigorous academic preparation for college by participating in dual credit courses at ACC. A total of 208 GEAR UP students enrolled in dual credit courses at ACC during the Summer and Fall 2004 semesters. One hundred and fifty-eight GEAR UP students completed dual credit college courses during Summer 2004, with 91% of those students earning high marks (Source: ACC Early College Start Office, September 2004). Course grades for the 72 GEAR UP students who took a dual credit course at ACC during the Fall 2004 semester and continuing GEAR UP student enrollment for Spring and Summer 2005 were unavailable at the time of this report.

GEAR UP College and Career Centers (CCCs) were designed to provide a place for students to explore the most up-to-date college and career information; however the centers also were used at each high school for academic support purposes. GEAR UP students often used software programs provided in the CCCs for individualized tutoring purposes. Many GEAR UP students do not have the necessary technology to complete academic assignments at home, so they often used the computers and software provided in the CCCs outside of class

hours to complete their work. Project records revealed that 591 GEAR UP students used the CCCs outside of class to complete academic assignments or used computer-assisted tutoring programs. Further, 157 teachers used the technology available to them in the CCCs for approximately 1,067 hours of classroom instruction (GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, April 2005).

In May 2005, the GEAR UP staff identified GEAR UP students needing course credit recovery assistance to stay on track to graduate. They made phone calls, scheduled conferences, and visited homes to provide GEAR UP students and their families with information regarding course credit recovery opportunities and assisted them in enrolling in AISD summer school courses. The project awarded AISD summer school scholarships to GEAR UP students with economic need for a total of \$45,600 (Source: GEAR UP Budget Records, 2004-2005). As a result, 287 GEAR UP students enrolled in AISD summer courses during Summer 2005 with 96% earning credits for the courses they completed (Source: AISD Course Enrollment, Summer 2005).

Enhanced Guidance and Counseling

Project staff at five GEAR UP campuses continued to support student leadership organizations sponsored by GEAR UP and expanded those organizations. The purpose of the student leadership groups sponsored by GEAR UP was to provide students with a place to belong that would confirm the positive impact of engaging in academic challenge, provide advisement within a supportive environment, and guide students through the post-secondary enrollment preparation process. Within these groups, students met frequently outside of school hours to engage in college preparation activities, community service, personal development activities, and social activities. Student membership in these organizations ranged between 20 and 60 students at each high school.

Because the junior year of high school is often considered a pivotal year in a student's postsecondary preparation process, GEAR UP designed Junior Seminars to help parents and students review student progress towards high school graduation and college enrollment, and to identify next steps in the process. The Junior Seminar sessions were limited to 5 families at a time to allow the GEAR UP staff and counseling team members the time to provide individualized support and information to families. During the seminars, GEAR UP staff, students, and their parents discussed information pertaining to TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills), college entrance exams, upcoming tutorial sessions, applications for taking college entrance exams, and SAT/ACT Preparation classes. Overall, 574 students and their families participated in a Junior Seminar. GEAR UP Austin will continue this service for students and their families into the students' senior year.

To support individualized college and career exploration needs, GEAR UP assisted the district in institutionalizing the use of eDISCOVER, a web-based college and career awareness product developed by ACT, and encouraged all students to use the College Career Centers for independent college and career exploration. Overall, 61.5% of GEAR UP students engaged in college/career exploration using eDISCOVER during the school year. Additionally, project service records showed that 267 GEAR UP students used the College and Career Centers for independent college and career exploration (GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, April 2005).

GEAR UP staff continued to communicate the importance of participating in college admissions testing. PSAT test preparation seminars were conducted on the high school campuses prior to the Fall 2004 PSAT test administration for 494 GEAR UP students. A total of 5,917 10th and 11th graders attending GEAR UP high schools took the PSAT in October 2004 (Sources: GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, 2004-2005 and the College Board, 2004).

The project staff provided GEAR UP cohort students with opportunities to visit colleges and to attend college fairs throughout the school year. Most of the GEAR UP sponsored college visits were limited to small groups of students and were tailored to meet their interests. A total of 790 students participated in at least one college visit and/or college fair during the school year. Of these students, 620 GEAR UP students visited 26 different colleges across Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana and 482 students attended a college and career fair (Source: GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, 2004-2005).

Sensitive to student aspirations and wanting to build on the success of the college visits that took place during the school year, the GEAR UP project sponsored an intensive enrichment course focused on the study of the Civil Rights Movement, taught by a Huston-Tillotson College faculty member. Forty students completing this course of study were able to participate in a week-long, summer road trip to historically Black colleges throughout the South. The students toured Lemoyne-Owen, Spellman, Morehouse, and Miles colleges and visited the National Civil Rights Museum, Martin Luther King Center and Historic Site, Civil Rights Institute, and National Voting Rights Museum. More information about this event may be accessed at <http://www.austinschools.org/gearup/Roadtrip>.

Professional Development

To improve the quality of college advising for GEAR UP students and others in Austin ISD and to increase college advising collaboration among multiple service providers within the district, the College Board Southwest Regional Office (a GEAR UP project partner) presented two, day-long college advising workshops for staff within the Student Support Services

Department. GEAR UP staff and their high school teams attended these workshops, which provided materials and strategies about the components of college counseling. The components of these workshops included:

- college admissions and placement tests;
- counseling students with Learning Disabilities, English language learners, and traditionally underrepresented students;
- college preparatory parent programming;
- the college selection process; and
- the basics of financial aid.

The interactive workshops provided training and time for collegial interaction regarding the “best practices” in counseling students for the transition from high school to postsecondary education. In addition, these workshops enabled the counseling teams to standardize and expand the college advising information shared with students. Twenty-nine participants attended the first workshop, and 39 attended the second workshop.

GEAR UP continued to fund training for teachers regarding quality test preparation for students planning to take the College Board’s exams. The Learning Systems Corporation, a GEAR UP Project partner, continued to provide PSAT and SAT preparation workshops for a total of 80 teachers in August 2004 and March 2005. These trainings focused on PSAT/SAT test formats, scoring strategies for analyzing test items, and creative ways for using PSAT preparation strategies within existing school curriculum. To date, GEAR UP Austin has trained a total of 134 teachers from GEAR UP middle and high schools to provide college admissions test preparation services for their students (GEAR UP Austin Professional Development Records, 2004-2005).

In addition to PSAT and SAT preparation, Learning Systems trained 18 teachers in ACT Testing Strategies. In this workshop, teachers learned about the ACT test format, scoring strategies for analyzing test items, and creative ways for using ACT preparation strategies within existing school curriculum. GEAR UP staff planned to provide a series of ACT test preparation classes for GEAR UP students in Fall 2005.

The University of Texas at Austin expanded their UT Telecampus to include an online TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) readiness program designed to help 11th grade students prepare for the state exams. In early Spring 2005, the developers of TRACK (TAKS Readiness and Core Knowledge) provided all GEAR UP staff with a hands-on informational session to learn about the online test preparation and tutorial program. The GEAR UP administrative staff developed additional instructional materials and delivered training sessions to 378 teachers and tutors at the GEAR UP high schools. The training helped teachers and tutors learn about the components of the program and how to navigate through

them. During the training session, teachers shared ideas of how they might use the program both in class and as out-of-class assignments. GEAR UP schools held after school sessions for 11th grade students before they took the Exit-Level TAKS tests, where the teachers, who had received the TRACK Training, provided guidance and support for students who took advantage of the review and practice sessions.

GEAR UP continued to sponsor and recommend professional development for teachers related to articulated district goals and project objectives that focused on subject matter and provided hands-on learning opportunities. As a result, the project spent approximately \$69,000 supporting teacher professional development during the 2004-2005 school year. District information systems indicated that 212 or 84% of GEAR UP teachers completed an overall average of 50.9 hours of professional development. Of those GEAR UP teachers participating in professional development, 77 % completed an average of 20 or more hours each. There were statistically significant increases in the percentage of teachers participating in professional development and in the average number of continuing education hours that the GEAR UP teachers completed relative to the 2003-2004 school year (Appendix C).

Parent Involvement

In Fall 2004, GEAR UP Austin and AISD's Student Support Services Department worked collaboratively to host two major college financial aid events for GEAR UP students and their parents. Locally, GEAR UP assisted with the Sallie Mae Fund's, "On the Road: The Paying for College Tour." This event was focused on helping Hispanic families learn about planning and paying for college. It united financial aid experts from area colleges, student-serving organizations, and Latino community-based groups. The Sallie Mae Fund also provided scholarships to distribute on high school and middle school campuses.

GEAR UP Austin and AISD's Student Support Services Department also hosted a college-recruiting event with Texas A&M University. African American and Latino junior and senior students who were ranked in the top ten percent of their classes and their parents were invited to attend. At this event, Texas A&M's President, Dr. Robert M. Gates, and Texas A&M System regents invited students to apply to the university. Representatives from A&M's Admissions Office provided application and financial aid information. The university provided ten \$1000 scholarships for the students in attendance, should the students become enrolled in Texas A&M University.

In 2004-2005, GEAR UP Austin continued to work towards improving its parent services to increase parent knowledge about preparation for post-secondary enrollment and college financial aid. Understanding that the development of relationships significantly aids learning, the GEAR UP parent support specialists focused on personalized outreach for GEAR

UP students' families. GEAR UP parent support specialists provided outreach in the form of home visits, conferences, and workshops for the parents or guardians of 1,708 GEAR UP students (Source: GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, 2004-2005). The GEAR UP parent support specialists provided personalized outreach services for 65% of these GEAR UP families three or more times during the school year. Seventeen percent of the parents participated in conferences with GEAR UP staff, and 18.3% of the parents were visited in their homes. Twenty-six percent of the parents participated in at least one GEAR UP sponsored workshop and 25.6% participated in a Junior Seminar.

METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE

Each year, the GEAR UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project comprehensively evaluates its program services to: 1) comply with federal law requiring an annual evaluation of the program, and 2) provide project decision-makers with the formative and summative information on program effectiveness necessary to support continuing implementation decisions. For the fifth year of program implementation, the evaluation focused on describing outcomes related to post-secondary enrollment preparation for students participating in the GEAR UP Austin Project within Austin ISD high schools.

Post-secondary enrollment preparation requirements were reviewed and eleven research hypotheses were constructed. Data collection activities and related analyses were completed as determined by these hypotheses. Six of these hypotheses are addressed within this report. The remaining cannot yet be addressed but are included to show the overall intent for this longitudinal evaluation and to reflect the following overarching goals for GEAR UP Austin: graduating from high school, enrolling in an institution of higher education, and completing college. Hypotheses explored in this evaluation are:

- **Hypothesis I.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, students served by GEAR UP will complete a greater percentage of advanced courses.
- **Hypothesis II.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, students served by GEAR UP will perform better on TAKS in the current school year and will have greater gains over time.
- **Hypothesis III.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, students served by GEAR UP will be promoted at a higher rate from Grade 9 through Grade 11 (2004-05 on-track grade level).
- **Hypothesis IV.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, GEAR UP students will have fewer serious discipline issues as measured by assignment to a disciplinary alternative campus.
- **Hypotheses V.** Students served by GEAR UP who have higher-rated levels of engagement in GEAR UP activities will have better outcomes than students with lower-rated levels of engagement.
- **Hypotheses VI.** Students served by GEAR UP whose parents are more highly involved in GEAR UP activities will have better outcomes.

Hypotheses to be examined in future GEAR UP evaluations are:

- **Hypothesis VII.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, a greater percentage of GEAR UP students will graduate from high school on time.
- **Hypothesis VIII.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, students served by GEAR UP who participate in college visits will have a greater rate of enrollment in college after graduation from AISD.
- **Hypothesis IX.** Compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, GEAR UP students will participate in college entrance examinations (SAT, ACT), apply for scholarships (controlling for financial position), and complete applications for colleges at a higher rate.
- **Hypothesis X.** Compared to their peers not served by GEAR UP, a greater percentage of the GEAR UP cohort of students will attend a college or university within 2 years of graduation.
- **Hypothesis XI.** Compared to college-specific historical graduation rates, a greater percentage of the GEAR UP cohort of students will obtain a degree within six years.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

GEAR UP project participants included 2,513 GEAR UP cohort students selected to participate in the GEAR UP program in 2000-2001 who were still enrolled in Austin Independent School District high schools during the 2004-2005 school year. Approximately 57% of GEAR UP students were potential first generation college students and 73% were categorized as economically disadvantaged. During the 2004-2005 school year, 2,243 of the GEAR UP students were enrolled in GEAR UP high schools: Akins, Crockett, Johnston, Lanier, LBJ, McCallum, Reagan, or Travis. Approximately 270 GEAR UP students were enrolled in Anderson, Austin, and Bowie high schools, which did not provide GEAR UP project services. A demographic summary for GEAR UP students who were enrolled in GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools is provided in Appendix D.

DATA COLLECTION

Project evaluators collected quantitative data from multiple sources. The Department of Program Evaluation obtained much of the student-level data from the district's comprehensive database that included student identification numbers, student demographic descriptors, high school of enrollment, course enrollment and completion information, Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) scores, discipline records, and attendance data. GEAR UP program participation data was obtained from the GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database (2004-2005). The GEAR UP database provided project service descriptors

and related contact hours for students and their parents. Teacher professional development data were obtained from Austin ISD's Professional Development Academy database and the GEAR UP Austin's professional development records (2004-2005).

GEAR UP project staff also rated GEAR UP student and parent involvement. Each program and parent coordinator at GEAR UP high schools was responsible for rating each GEAR UP student on a scale of 1 to 5 that reflected the student's level of engagement in the GEAR UP program. A "1" rating meant that the student had little or no interest and little active participation in the program activities and goals. Conversely, a "5" rating meant that the student was a very active participant, encouraged other students to be involved, and generally was very interested in GEAR UP goals. There was a similar scale for parental involvement. In addition, each coordinator was asked to rate whether the engagement (student) or involvement (parent) had declined or increased during the 2004-2005 school year.

GEAR UP Student and Parent Surveys, developed from the previous years' surveys and requirements of the Department of Education, were made available to all GEAR UP students and parents. These surveys were designed to provide information related to student college preparation needs, expectations for post-secondary education, and perceived educational outcomes. The student response rate was 70%. The parent response rate was 40%. An examination of survey respondents indicated that they were representative of the population of GEAR UP students and parents; therefore, the data obtained from this survey could be generalized to the GEAR UP cohort. Student survey results are provided in Appendix E, and parent survey results are provided in Appendix F.

Teacher Surveys were sent to 324 core course teachers of GEAR UP students. These online surveys were designed to elicit the teachers' perspectives on GEAR UP students' college preparation needs, expectations for post-secondary education, and perceived educational outcomes. The teacher response rate was 25%. An examination of the responses revealed that most of the respondents were teachers who reported a high level of interaction with the program. Therefore, the results may not represent the perceptions of teachers who occasionally or infrequently interact with the project staff or access GEAR UP services. The teacher survey is provided in Appendix G. Overall results may be requested from the Department of Program Evaluation, Austin Independent School District.

Project evaluators collected qualitative data from multiple sources. In-depth program information was collected through one-on-one interviews with GEAR UP project staff, assistant principals, and counselors. At each campus, the GEAR UP facilitator and school counselor participated in an interview. Assistant principals representing 7 of the 8 GEAR UP schools participated in an interview. Campus site visits were conducted between May 9 and May 20, 2005. A variety of topics were addressed during the visits including: descriptions of

the GEAR UP program; roles of the project facilitator; coordination between GEAR UP and other school-level programs; influences of GEAR UP on students, parents, and the school overall; assistant principal and counselor perceptions of GEAR UP; and the future role of GEAR UP in Austin ISD.

GEAR UP cohort students participated in focus-group discussions to provide in-depth information regarding implementation of the project's services and perceived participant outcomes. Groups of 5 to 8 GEAR UP students at each high school were selected according to articulated criteria to ensure that the participants were representative of all GEAR UP students at each school. During the interviews, students described the GEAR UP project, discussed their level of satisfaction with the quality of GEAR UP, articulated outcomes resulting from their participation or lack thereof, and talked about their plans and concerns for the future.

DATA ANALYSIS

A concurrent mixed-methods approach continued to be used for the evaluation of the GEAR UP Austin Project. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Results were triangulated to determine the effectiveness of the project's service implementation and outcomes for its participants. The data triangulation also allowed the evaluators to verify the consistency of data and to clarify results, increasing the validity and reliability of the performance evaluation.

Within the evaluation, varied data analysis techniques were used. Simple descriptive statistics were used to represent the characteristics of GEAR UP participants, to describe program participation, and to summarize outcomes for tests and/or surveys. Graphical and tabular presentations were used to communicate these descriptive statistics. Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was also utilized to determine more precise outcomes for GEAR UP students and to isolate the influences of other variables. In this process, statistical analysis models were developed to examine and report outcomes for students participating in the GEAR UP program within Austin ISD high schools. Content analysis techniques were used to identify important details, themes, and patterns within interview data. Patterns or themes emerging from the analysis were summarized to explain project outcomes for participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

COMPLETION OF ADVANCED COURSES

To prepare for post-secondary enrollment upon the completion of high school, GEAR UP students were encouraged each school year to enroll in advanced coursework that included Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, Magnet, and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. In this evaluation, it was hypothesized that students served by GEAR UP, compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP, would have a higher ratio of advanced course credits to regular course credits. Thus, the advanced course-taking history for 11th grade students served by GEAR UP was compared to that of other 11th grade students not served by GEAR UP.

Using the overall student course history data for students at Akins, Crockett, Johnston, Lanier, McCallum, Reagan, and Travis high schools, Stamman and Romero (2005) compared the number of advanced course credits to the total number of credits earned across school years. LBJ high school was not included in this comparison due to inconsistencies associated with the magnet student indicator across school years at the time of the study. The data analyses (Table 1) revealed that students served by GEAR UP had higher advanced course credit ratios (0.19) than did students not served by GEAR UP in the same schools (0.17). This difference was found to be statistically significant, yet the difference was determined to be modest.

Table 1: Comparison of Advanced Course Ratios Between AISD GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Enrolled in AISD High Schools

School Type	Students Not Served by GEAR UP	Students Served by GEAR UP		
		All	Rating >2	Rating ≤2
GEAR UP Schools	0.17	0.19	0.22	0.11
Non-GEAR UP Schools	0.31	0.21	--	--

Sources: AISD Student Enrollment and Course History prepared by Academic Information Management, Inc., May 2005

Note. Dataset does not include LBJ high school, as reliable magnet indicators for students were not available at the time of the analyses.

Since the differences were modest, Stamman and Romero (2005) further investigated factors related to the advanced course enrollment for GEAR UP students. They examined program engagement ratings for GEAR UP students given by the project facilitators in relation to advanced course ratios (Table 1). The results showed that GEAR UP students with higher engagement ratings had higher advanced course ratios (0.22) compared to the GEAR UP students with lower engagement ratings (0.11) in GEAR UP high schools. GEAR UP students who were enrolled in non-GEAR UP high schools had an average advanced course ratio of

0.21. The ratio for students not eligible for GEAR UP services who were enrolled in non-GEAR UP high schools was considerably higher (0.31).

Advanced course ratios across school years also were examined for GEAR UP students with program engagement levels of 3 or higher to further determine outcomes for students who consistently participated in the program. With the exception of two schools (McCallum and Crockett), GEAR UP cohort students had higher ratios of advanced courses than did the non-GEAR UP served students (Table 2). Controlling for the level of student engagement, the ratios for the GEAR UP students were reasonably similar across these GEAR UP high schools, while the ratios varied considerably for students not served in the GEAR UP schools.

Table 2: Comparison of Advanced Course Ratios for Highly Engaged GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Enrolled in GEAR UP High Schools

Campus	GEAR UP Students with Program Engagement Ratings of 3 or Higher		Students Not Served by GEAR UP	
	Number	Course Ratio	Number	Course Ratio
Akins	203	0.21	231	0.19
Crockett	90	0.18	318	0.18
Johnston	59	0.26	80	0.18
Lanier	173	0.22	141	0.06
McCallum	123	0.24	236	0.29
Reagan	138	0.22	74	0.06
Travis	163	0.21	121	0.05

Sources: AISD Student Enrollment and Course History prepared by Academic Information Management, Inc., May 2005

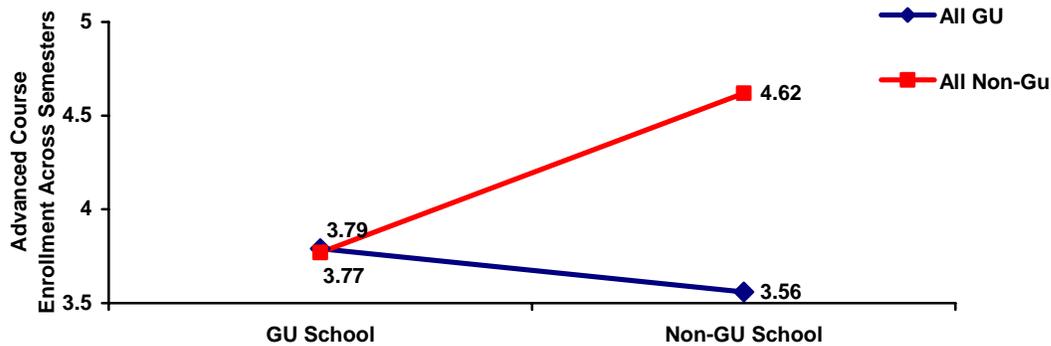
Note. Analysis only included GEAR UP students with an engagement rating of 3 or higher.

In these analyses, Stamman and Romero (2005) stated that the influences of GEAR UP on advanced course enrollment were positive. They also stated that there were probable confounds in the findings primarily due to the inability to identify students participating in the magnet schools across multiple school years. They suggested that the results could be more definitive if the analyses included magnet student indicators and data for all Austin ISD high schools.

In response to these recommendations, Austin ISD's Department of Program Evaluation examined the 11th grade student enrollment in advanced courses, incorporating magnet indicators and data for all 11 high schools for the 2004-2005 school year. The analyses considered limited English proficiency, special education participation, magnet participation, and economic disadvantage status. Both GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP students in GEAR UP high schools were enrolled in approximately the same number of advanced courses during the 11th grade (Figure 1). Non-GEAR UP students attending in non-GEAR UP high schools were enrolled in significantly more advanced courses, compared to students in GEAR UP schools.

However, GEAR UP students attending non-GEAR UP high schools enrolled in fewer advanced courses than their GEAR UP counterparts at GEAR UP schools.

Figure 1. Average Number of Advanced Courses Taken by 11th Graders at All Austin ISD High Schools, 2004-2005



Source: Austin ISD Course Enrollment Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, 2004-2005

Note. The average number of advanced courses (i.e., AP, pre-AP, honors, magnet, IB) that 11th grade students enrolled in during the 2004-2005 school year, across the 11 high schools. These estimates are statistically significant at the .001 level and control for LEP, special education, magnet, and economic status variables.

Data analyses also revealed that the advanced course enrollment during the 2004-2005 school year was significantly different for economically disadvantaged males participating in GEAR UP compared to their non-GEAR UP peers. In GEAR UP high schools, GEAR UP male students who were economically disadvantaged enrolled in more advanced courses than did their non-GEAR UP counterparts during the 11th grade (Table 3).

Table 3: The Average Number of Advanced Courses Taken by 11th Grade, Economically Disadvantaged Males in GEAR UP High Schools, 2004-2005

	GU Student	Non-GU Student	% Difference
Econ Disadvantaged African American Males	1.93	1.74	10%
Econ Disadvantaged Hispanic Males	2.75	2.56	7%
Econ Disadvantaged White Males	4.03	3.84	5%

Source: Austin ISD Course Enrollment History prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, 2004-2005

Note. These differences are statistically significant at the .05 level and control for LEP, special education, and magnet student demographics.

In summary, the GEAR UP project positively influenced advanced course enrollment for GEAR UP students. Across school years, GEAR UP students had a higher ratio of advanced course credits to regular course credits than did their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP within the same schools. Students who were highly engaged in the GEAR UP program had higher advanced course ratios than did students who were reported as less engaged in the program. Highly engaged students showed greater advanced course ratios regardless of campus, while the ratio for less-engaged or non-served students varied by campus.

During the 2004-2005 school year, GEAR UP students had only a slightly higher ratio of advanced course credits to regular course credits compared to their grade-level peers in GEAR UP schools. GEAR UP male students who were categorized as economically disadvantaged were enrolled in a significantly greater average number of advanced courses each semester than non-GEAR UP males within the same schools. GEAR UP students who had transferred to non-GEAR UP high schools took significantly fewer advanced courses than GEAR UP students in GEAR UP high schools. Further, all data analyses showed that non-GEAR UP students in non-GEAR UP high schools enrolled in significantly more advanced courses than students in GEAR UP high schools.

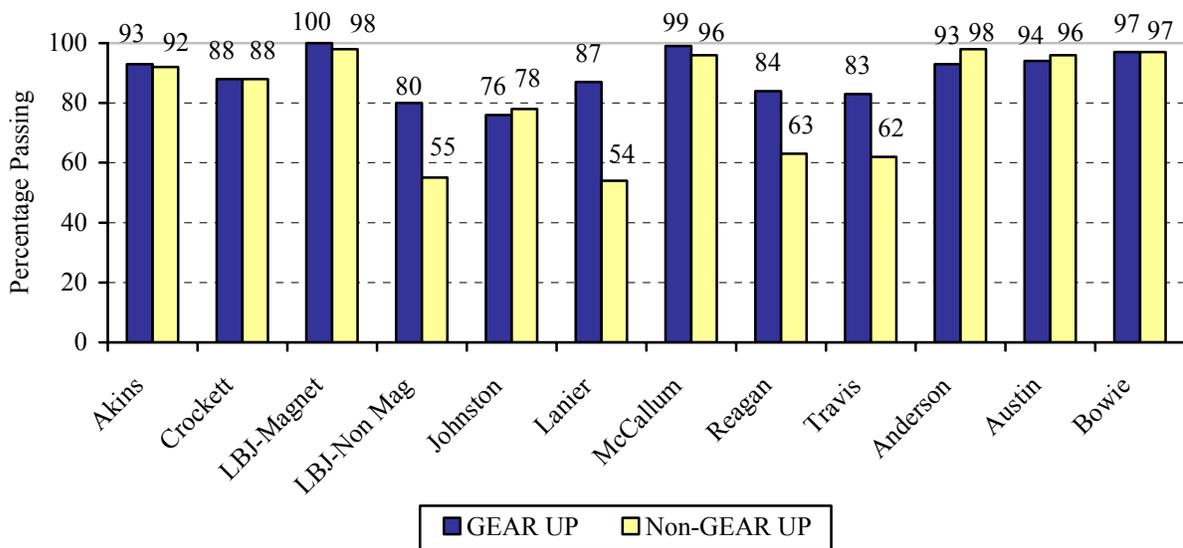
Again, it was articulated within the program objectives that students should be enrolled in rigorous coursework as a part of college preparation. Results indicate that GEAR UP project staff effectively encouraged GEAR UP students to enroll in and assisted them with registration for advanced level courses. It also appears that when GEAR UP students transferred to non-GEAR UP schools, the lack of advocacy may have resulted in students taking fewer advanced courses.

TAKS PERFORMANCE

To complete high school successfully and to be eligible to enroll in a post-secondary institution, students must pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests for all core subject areas. GEAR UP Austin provided intensive academic support to GEAR UP students and supported their teachers in obtaining the professional development necessary to provide quality classroom instruction. In this evaluation, it was hypothesized that GEAR UP students would perform as well as or better on TAKS across all school years than would their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP.

For the 2004-2005 school year, GEAR UP students generally performed as well as or better than their non-GEAR UP peers on the exit-level TAKS English/language Arts (ELA) test (Figure 2). All GEAR UP high schools met their project objective of having 80% or more of their students pass the TAKS exit-level ELA test (Appendix A), with the exception of Johnston. A significantly greater percentage ($p < .05$) of GEAR UP students enrolled in Lanier, LBJ (magnet and non-magnet), Reagan, and Travis high schools passed the ELA test, compared to the non-GEAR UP students at those high schools. Over 90% of the GEAR UP students attending non-GEAR UP high schools passed the exit-level ELA test. However, significantly fewer ($p < .05$) GEAR UP students passed the ELA test compared to the non-GEAR UP students at Anderson high school.

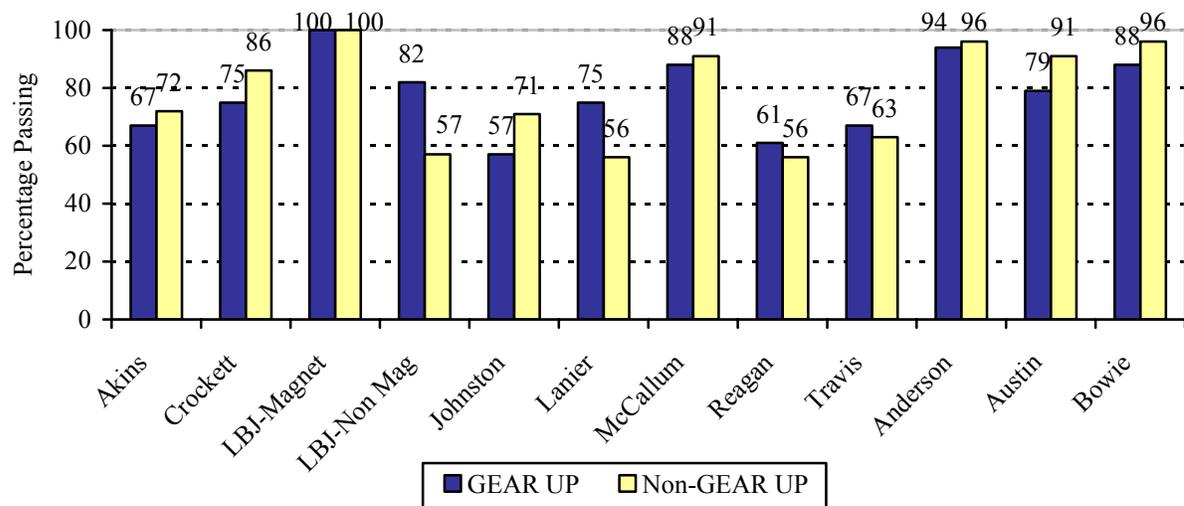
Figure 2: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS English/Language Arts Test, Spring and Summer 2005



Source: District TAKS files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, August 2005.

GEAR UP student performance results on the exit-level TAKS mathematics test were mixed during the 2004-2005 school year relative to the performance of non-GEAR UP students (Figure 3). Compared to non-GEAR UP students, greater percentages of GEAR UP students passed at LBJ, Lanier, Reagan, and Travis high schools, while greater percentages of non-GEAR UP students passed at Akins, Crockett, Johnston, and McCallum high schools. The differences between the passing percentages for GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP students at Lanier, Austin, and Crockett high school were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Only LBJ and McCallum high schools met their project objective of having 80% or more of their students pass the exit-level TAKS mathematics test (Appendix A).

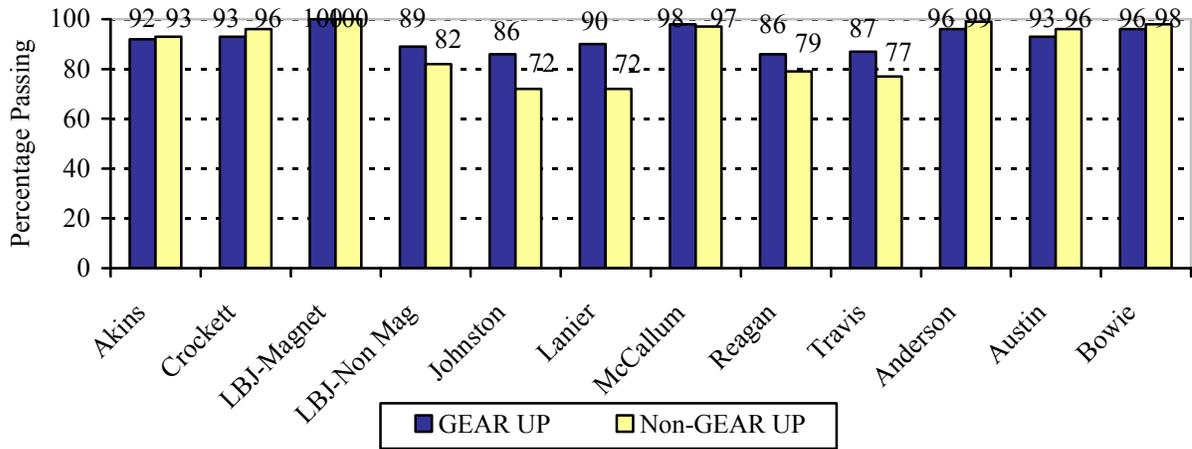
Figure 3: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS Math Test, Spring and Summer 2005



Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, August 2005

For the 2004-2005 school year, GEAR UP students performed as well as or better than their non-GEAR UP peers on the TAKS Social Studies test (Figure 4). All GEAR UP high schools met their project objective of having 80% or more of their students pass the exit-level TAKS Social Studies test (Appendix A). A significantly greater percentage ($p < .05$) of GEAR UP students enrolled in Lanier and Travis high schools passed the TAKS social studies test compared to the non-GEAR UP students at those high schools.

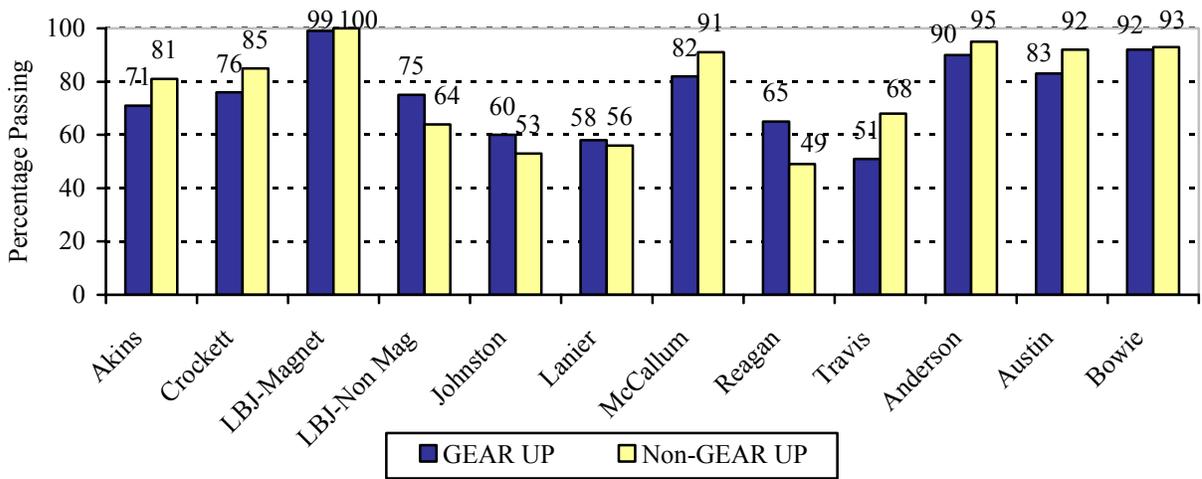
Figure 4: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS Social Studies Test, Spring and Summer 2005



Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, August 2005.

GEAR UP student performance results on the exit-level TAKS Science test were mixed during the 2004-2005 school year compared to non-GEAR UP student performance (Figure 5). Greater percentages of GEAR UP students passed at LBJ, Johnston, Lanier, and Reagan, yet greater percentages of non-GEAR UP students passed the TAKS Science test at Akins, Crockett, McCallum, and Travis high schools. Only McCallum high school met its project objective of having 80% or more of their students pass the exit-level TAKS Science test (Appendix A).

Figure 5: Percentages of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS Science Test, Spring and Summer 2005



Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, August 2005

Stamman and Romero (2005) also examined the 2005 TAKS passing percentages for GEAR UP students who were rated by GEAR UP staff as having higher or lower levels of engagement in the program (Table 4). For both ELA and mathematics, a larger percentage of GEAR UP students with the higher rating passed TAKS than GEAR UP students with the lower rating. Students with higher engagement levels had a nine percentage point advantage in ELA and a seven percentage point advantage in mathematics.

Table 4: Percentages of GEAR UP Students Passing the Exit-Level TAKS English/Language Arts and Mathematics Tests by Engagement Levels, Spring 2005

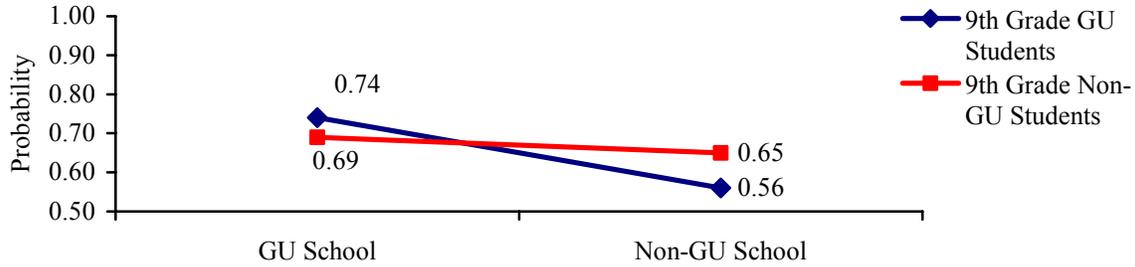
	TAKS ELA, Spring 2005		TAKS Math, Spring 2005	
	3 or Greater Engagement Rating	2 or Less Engagement Rating	3 or Greater Engagement Rating	2 or Less Engagement Rating
N	804	230	799	229
Percent Passing	87%	78%	67%	60%

Source: District TAKS Files and GEAR UP student engagement ratings prepared by Academic Information Management Inc., May 2005

Across project years, GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP student performance on the TAKS tests were compared. While GEAR UP students often were found to perform as well as their non-GEAR UP counterparts, there were exceptions (Alderete, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004). Thus, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was employed in this evaluation to explain and describe the relationships between factors that may have influenced student performance on the TAKS tests across school years. The procedure also allows inferential statements to be made about GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP student performance.

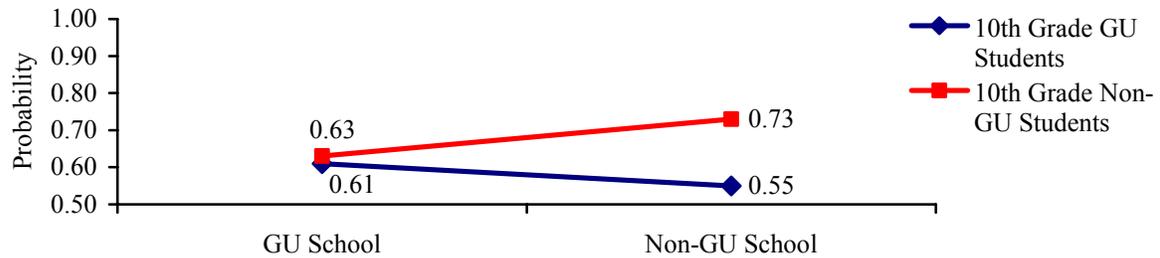
Using HLM, student performance on the TAKS English/Language Arts tests was compared across school years (Figures 6-8). Within the GEAR UP high schools, the probability of meeting standards was not found to be related to being a GEAR UP student except for the 2002-2003 school year, where 9th grade GEAR UP students performed better than their non-GEAR UP peers. At non-GEAR UP high schools, the probability that GEAR UP students would pass the TAKS ELA tests was found to be significantly lower than that for non-GEAR UP students in those schools. These differences were statistically significant ($p < .05$) and controlled for limited English proficiency, special education, magnet, and economic disadvantage student demographics.

Figure 6: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS English/Language Arts Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2002-2003



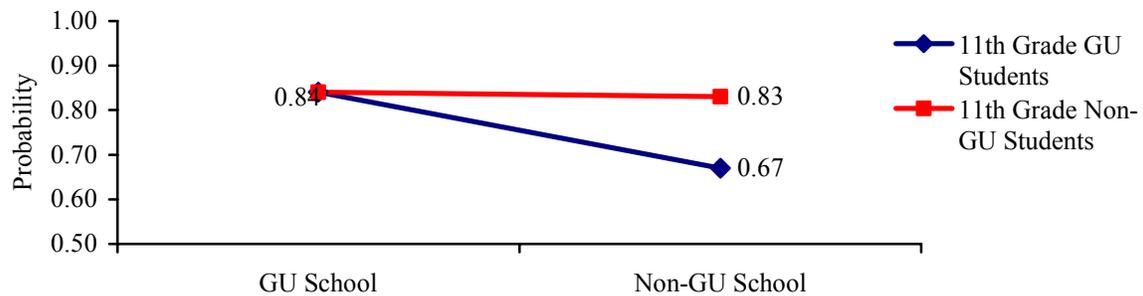
Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, May 2005

Figure 7: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS English/Language Arts Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2003-2004



Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, August 2005.

Figure 8: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS English/Language Arts Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2004-2005



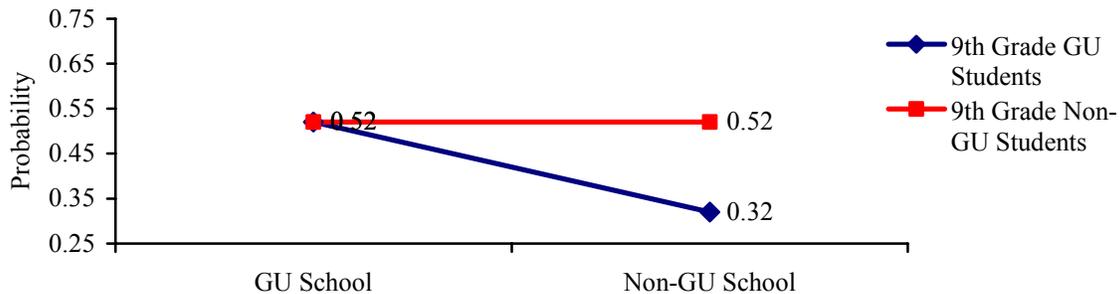
Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, August 2005.

Being a GEAR UP student was not related to rate of gain in TAKS reading scale scores. Analyses showed that the rate of gain in TAKS scale scores was about the same for all

students in GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP schools. However, the average scale score was slightly higher for students in non-GEAR UP schools in each of the three years. This difference between GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP schools was statistically significant ($p \leq .001$); however, the actual effects were determined to be small.

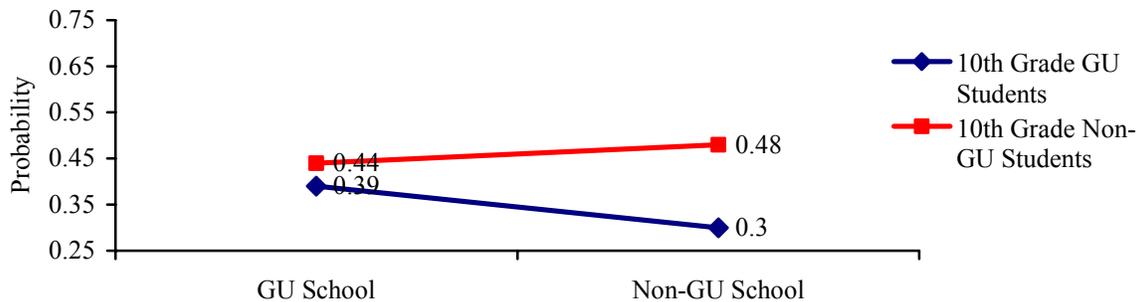
GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP student performance on the TAKS Math test also was compared across school years. Within the GEAR UP high schools, the probability of meeting standards was lower for GEAR UP students, except for school year 2002-2003, where 9th grade GEAR UP students performed as well as non-GEAR UP 9th graders (Figures 9-11). GEAR UP students who transferred to non-GEAR UP high school campuses consistently underperformed on the TAKS math tests across school years.

Figure 9: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS Math Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2002-2003



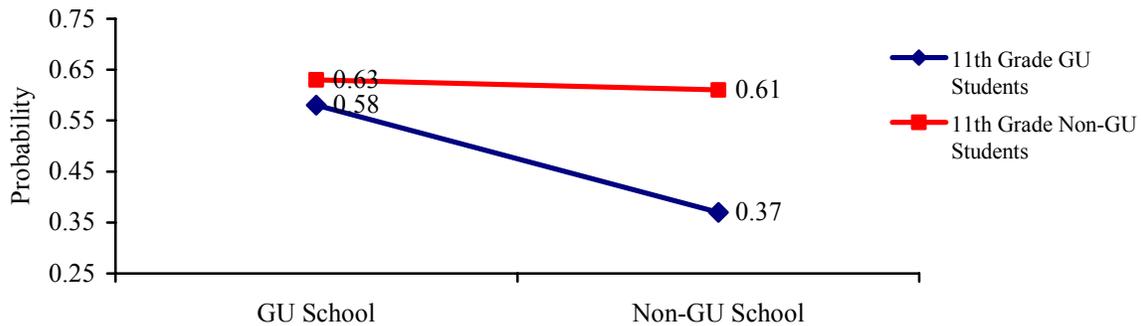
Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation August 2005. Note. Differences are statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ and control for LEP, special education, magnet, and economic status variables.

Figure 10: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS Math Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2003-2004



Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation August 2005. Note. Differences are statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ and control for LEP, special education, magnet, and economic status variables.

Figure 11: Probability of Students Meeting TAKS Math Standards Across All AISD High Schools, 2004-2005



Source: District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation August 2005.
 Note. Differences are statistically significant at $p \leq .01$ and control for LEP, special education, magnet, and economic status variables.

In summary, GEAR UP students' performance on TAKS was variable. In comparison to their grade-level peers not served by the program, GEAR UP students performed as well or better on the TAKS English language arts and social studies tests in 2004-2005. GEAR UP student performance on the TAKS mathematics and science tests varied in 2004-2005, compared to non-GEAR UP students. Across school years, the rate of gain in TAKS scale scores for GEAR UP students was similar to that of non-GEAR UP students. Importantly, GEAR UP students who transferred to high schools that did not offer GEAR UP academic support services were much more likely to have lower levels of performance on TAKS tests than non-GEAR UP students and GEAR UP students at GEAR UP schools.

To support student academic needs, GEAR UP staff assumed a supportive role within the schools and provided intensive academic support for students and professional development for teachers. However, GEAR UP staff actually had little ability to directly influence the quality of curriculum and instruction within the classroom. As such, they may have had less impact on student performance on TAKS than would other more direct influences, such as the curriculum or the classroom teacher. It should be noted that improving student performance on TAKS was not one of the primary goals of GEAR UP, though the evidence suggests that the program indirectly made a difference for its students.

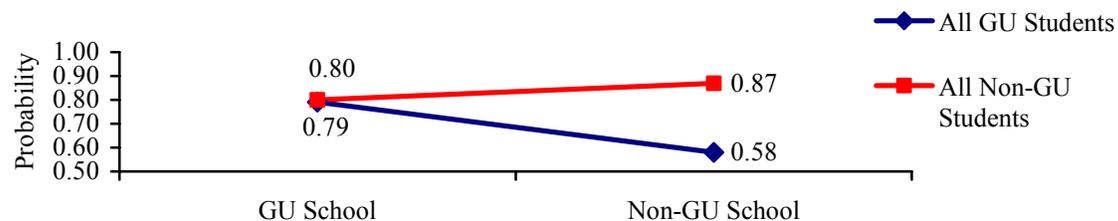
PROMOTION RATES

To successfully complete high school and to be prepared for college, it is important that students complete required courses at each grade level and earn credits for those courses. GEAR UP staff provided multiple academic and enhanced guidance and counseling support services to support student promotion to the next grade level each year. Thus, it was expected

that GEAR UP students would be promoted at a higher rate from Grade 9 through Grade 11, compared to their grade-level peers not served by GEAR UP.

Beginning with first-time 9th graders in 2003, grade level designations for each school year were used to determine promotion rates for GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP students at all high schools. Data analyses revealed that both GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP students in GEAR UP high schools were promoted from 9th grade to 10th grade at approximately the same rate (Figure 12). GEAR UP students enrolled in GEAR UP schools were promoted at only a slightly lower rate than non-GEAR UP students enrolled in non-GEAR UP high schools. However, GEAR UP students who transferred to non-GEAR UP high schools were less likely to be promoted than their non-GEAR UP peers. This difference was statistically significant.

Figure 12: Probability of 2002-2003 Students Being Promoted from 9th to 10th Grade in All AISD High Schools



Source: District Student Enrollment Files for school years 2002 through 2005 prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation.

Note. Probability of 2002-2003 9th grade students being promoted to 10th grade across the 11 high schools. These differences were statistically significant at $p < .001$ and control for LEP, special education, magnet, and economic status variables.

Stamman and Romero (2005) examined grade level promotion history for the GEAR UP students still enrolled in AISD in 2005 in terms of the student engagement ratings provided by the GEAR UP staff. They found that 87.5% of the GEAR UP students moving from Grade 9 to Grade 10 in Spring 2003 had a high engagement rating (>3). Regardless of their engagement rating, GEAR UP students were promoted at higher rate (80.0%) than those not served in the GEAR UP schools (76.2%) in Spring 2003.

Promotion rates from the 10th to the 11th grade level did not differ significantly for GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP students. In meetings and interviews, project staff believed that the critical year for student promotion was the freshman year, when many of the students experienced a variety of challenges unique to that grade level. They explained that once students transitioned from the 9th to the 10th grade, most students were likely to meet the requirements for promotion to the next grade. The staff believed that GEAR UP support was a

primary factor in making sure that GEAR UP students were promoted each year and “on-track” to graduate.

DISCIPLINE ISSUES

To successfully complete high school and to be prepared for college, it is important that students consistently attend school and be actively engaged in the classroom. GEAR UP focused on academic preparation for college and provision of enhanced guidance and counseling services to enable students to be successful in the classroom. It was expected that students served by GEAR UP would have fewer serious discipline issues as measured by assignment to a disciplinary alternative campus (Alternative Learning Center).

In 2004-05, 11th grade GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP student assignment to the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) was examined. GEAR UP students had a slightly lower rate of assignment to the Alternative Learning Center. Data analyses showed that student participation in GEAR UP was not significantly related to the probability of being removed from the high school campus to an alternative learning center. However, 38.6% of the GEAR UP students assigned to the ALC had a GEAR UP engagement rating of 2 or less (Stamman and Romero, 2005), whereas only 28.9% of all GEAR UP students had a rating of 2 or less. Thus, GEAR UP students with the lower engagement ratings were over-represented in the ALC.

INFLUENCE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

As discussed in previous sections of this report, students with high levels of engagement outperformed their GEAR UP peers with lower ratings in regards to being enrolled in advanced courses, passing TAKS, being promoted to the next grade level, and avoiding significant discipline issues. However, the student engagement ratings previously discussed were based on assignments given by the GEAR UP staff. While the staff ratings were found to be quite relevant and consistent in identifying students with higher levels of performance, additional analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between student self-reported levels of engagement and desired program outcomes.

Student survey responses were examined to determine the relationship between the students’ academic outcomes and their perceived level of engagement in the GEAR UP program. The following survey questions were used to measure the students’ level of engagement in GEAR UP:

1. How much do you know about the GU program?
2. How often do you interact with the GU teachers on your campus?

3. How well do the GU teachers provide you with information and help that you need to meet your college and career goals?
4. Do you participate in GU tutoring services?
5. Do you believe that the GU tutoring services are helpful?

According to these survey responses, the majority of GEAR UP students had moderate to high levels of engagement in the program. Overall responses to the survey questions were used to determine whether the students had high or low levels of program engagement and the ratings were examined along with overall program outcomes.

As with the staff ratings of student engagement, 11th grade GEAR UP student enrollment in advanced courses during the 2004-2005 school year was related significantly to the level of self-reported student engagement in the GEAR UP program. For each ethnic group, GEAR UP students with high levels of engagement were enrolled in more advanced courses than GEAR UP students with low levels of engagement (Table 5). Gender and economic disadvantage were not found to be related to advance course participation when controlling for the level of student engagement.

Table 5: Average Number of Advanced Courses Taken by GEAR UP Students Based on High Versus Low Student Engagement Levels, 2004-2005

	High Engagement	Low Engagement	Difference
African-American	4.62	3.92	13%
Hispanic	5.60	4.89	15%
White	7.08	6.38	10%
Overall	5.01	4.63	8%

Source: GEAR UP Student Survey and District Course Enrollment Files, 2004-2005

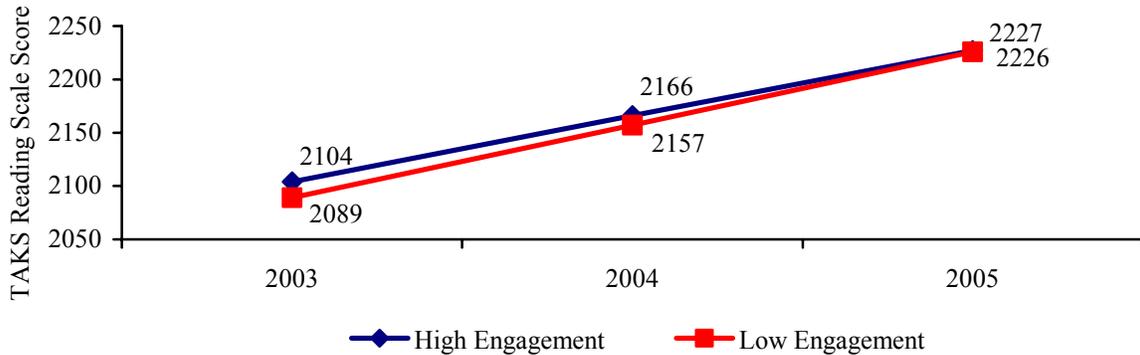
Note. The coefficients used to calculate these values are statistically significant at $p \leq .001$ and control for gender, LEP, special education, magnet, and economic disadvantage student demographics.

The engagement ratings based on the student self-report were used to re-examine student performance on the TAKS English language arts (ELA) tests administered in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Students reporting to be highly engaged in the GEAR UP program in 2005 had significantly higher scale scores on the TAKS ELA tests in 2003 and 2004 than the students who reported lower levels of engagement (Figure 13). The rate of gain measured by TAKS scale scores over the three years was significantly greater for the students who were engaged at a low level. The level and strength of these relationships were repeated across student demographics. To help explain this finding, GEAR UP staff suggested that the highly engaged students were likely to have received greater levels of academic support than the less engaged students, who often performed well without the help from GEAR UP staff.

In the same way, the engagement ratings based on the student self-report were also used to re-examine student performance on the TAKS mathematics tests administered in 2003,

2004, and 2005. The level of student engagement was not found to be related to the level of student performance or the rate of gain for the TAKS mathematics scale scores.

Figure 13: Increase in TAKS English/Language Arts Scale Scores Based on Student Engagement in the GEAR UP Program, 2003-2005

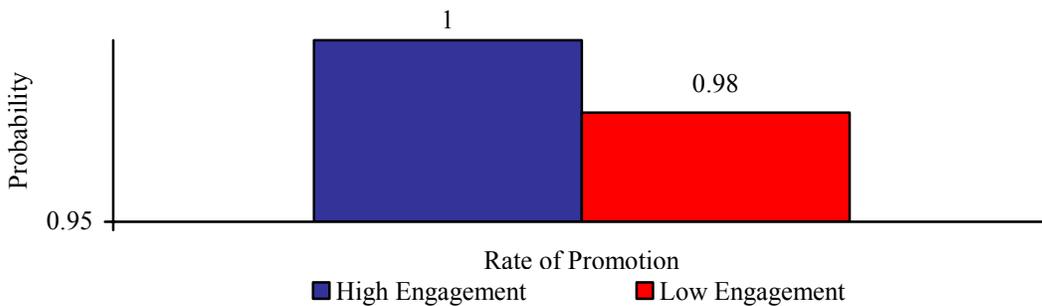


Source: GEAR UP Student Survey and District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, 2004-2005.

Note. These differences are statistically significant at $p < .05$ and control for gender, LEP, special education, magnet, and economic disadvantage student demographics.

Using HLM, self-reported levels of GEAR UP student engagement were considered along with the probability of promotion from the 9th to the 10th grade. There was a strong relationship between the student reports of being highly engaged in GEAR UP and their promotion to 10th grade ($p \leq .001$). However, the amount of difference between high and low engagement levels was relatively small (2%).

Figure 14: Probability of GEAR UP Students Being Promoted from 9th to 10th Grade Based on Self-Reported Level of Engagement in GEAR UP



Source: GEAR UP Student Survey and District TAKS Files prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation, 2004-2005.

Note. Probabilities were significant at the $p \leq .001$ level and controlled for gender, LEP, special education, and magnet student demographics. The model assumed students had economic disadvantage.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Educators, researchers, and parents alike often expect the levels of parental involvement to decline as students get closer to finishing their public school career. In contrast to these expectations, the GEAR UP program continued to work towards increasing parental involvement through personalized outreach and special programs. It was expected that GEAR UP students whose parents were more highly involved in GEAR UP activities would have overall higher levels of outcomes.

Table 6: Summary of GEAR UP Parent Participation for Multiple Project Years

	Number of GEAR UP Students	Number of GEAR UP Parents Participating in Project Services	Percentage of GEAR UP Parents Participating in Project Services	Percentage Point Change
2001-2002	3,670	942	25.7%	
2002-2003	2,880	1,448	50.2%	+24.5*
2003-2004	2,484	2,038	82%	+31.8*
2004-2005	2,243	1,708	76.1%	-5.9

Source: GEAR UP Austin Student Services Database, 2004-2005.

Note. * Differences are statistically significant at $p < .05$

Stamman and Romero (2005) asked GEAR UP parent support specialists to rate levels of parent involvement for the GEAR UP students. The parent involvement ratings were examined. The ratings tended to stack up at the high and low ends of the scale with few ratings falling within the average range. This pattern of distribution may indicate that the systems for developing the parent involvement rating should undergo more development. Conversely, these ratings may actually reflect a reality that parents of GEAR UP students are either highly involved or not at all involved.

With careful consideration of the unusual distribution of the ratings, Stamman and Romero (2005) completed one regression analysis to further examine the parental involvement ratings. They found a significant relationship between the level of parental involvement during the 2004-2005 school year and the advanced course ratio variable. As with student engagement, higher levels of parental involvement were associated with higher advanced course ratios ($p \leq .001$). While this finding was significant, the relationship was considered modest. Additional analyses were not conducted pending refinement of parent involvement ratings.

During the GEAR UP facilitator interviews, the role of the parent involvement specialist also was identified as a positive influence on student success (Stamman and Romero, 2005). The GEAR UP facilitators clearly indicated that parental involvement was a strong component of the program. They consistently reported that the GEAR UP facilitators and

parent support specialists had established strong relationships with students and their families. All of the facilitators reported that parents often came to them for all types of information, not necessarily information about GEAR UP only. GEAR UP facilitators perceived that the GEAR UP program had provided more frequent and relevant opportunities for parents to participate in the program and in the schools. They also believed that parents of GEAR UP students were more informed about their children's education.

FOCUS ON POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT

While the actual post-secondary enrollment cannot be measured at this time, interviews and surveys indicated that students were recognizing and preparing to meet that project goal. Across data sources, it appeared that most GEAR UP students were aware of and actively working towards enrolling in a post-secondary institution. Further, the college preparation efforts for the GEAR UP cohort may have also affected others on those same campuses.

The GEAR UP project facilitators reported that the primary reason that they were able to provide intensive academic support and enhanced guidance and counseling services for all of their students was because they knew the students so well. As a result, the GEAR UP facilitators reported that fewer students were "falling through the cracks." They believed that many students had been prevented from dropping out of school and that the district would see more students graduating from high school and enrolling in college in 2006.

On the GEAR UP Student Survey (2005), the students provided general information about the GEAR UP program. Significantly more ($p < .05$) students reported that their interaction with the GEAR UP staff was frequent (31.4%) or occasional (38.2%) than in prior years. Only 6.7% of the students reported that they had never utilized GEAR UP services. Significantly more ($p < .05$) GEAR UP students (70.2%) reported that GEAR UP provided college preparation information "very well", with 57.4% reporting that GEAR UP had helped them learn the most about preparing for college.

Compared to prior years' data, the GEAR UP Student Survey (2005) also indicated that significantly more students were increasingly informed about their college preparation needs and were making plans for post-secondary enrollment after high school graduation. Students were becoming academically prepared for college with significantly more of them reporting that they:

- were participating in academic clubs;
- had taken or would take advanced coursework that included Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, Career and Technology, and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) courses; and
- had taken or were planning to take the PSAT, SAT and ACT tests.

Further, the majority of students (52.5%) reported that the academic support provided by GEAR UP had resulted in better grades. GEAR UP students were also talking to their parents about post-secondary enrollment, with almost half discussing it frequently and 44.0% occasionally. Overall, more of the GEAR UP students were discussing college entrance (71.1%) and financial aid (58.0%) requirements with the GEAR UP staff and their parents. Almost 20.0% of the GEAR UP students “knew a lot” about obtaining financial aid, and 62.5% of the students were planning on obtaining financial aid for college. A multi-year summary of the GEAR UP Student Survey is provided in Appendix E.

During focus group interviews, GEAR UP students rated highly the college preparation services provided by GEAR UP. College visits continued to be identified as one of the most popular and important program activities. Students often described how their decisions to attend college were greatly influenced by the things they had seen and learned on their college visits. Students also reported that the consistent academic support provided by GEAR UP helped them succeed in their coursework. Students appreciated the high quality tutoring provided to them as needed and the diligent monitoring of their progress by the GEAR UP project facilitators. Students admitted that obtaining financial aid for college was a grave concern in the past; however, they reported that they were learning more about the financial aid application process and were confident that they could find a way to finance college. Overall, the students reported that they had become increasingly responsible for their own college preparation through GEAR UP’s consistent support and were planning to enroll in a post-secondary institution upon high school graduation.

The GEAR UP Parent Survey (2005) also indicated that the students and their families were continuing to become increasingly informed about their college preparation needs and were making plans for post-secondary enrollment after high school graduation. Statistically significant increases were reported in the number of:

- hours that their children were spending on homework;
- students participating in academic clubs and community service activities;

“It opened my eyes to college. College was never a priority for me. Only high school. I was just glad to go to high school. College never, never crossed my mind until this program.”

“ They make me feel like it is real. They make us realize that we can go to college too.”

“They told us about scholarships and to think that money was not an obstacle. In the beginning, I thought I was not going to college because my family couldn’t afford it. But now, they have shown us so much scholarship and financial aid stuff. There is a way. You just have to go and do it.”

Source: GEAR UP Student Focus Groups, May 2005.

- students who had taken advanced coursework that included Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, Career and Technology, and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) courses; and
- students who had taken or were planning to take the PSAT, SAT and ACT tests.

When reporting their children's plans for the future, 82.1% of the GEAR UP parents reported that their children would enroll in a post-secondary institution after high school graduation. Significantly more ($p < .05$) GEAR UP parents had discussed college entrance requirements and financial aid with their children. Significantly fewer parents identified obstacles related to obtaining financial aid for college, with 78.5% planning to apply for financial assistance. Finally, 66.4% of the parents reported that the GEAR UP staff members had been the most helpful resource as they prepared their children for college. A multi-year summary of the GEAR UP Parent Survey is provided in Appendix F.

In an especially busy time of year, the high school counselors participated in interviews to discuss the GEAR UP project. During the interviews, high school counselors reported that they were often overloaded with a variety of tasks on their campuses and a high student-to-counselor ratio, often preventing them from providing students with individualized services in the way that they would like. They recognized the significant role that GEAR UP facilitators and parent support specialists played on their campuses to ensure that all students are prepared for college, especially those who have been traditionally underrepresented in post-secondary institutions. When describing the services provided by GEAR UP, the counselors stated that the program provided students with significant, individualized support with things such as PSAT or SAT test preparation and registration, enrollment in advanced courses, and assistance with college and college financial aid applications. The counselors also reported that this assistance from GEAR UP staff made it possible for the campuses to provide more services for more students.

The assistant principals also described the influence of GEAR UP on students' college preparation on their campuses. They reported that the GEAR UP students had received personalized support that other students did not usually get, and as a result the GEAR UP students seemed much more knowledgeable about their future after high school. As one stated, "This class is more mature, and is better informed about their future choices." The assistant principals reported that there were many GEAR UP students who had been potential dropouts but were still in school because of the emotional and academic support that GEAR UP provided.

INFLUENCE OF RELATIONSHIPS

Across various data sources, students, teachers, and a variety of school staff emphasized the importance of relationships within the GEAR UP project. Uniquely, the GEAR UP project staff members served the same cohort of students for a period of five years and believed that the relationships that had been developed over the years contributed greatly to their work. The facilitators often had difficulty describing these relationships in unbiased terms and expressed great emotions when talking about their students. Each GEAR UP facilitator described the strong relationships that they had developed with many of their students and reported that these relationships were essential to the overall success of GEAR UP students. They reported being able to address both academic and personal issues with their students in a way that a regular teacher or school counselor might not be able to do. GEAR UP facilitators believed that their knowledge of students enabled them to provide personalized outreach services and to hold students accountable for their academic and overall college preparation.

GEAR UP students at each GEAR UP high school consistently emphasized the importance of their relationships with the GEAR UP project facilitators and parent support specialists during focus group interviews. Students often stated that they had known the GEAR UP staff since their 7th grade year. They were comfortable with and trusted the GEAR UP staff, and often sought out a GEAR UP staff person for advice and counseling before turning to another adult on their campus. Students often described GEAR UP staff as “second parents” and the GEAR UP program as a “second home.” Over and over again, the students stated that they believed that the GEAR UP staff valued each of them highly and held each student accountable for meeting their high expectations. Most of the students felt compelled to follow the recommendations of the GEAR UP staff because they believed that the staff genuinely cared about the students, were knowledgeable about college preparation, and would continue to follow up on the students’ progress.

On the 2005 GEAR UP teacher survey, teachers emphasized the importance of the relationships that had been built between the GEAR UP staff members and the students and attributed much of the students’ success to those relationships. They reported that GEAR UP not only provided personalized, high-quality academic support, but also provided significant emotional support for GEAR UP students. Teachers reported that the program had a positive impact on the GEAR UP students’ motivation to do well in school and to continue on to college.

“GEAR UP has helped influence the kids who had no idea where they were going or what they needed to do to be successful. The GEAR UP staff on our campus have made a point to get to know and follow up with the kids who need extra support.”

Source: Teacher Survey at GEAR UP Schools, Spring 2005.

The counselors also described the relationships that had been built between the GEAR UP staff and the students. Counselors recognized that students often sought help from GEAR UP with personal, academic, and college preparation concerns before making a trip to the counseling office. Importantly, each of the counselors reported that these relationships provided GEAR UP students with emotional support during a time when they were making decisions that could have an impact on the rest of their lives. Counselors also reported that GEAR UP students were more informed about college and were more confident about their plans for the future compared to the other students within their school.

“Our job is like a traffic jam. Lots of kids get overlooked. But far fewer kids have been overlooked because of GEAR UP...”

“This junior class is different. They have had all the opportunities in the world to travel and visit colleges. They know what college is and that there is money out there for them.”

Source: Counselor Interviews at GEAR UP Schools, May 2005.

Assistant principals also recognized the importance of the relationships that the GEAR UP staff had built with their students. The assistant principals reported that the personal relationships that GEAR UP facilitators and parent support specialists had with the students were important in the successes of the GEAR UP cohort. The assistant principals valued these relationships and often called on the GEAR UP staff to participate in campus committees and events, utilizing their knowledge of the students and college preparation expertise for the good of the campus.

In summary, the structure of the GEAR UP program was especially conducive to the development of relationships between project staff members and the students with whom they worked. These relationships were highly valued by the GEAR UP staff members and the students, and the importance of those relationships had been recognized by teachers, school counselors, and assistant principals. The relationships between the students and the GEAR UP staff members were beneficial to many GEAR UP students. Not only were they provided with information and services, but they also were motivated to follow through with the steps necessary to become prepared for college.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

In each school, the GEAR UP project facilitators, counselors, and administrators discussed building capacity on the school campuses to sustain GEAR UP services when federal funding ends. They described the steps that their campuses had taken to communicate and share information. GEAR UP staff members had participated in campus committees and provided information to others on their campuses as needed. GEAR UP staff had coordinated services and collaborated with other programs including AVID, Project ADVANCE, ENLACE, the Texas High School Completion and Success Grant, and Smaller Learning Communities. GEAR UP staff believed that a few of the program’s services, such as tutoring,

college visits, test preparation workshops, and parent information workshops might be continued using alternate resources from other grants or campus funds. The continuation of these services probably would not be completely determined until the end of the grant.

GEAR UP project facilitators, counselors, and administrators were not confident that the GEAR UP program would be sustained in its current form once federal funding ends in Spring 2006. The coordination and implementation of these events was very time consuming at full scale and with expert outreach. Going beyond specific services, each interview participant emphasized the importance of maintaining a staff person solely devoted to providing intensive college preparation support for student groups who were underrepresented in post-secondary institutions. They reiterated the importance of developing relationships with the students to influence student success. This could not be done piece-meal through other programs.

“ I don’t think we are prepared to take up the slack. I fear that we haven’t learned enough for the other kids. How do we keep those parents coming on Saturday? How do we fill the void? When these positions are gone, it is not the technology or the professional expertise, but having the personal relationship...”

Source: GEAR UP Assistant Principal Interviews, May 2005.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Multiple research studies have indicated that low-income students are often less likely to finish high school, enroll in college, and be accepted to that college. Based on that assumption, 10 middle schools were selected to participate in the GEAR UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project. These schools were selected because more than 50% of their students qualified for free and /or reduced priced lunches and often met the state's at-risk criteria. Within these schools the GEAR UP student cohort was identified and was provided with a variety of intensive support services developed to meet the unique needs of lower-income and minority students.

Quantitative and qualitative analyses provided strong evidence that student participation in GEAR UP resulted in positive outcomes for the students. The consistent findings across data sources by both district and external evaluators helped validate these results. Thus, the evaluation results can be reported with confidence.

Repeatedly, the evaluation findings revealed positive outcomes for these GEAR UP students. Positive outcomes were found in the areas of advanced coursework, TAKS test results, grade level promotion, and overall knowledge of college and career preparation issues. The majority of GEAR UP students were found to have high levels of program engagement, and the students with higher levels of engagement within the program had significantly more favorable overall outcomes. From an evaluative standpoint, it appears that this program has met most of its objectives, and it is expected that all of the program objectives will be met by the end of the grant period.

There is also compelling evidence that student participation in GEAR UP changed lives. Time and time again, students rated the program highly and provided anecdotal information to illustrate their points. These stories were more than descriptions of services and events. These adolescents discussed issues and shared stories close to their hearts with their peers and with the complete strangers who were facilitating the discussion groups. GEAR UP students often indicated that their lives were completely changed for the better because of the support they had received. They had high expectations for their futures. Again, the outcomes reported by the students were supported across the many data sources used within this evaluation.

Further, it appears that the relationship between the GEAR UP staff and the GEAR UP students and their families built over a period of five years was a key factor in the students' successes. The GEAR UP staff worked diligently to know their students and their families. They had intimate knowledge of the issues facing these students who were not considered

traditional “college material.” The GEAR UP staff members devoted substantial time to providing much encouragement over the years and to ensuring that all GEAR UP students could meet their potential through systematic preparation.

GEAR UP Austin has employed the ideas of rigor, relevance, and relationships that are frequently discussed in high school redesign literature (Southern Regional Education Board, 2004 and Darling-Hammond, 2002). They have supported the implementation of increased rigor within the high schools and have supported students in their endeavors to meet high expectations. GEAR UP communicated the relevance of academic rigor in the context of college preparation to a variety of audiences including students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Within this work, the GEAR UP staff members developed relationships with GEAR UP students and their families over a period of years. These relationships enabled the staff members to support and encourage students to prepare for college and to create an environment where they could hold students accountable for post-secondary preparation.

Unfortunately, the most important aspect of this program, the dedicated case management approach to preparing students for college that results in changed lives, is in jeopardy of being discontinued. Federal funding for the GEAR UP Austin: Impacting Lives Project will end at the end of the 2005-2006 school year. While selected GEAR UP program services could be supported through other resources, teachers and school counselors do not have the time to devote to the case management of students and the consistent implementation of services. Many teachers and school counselors also may not have the high level of expertise needed to address the needs of low- income or immigrant students as they prepare for college. Staff time and expertise were the crucial elements that seemed to make this program work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the results of the evaluation were consistently positive for GEAR UP students, and best practices for post-secondary preparation and enrollment were identified, the following recommendations are provided:

- 1. The school district should use a three-tiered intervention model to provide academic advising for all students and intensive academic support services for first generation college students, as well as guidance and counseling support services focused on preparation for post-secondary enrollment upon high school graduation for first generation and low-income middle and high school students.**

GEAR UP evaluation results indicated that students who were not traditionally considered as candidates for post-secondary enrollment have experienced positive outcomes related to college preparation. GEAR UP students, teachers, administrators, and staff persons emphasized the need for continued, concentrated academic and enhanced guidance and

counseling support for like groups of students. Therefore, it is recommended that GEAR UP extend its services to all high school students while continuing to identify and provide intensive support to those who are categorized as economically disadvantaged and/or first generation college students.

The GEAR UP program implementation could follow the district's three-tiered "Struggling Learner Model" to provide services for students with differing needs. At Level 1, academic support and college preparation could take place within and outside of the classroom for all students. Level 1 interventions might include increased classroom instruction using existing college and career preparation curricula, eDISCOVER and Focus on Your Future. Parent workshops that address high school course selection and college entrance requirements could be provided for all parents of middle and high school students. At Level 2, tailored program interventions could be provided for selected groups of students with special needs. These interventions may include tutoring for first generation students taking AP classes and college admissions preparation workshops for economically disadvantaged students. Parents of potential first generation college students could be invited to workshops that would assist them in planning for and tracking their child's college preparation progress. At Level 3, intensive academic and enhanced guidance and counseling support for students who are first generation college students could be provided in a case management format. These students could work one-on-one with their GEAR UP project facilitator to track their individual academic and college preparation progress. Parent outreach also could be provided in a case-management format. The GEAR UP parent support specialists could conference with and provide personalized communication for parents.

2. The school district should institutionalize the positions of the GEAR UP project facilitator and parent support specialist.

As stated before, the relationships built between the students and GEAR UP project facilitator and parent support specialist on each campus appeared to be the primary factors in the success of the students. Building solid relationships with students and their families through the provision of consistent and intensive academic and college preparatory support for high need students requires the full-time attention of staff fully devoted to that work. Thus, it is recommended that high schools continue to employ a GEAR UP Project Facilitator and Parent Support Specialist. This recommendation would require that the district employ 11 counselors and 11 parent support specialists.

The GEAR UP Project Facilitator will work closely with students to provide high quality academic and enhanced guidance and counseling services. The facilitators should have

a strong interest in working with at-risk students and understand their academic and post-secondary preparation needs. The GEAR UP Project Facilitator shall be responsible for:

- Communicating consistently with cohort students about issues related to post-secondary preparation;
- Developing and implementing tutoring, mentoring, and parental involvement components of the project;
- Participating in academic team meetings and activities designed to monitor students' academic progress;
- Assessing academic, college and career preparation, and social needs for GEAR UP students and implementing appropriate plans to address those needs;
- Designing and facilitating summer enrichment camps focused on academic and college preparation; and
- Collaborating with the school's guidance counselors to provide college campus experiences, admissions test preparation, and other post-secondary preparatory activities.

Similarly, the GEAR UP Parent Support Specialist will work closely with the parents of the GEAR UP cohort students. The primary goal of the parent support specialist is to educate and to inform the parents about college preparation; however, the specialist will also work closely with parents of children who are struggling with academics, behavioral issues, attendance, and other issues that impede progress in school. This work will be accomplished through home visits, phone calls, parent conferences, written communication, and parent workshops. The GEAR UP Parent Support Specialist shall be responsible for:

- Completing 8-10 home visits weekly, related to student academic performance, attendance, behavior, and/or other issues pertaining to school success;
- Facilitating workshops or training sessions for parents on issues related to academic success in high school, preparation for post-secondary enrollment; and responding to parents' requests for information or assistance;
- Serving as a liaison between the parent, the student, the school and the community;
- Participating in college preparation activities with a focus on involving and educating parents about the post-secondary experience; and
- Recruiting parent volunteers and/or trainers to teach and empower parents to become involved in their children's education.

3. The school district should find long-term and short-term funding sources that can be used to continue post-secondary preparation services identified as best practices through the GEAR UP Project.

Time and again, Austin Independent School District has articulated its commitment to quality preparation towards post-secondary enrollment for all students. This commitment can be found in the district's long-term Strategic Plan, Board Results Policies, and High School Redesign Initiative. Further, the district has garnered resources through other grant programs to facilitate student preparation for post-secondary enrollment. These programs include, but are not limited to, Project ADVANCE, Smaller Learning Communities, and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). As the high schools make plans for the redesign, it is recommended that all high schools thoughtfully review the evaluation findings of this report and make plans for continuing selected GEAR UP activities, such as tutoring, college admissions test preparation classes, college visits, college preparation seminars, and financial aid workshops, through the collaborative efforts of school staff and other continued funding sources.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EVALUATION

The 2004-2005 evaluation of GEAR UP is markedly improved from previous years' work. Data analyses were expanded in scope and rigor to provide improved information pertaining to program outcomes. Instead of being handled by one investigator, the evaluation was conducted by a team of evaluators within AISD's Department of Program Evaluation to take advantage of the varying areas of expertise within the department and to provide multiple expert perspectives to guard against the introduction of subjective bias. An external evaluator was contracted to provide statistical expertise and an additional "outside" perspective of the program. The external evaluator also identified challenges to be addressed within the evaluation and provided recommendations for the improvement of the work. Those suggestions for improvement were addressed and incorporated into this evaluation.

The improved quality of the GEAR UP evaluation will have several effects. It will provide high quality information that will enable project directors and school administrators to make decisions for improved post-secondary preparation programs for all AISD students. Further, the disentanglement of program effects and related student outcomes will help school administrators identify and prioritize GEAR UP program practices that should be sustained after federal funding ends. Finally, the development of more rigorous evaluation practice within the district will improve the overall quality of information that decision-makers obtain and use across multiple programs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: GEAR UP AUSTIN PROJECT PARTNERS, 2004-2005

ACT

Applied Materials, Inc.

Austin Coca Cola

Austin Community College

Austin Energy

AVANCE

Capital Area Training Foundation

Career Resources Development

College Board, Southwest Regional Office

Communities in Schools—Central Texas

DAAMARS International

Educational Resources Consulting

The Faulkner Group

Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce

HEB

Huston Tillotson College

Jr. Achievement of Central Texas

Learning Systems

Locke, Lidell, and Sapp

LULAC

St. Edward's University

Selectron-Texas

Texas Gas Service

Texas State University

The College Board

3 M

URS Radian

University of Texas at Austin

APPENDIX B: GEAR UP PROJECT OBJECTIVES, 2004-2005

Table B1: GEAR UP Project Objectives, 2004-2005

I. Academic Intervention	Objective Met
A. 80% of cohort students will meet minimum passing standards for all TAKS tests.	No, see pages 16-18.
B. 100% of cohort students with course averages between 50-69 will participate in tutoring each weekly.	Yes
C. 18% of cohort students are enrolled in advanced courses.	Yes
D. 63% of cohort students complete the SAT and/or ACT test.	In Progress
E. 27% of cohort students score at or above criterion on SAT/ACT tests.	In Progress
F. 50% of cohort students enroll in post-secondary education.	In Progress
II. Enhanced Guidance & Counseling	Objective Met
A. 100% of cohort students will complete the Individual Academic Career Plan (IACP), complete e-Discover interest inventory, create a portfolio; attend Centex College Fair; and attend a Career Exploration Day.	No, see pages 3-4.
B. 100% of cohort students will visit college internet site.	No, see pages 3-4.
C. 100% of cohort students will receive a 21 st Century Scholars certificate.	Yes
D. 100% of cohort students will visit a College and Career Center (CCC) twice per year, complete the PSAT/PLAN, complete the SAT/ACT; and identify 2 post-sec institutions for enrollment.	In Progress
E. 90% of cohort students will complete financial aid applications.	In Progress
III. Professional Development	Objective Met
A. 100% of project staff and cohort teachers will complete 20 hours of staff development per year.	No, see page 44.
B. 100% of project partners will engage in at least one project planning session each year.	Yes
C. 95% of school principals and project partners will meet annually to evaluate project's collaborative and intervention strategies.	Yes
D. 100% of project support staff and core team of teachers at each campus will complete IMPACT/GAIT team training.	Yes
IV. Parent Involvement	Objective Met
A. 100% of cohort parents will receive a GU brochure and attend a parent orientation.	Yes
B. 100% of cohort parents will sign a GU participation contract.	Yes
C. 50% of cohort parents will participate in Parent University classes annually.	No, see page 7.
D. Parents from each GEAR UP campus will serve in an advisory capacity to GEAR UP staff and to the school on parent issues.	Yes
E. 100% of students with more than 5 absences in one or more courses or failing more than one core course will receive a home visit.	Yes

Source: GEAR UP Project Records, 2004-2005.

APPENDIX C: GEAR UP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY, 2004-2005

Table C1: GEAR UP Austin: Professional Development Participation, 2004-2005

GEAR UP Campus	Number of GEAR UP Teachers	% Participating in AISD PDA Courses	AVG Hours of PD Completed	% Completing >20 Hours of PD
Akins	28	86%	52.0	82%
Crockett	26	77%	58.4	73%
LBJ	47	91%	38.0	79%
Johnston	16	88%	58.9	88%
Lanier	29	90%	57.3	86%
McCallum	51	71%	41.5	61%
Reagan	15	87%	68.2	80%
Travis	39	92%	57.1	85%
TOTAL	251	84%	50.9	77%

Source: Teacher CPE hours reported by AISD Professional Development Academy, 2004-2005.

Table C2: Multi-Year Comparison of GEAR UP Professional Development Participation, School Year 2000-2001 Through School Year 2004-2005

School Year	Number of GEAR UP Teachers Participating	Percent of GEAR UP Teachers Participating	Average Number of Hours Completed
2000-2001	127	52%	23.4
2001-2002	192	76%	30.8*
2002-2003	204	59%	5.8*
2003-2004	164	66%*	19.2*
2004-2005	212	84%*	50.9*

Source: Teacher CPE hours reported by AISD Professional Development Academy, 2004-2005.

Note.* indicates statistically significant change at $p < .05$

**APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY FOR GEAR UP AND NON-GEAR UP
HIGH SCHOOLS IN AUSTIN ISD, 2004-2005**

Table D1: Demographic Summary for All Students Enrolled in Austin ISD High Schools,
2004-2005

Schools Served by GEAR UP					
	N	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Economically Disadvantaged
Akins	2,151	12.5%	61.6%	23.4%	48.3%
Crockett	1,964	9.1%	53.3%	36.0%	40.8%
Johnston	958	17.7%	79.7%	2.5%	73.6%
Lanier	1,765	18.1%	66.7%	11.5%	69.9%
McCallum	1,672	19.3%	25.2%	54.4%	24.4%
Reagan	1,130	37.4%	58.8%	3.3%	71.1%
Travis	1,619	9.8%	81.1%	8.3%	74.7%
Johnson	1,656	32.5%	30.0%	31.5%	39.9%
Schools Not Served by GEAR UP					
	N	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Economically Disadvantaged
Anderson	1,955	6.6%	17.9%	68.6%	13.5%
Austin	2,129	5.7%	34.9%	57.9%	23.1%
Bowie	2,479	3.5%	21.9%	70.2%	6.4%

Source: Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), Texas Education Agency, 2004-2005, prepared by Academic Information Management Inc.

Table D2: Demographic Summary for GEAR UP Students Enrolled in Austin ISD High
Schools, 2004-2005

	N	% African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Economically Disadvantaged
Akins	394	13%	69%	16%	58.1%
Anderson	98	26%	32%	35%	39%
Austin	168	10%	69%	20%	50%
Bowie	33	9%	55%	36%	27%
Crockett	198	10%	69%	21%	65%
LBJ	352	35%	34%	23%	49.7%
Johnston	186	27%	71%	2%	100%
Lanier	438	20%	68%	10%	89.2%
McCallum	206	39%	28%	32%	43.8%
Reagan	275	35%	63%	2%	90.3%
Travis	425	11%	82%	7%	88.4%

Source: Student Enrollment Records, Austin Independent School District, 2004-2005, prepared by the Department of Program Evaluation.

Note. GEAR UP students may have attended more than one high school during the 2004-2005 school year, and their demographic data are included for each high school attended.

APPENDIX E: GEAR UP STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY, 2004-2005

	Spring 2005	Spring 2004	Spring 2003	Spring 2002	Spring 2001
Student Response Rates	70%	72%	78%	80%	74%

Table E1: GEAR UP Student Survey Results Summary, 2001-2005

How much do you know about the GEAR UP program?		
	2005	2004
Know everything about it.	39.4%*	29.9%
Know a few things about it.	57.0%*	66.1%
Do not know anything about it.	3.5%	4.0%
How often do you interact with the GEAR UP teachers on your campus?		
	2005	2004
Frequently	31.4%*	22.8%
Occasionally	38.2%	36.1%
Once or twice	23.6%*	28.9%
Never	6.7%*	12.1%
How well do the GEAR UP teachers provide you with information and help that you need to meet your college and career goals?		
	2005	2004
Very well	70.2%*	63.7%
Somewhat	23.5%*	28.3%
Not well	6.3%	7.9%
Do you participate in GEAR UP tutoring services?		
	2005	2004
Frequently	11.0%*	7.6%
Occasionally	29.8%*	25.1%
Once or twice	27.9%	29.3%
Never	31.3%*	37.9%
Do you believe that the GEAR UP tutoring services are helpful?		
	2005	2004
Very helpful	59.8%*	55.2%
Somewhat helpful	20.1%	21.3%
Not very helpful	1.1%	2.0%
I do not know	19.1%	21.4%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

How many hours per week do you spend studying or doing homework?

	2005	2004
None.	9.3%	12.3%
1-5 hours per week	58.6%	55.0%
6-10 hours per week	21.9%	23.1%
11-15 hours per week	7.1%	6.3%
16 or more hours per week	3.1%	3.3%

I participate in the following activities in high school:

	2005	2004
Music (Band, Choir, etc.)	15.3%	18.0%
Theater/ Drama/ Dance	11.3%	11.8%
Academic clubs	12.4%*	8.4%
GEAR UP Leadership clubs	15.2%	14.3%
Journalism (Newspaper, Yearbook, etc.)	5.9%*	3.9%
Speech/Debate	3.1%	3.9%
Student Council	4.1%	4.2%
Sports	39.6%	38.0%
Other	23.2%*	18.4%

I participate in the following activities outside of school:

	2005	2004
Church-related activities	28.6%	30.2%
Sports activities not related to school	33.2%	35.6%
Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts	3.7%	3.3%
Arts/Performance activities	10.5%	10.9%
Community service activities (at hospitals, nursing homes, museums, libraries, food drives, clean-up campaigns, etc.)	21.6%*	16.4%
Part-time work	28.3%*	16.7%
Helping my family by providing regular childcare or other help	32.0%*	36.3%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

What level of school do you plan to complete?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
I do not plan to finish high school	0.8%	1.2%	1.4%	1.9%	N/A
High School only	6.8%	8.4%	8.9%	8.2%	3.5%
Certificate or Associates degree (2 Year)	12.3%	11.0%*	8.0%	9.2%	16.0%
Bachelors degree (4 Year)	38.8%	35.5%*	17.4%	23.4%	21.5%
Graduate or Professional Degree	29.2%	30.0%*	36.1%	30.6%	28.9%
I do not know	12.1%	13.9%*	28.2%	26.5%	30.0%
Why might you not continue your education after high school?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
It costs too much.	25.7%*	22.2%	22.0%	19.4%	35.8%
Need or want to work.	6.8%	8.3%	7.8%	6.0%	13.0%
Grades are not good enough.	18.5%*	14.5%*	12.0%	7.4%	20.7%
Joining the military.	2.6%	3.6%	3.4%	5.9%	8.0%
Starting a family or need to take care of family.	1.9%	1.6%	2.2%	2.4%	7.0%
Job/career will provide training.	2.1%	0.0%	2.5%	2.8%	9.0%
Not interested.	2.4%	3.4%	3.1%	4.1%	6.6%
Does not apply, because I am going to college.	40.0%*	46.5%	47.0%	52.1%	N/A
Someone in our immediate family has a college degree.					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	
Yes	43.3%*	47.4%	49.6%	51.2%	
No	56.7%	52.6%	30.8%	27.4%	
I do not know.	N/A	N/A	19.6%	21.4%	
Parent has talked with child about attending college.					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	
Frequently	49.5%*	44.0%*	31.4%	33.5%	
Occasionally	43.5%*	47.1%*	53.3%	52.5%	
Never	6.9%	8.8%*	15.2%	14.0%	
Have you talked with someone about the college entrance requirements and the classes that you will need to take in high school in order to prepare for college?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	
Yes	71.2%*	67.4%	75.9%	72.2%	
No	28.8%	32.6%	13.5%	14.1%	
I do not know.	N/A	N/A	10.5%	13.7%	

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

Who has helped you learn the most about preparing for college?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	
A family member	16.8%*	23.2%	21.4%	30.1%	
GEAR UP project staff	57.4%*	51.0%	54.0%	38.0%	
A classroom teacher	4.6%	3.9%	5.3%	11.1%	
A school counselor	6.2%	4.5%	4.1%	N/A	
A GEAR UP mentor	5.1%	4.4%	4.2%	7.5%	
A GEAR UP tutor	2.3%	2.9%	3.2%	N/A	
A classmate or friend	2.6%	3.0%	2.0%	2.8%	
No one has helped	5.1%	7.1%	5.7%	10.5%	
Do you know what classes you should take to prepare for college?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes, I know a lot about them.	32.6%*	21.3%	43.5%	44.0%	40.6%
I know a few things about them.	53.0%*	58.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A
No, I do not know anything about them.	14.4%*	19.8%	36.2%	28.5%	25.1%
I do not know.	N/A	N/A	20.3%	27.5%	34.3%
I have taken or will take the following types of classes:					
	2005	2004	2003		
Honors	46.5%	48.4%*	30.4%		
Pre-AP or AP	51.7%*	43.3%*	25.8%		
Dual Enrollment / Early college start	28.5%*	22.4%	N/A		
Career and technology	20.5%	22.0%	N/A		
AVID	10.0%	9.4%	N/A		
None of these	9.7%	9.1%*	3.4%		
Don't know	20.0%*	23.7%*	37.0%		
I have taken or will take the following tests:					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	
PSAT	72.9%*	57.6%*	38.9%	N/A	
SAT	53.4%*	45.5%	46.5%	36.8%	
ACT	31.7%*	19.9%	21.8%	18.5%	
ASVAB	3.6%	2.9%*	7.1%	N/A	
None of these	5.6%*	14.0%*	3.4%	4.0%	
I do not know	14.2%*	22.6%*	37.0%	40.6%	

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

Which GEAR UP services have helped you to prepare for college?

	2005	2004
Tutoring/Mentoring	44.2%*	38.3%
College Visits (during school year)	63.3%	63.5%
Time in the College and Career Center	21.9%*	17.1%
GEAR UP student leadership clubs	10.9%	10.9%
Algebra or Geometry Readiness Camp	6.6%	8.7%
PSAT Preparation Camp or workshops	31.7%*	24.4%
Camp College (Summer)	13.0%	11.0%
Other GEAR UP sponsored activities	20.2%	16.5%
I do not know	20.1%	23.7%

Due to GEAR UP, my academic performance is:

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Better	52.5%*	44.6%*	41.1%	34.6%	20.4%
About the same	23.5%	26.4%*	39.0%	37.9%	4.8%
Worse	0.5%	0.5%*	1.8%	2.2%	41.0%
I don't know.	11.1%	12.5%*	17.9%	25.3%	33.8%
I do not participate.	12.3%*	16.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A

My participation in GEAR UP has changed my plans about attending college.

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes	54.0%	52.0%*	40.0%	34.5%	31.4%
No	29.7%	29.2%	31.7%	33.1%	33.2%
I do not know.	16.3%	18.8%*	28.3%	32.4%	35.4%

I have talked with someone about getting financial aid to help pay for college.

	2005	2004	2003	2002
Frequently	15.2%*	8.5%	9.6%	8.4%
Occasionally	42.8%*	39.9%	38.6%	34.2%
Once	23.6%	25.9%	N/A	N/A
Never	18.5%*	25.7%*	51.8%	57.4%

Do you know how to get financial aid for college?

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes, I know a lot about it.	19.8%*	12.1%	12.2%	8.6%	12.3%
I know a few things about it.	53.8%	52.9%	50.3%	42.3%	28.2%
No, I do not know anything about it.	26.4%*	35.0%	37.5%	49.1%	59.5%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

Can you afford to attend a public 4-year college using financial aid, scholarships, and your family's resources?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Definitely/Probably/Yes	56.2%	55.2%*	23.3%	53.6%	23.3%
Not Sure	30.9%	33.1%*	55.5%	1.1%	64.4%
Definitely Not/Probably Not/No	12.8%	11.7%*	21.2%	45.3%	12.3%
Are you planning to get financial aid for college?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes	62.5%*	48.5%*	44.5%	76.2%	21.1%
No	5.2%	7.2%*	9.4%	23.2%	8.7%
I am not sure.	32.3%*	44.3%	46.1%	0.6%	70.1%
What might prevent you from seeking financial aid for college?					
	2005	2004			
Nothing, will seek financial aid.	42.1%*	37.5%			
Not planning to go to college.	5.0%	6.6%			
May not meet college requirements.	22.1%	19.5%			
Do not have enough information about it.	25.8%*	30.0%			
The process is too difficult.	6.3%	7.1%			
The process is too time consuming.	3.8%	3.4%			
My family has money to pay for college.	4.2%*	7.1%			
Other	11.8%	13.5%			

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

APPENDIX F: GEAR UP PARENT SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY, 2001-2005

	Spring 2005	Spring 2004	Spring 2003	Spring 2002	Spring 2001
Parent Response Rates	40%	39%	44%	38%	33%

Table FA: GEAR UP Parent Survey Results Summary, 2001-2005

I understand the purpose of the GEAR UP program.		
	2005	
Strongly Agree	44.2%	
Agree	51.3%	
Disagree	3.2%	
Strongly Disagree	1.3%	
How many hours per week does your child spend studying or doing homework?		
	2005	2004
None	7.4%	10.8%
1-5 hours per week	56.5%	59.3%
6-10 hours per week	23.0%*	27.6%
11-15 hours per week	9.4%*	2.1%
16 or more hours per week	3.7%*	0.0%
My child participates in the following activities in school:		
	2005	2004
Music (Band, Choir, etc.)	12.7%	14.8%
Theater/Drama/Dance	10.4%	10.3%
Academic clubs	12.4%*	6.8%
GEAR UP Leadership clubs	14.9%	14.9%
Journalism	5.6%	2.5%
Speech/Debate	3.3%	1.9%
Student Council	5.8%	3.4%
Sports	36.5%*	31.2%
Other	31.9%*	52.3%
My child participates in the following activities outside of school:		
	2005	2004
Church-related activities	31.0%	32.0%
Sports activities not related to school	20.2%	22.9%
Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts	3.5%	2.7%
Arts/Performance activities	6.0%	7.8%
Community service activities	23.3%*	13.5%
Part-time work	30.0%*	9.8%
Helping my family by providing regular childcare or other help	47.8%*	57.2%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

What level of school does your child plan to complete?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Does not plan to finish high school	1.2%	0.0%*	2.0%	2.1%	0.0%
High School only	4.6%*	12.1%	10.3%	7.3%	7.3%
Certificate or Associates degree (2 Yr)	16.3%	16.1%*	9.8%	13.2%	20.9%
Bachelors degree (4 Yr)	40.1%	37.7%*	23.7%	35.0%	40.9%
Graduate or professional degree	25.7%*	20.0%*	29.5%	28.8%	31.0%
I do not know.	12.2%	13.8%*	24.6%	13.6%	0.0%
Why might your child not continue his/her education after high school?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
It costs too much.	24.4%	24.0%	29.9%	30.7%	41.5%
Needs or wants to work	4.3%	5.9%	4.8%	4.4%	6.5%
Grades are not good enough	6.9%*	13.7%*	8.8%	4.2%	4.7%
Wants to join the military service	3.7%	2.9%	3.2%	1.7%	0.0%
Needs to take care of family	2.1%	1.8%*	0.6%	1.0%	1.4%
Job/career will provide training	3.0%	2.3%	3.4%	1.0%	3.9%
Not interested	1.4%	3.0%	5.0%	2.6%	3.0%
Question does not apply because he/she is going to college.	54.1%*	46.1%*	44.1%	54.5%	39.1%
Someone in our immediate family has a college degree.					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes	34.6%*	41.1%*	49.4%	53.3%	
No	65.4%*	58.8%*	37.1%	39.2%	
Parent has talked with child about attending college.					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Frequently	55.1%	51.5%	48.4%	47.3%	55.1%
Occasionally	41.4%	45.3%	45.2%	43.5%	40.6%
Never	3.5%	3.1%*	6.4%	9.3%	4.4%
Have you talked with someone about the college entrance requirements and the classes that your child will need to take in high school in order to prepare for college?					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes	74.2%*	57.8%	53.8%	37.7%	5.1%
No	25.8%*	42.2%*	32.0%	40.6%	59.5%
I do not know.	N/A	N/A	14.1%	21.7%	35.4%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

Who has helped your family learn the most about preparing for college?

	2005	2004	2003	2002
A classmate or friend	2.4%	3.0%*	0.7%	2.5%
Myself or another family member	12.7%*	20.6%	22.0%	31.9%
A classroom teacher	2.4%	1.9%	3.0%	10.3%
A school counselor	6.1%	2.5%	2.8%	N/A
A mentor	2.1%	1.0%*	2.8%	4.7%
GEAR UP project staff	66.4%*	55.7%	55.6%	12.7%
A GEAR UP tutor	2.1%	2.5%	1.8%	N/A
No one has helped.	5.6%*	12.8%	11.0%	38.0%

Do you know what classes your child should take to prepare for college?

	2005	2004	2003	2002
Yes, I know a lot about them.	27.8%*	15.2%	40.3%	42.6%
I know a few things about them.	50.9%	56.2%	N/A	N/A
No, I do not know anything about them	21.3%*	28.5%	34.5%	32.6%
I do not know.	N/A	N/A	25.2%	24.8%

My child has taken or will take the following types of classes:

	2005	2004	2003	2002
Honors classes	44.9%	44.8%*	27.8%	N/A
Pre-AP or AP classes	49.7%*	33.5%*	16.4%	N/A
Dual Enrollment/Early College Start classes	29.6%*	23.3%	N/A	N/A
Career and Technology classes	18.3%*	12.0%	N/A	N/A
AVID classes	20.1%*	10.8%	N/A	N/A
None of these	7.7%	7.0%*	4.5%	15.8%
I do not know.	19.0%*	29.7%*	37.1%	25.0%

My child has taken or will take the following tests:

	2005	2004	2003	2002
PSAT	79.9%*	45.0%*	34.8%	
SAT	57.7%*	41.8%	43.3%	18.2%
ACT	35.1%*	20.9%	21.5%	37.8%
ASVAB	3.5%	3.0%*	5.3%	
None of these	1.8%*	7.8%*	4.5%	15.8%
I do not know.	13.1%*	27.9%*	37.1%	25.0%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

Which GEAR UP services have helped your child to prepare for college?

	2005	2004	2003
Tutoring/Mentoring	55.6%*	44.6%	
College visits (during school year)	63.6%	58.5%	
Time in the College and Career Center	35.3%*	17.7%	
GEAR UP Student Leadership Clubs	15.4%	11.5%	
Algebra or Geometry Readiness Camp	7.2%	8.2%	
PSAT Preparation Camp or workshops	26.2%*	17.3%	
Camp College (Summer)	14.3%	14.0%	
Other GEAR UP sponsored activities	34.4%*	28.5%	
I do not know.	12.7%*	18.9%	

Due to GEAR UP, my child's academic performance is

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Better	53.9%	51.4%	50.2%	56.1%	67.5%
About the same	38.6%	32.4%	33.4%	22.6%	2.2%
Worse	0.9%	1.5%	1.0%	2.0%	13.1%
I don't know.	6.6%	14.7%	15.4%	19.3%	17.2%

My child's participation in GEAR UP has changed his/her plans about attending college.

	2005	2004	2003	2002
Yes	52.8%	47.3%*	42.3%	41.2%
No	25.6%	25.4%	24.3%	27.9%
I do not know.	21.6%	27.2%*	33.4%	30.9%

I have talked with someone about getting financial aid to help pay for college.

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Frequently	16.2%*	7.0%	7.2%	5.3%	6.0%
Occasionally	42.5%*	34.6%*	24.5%	35.7%	43.7%
Once	22.0%	20.9%	19.3%	N/A	N/A
Never	19.3%*	37.3%*	48.9%	59.0%	50.3%

Do you know how to get financial aid for college?

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Yes, I know a lot about it.	23.3%*	15.6%	14.7%	11.3%	14.6%
I know a few things about it.	55.6%	53.7%	52.4%	53.5%	41.1%
No, I do not know anything about it.	21.1%*	30.6%	32.9%	35.3%	44.2%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

Can your child afford to attend a public 4-year college using financial aid, scholarships, and your family's resources?

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Definitely/Probably/Yes	65.0%	59.0%*	23.4%	40.3%	42.0%
Not Sure	23.0%	24.0%*	52.3%	0.3%	47.6%
Definitely Not/Probably Not/No	12.0%	16.9%*	24.3%	59.3%	10.4%

Are you planning to help your child get financial aid for college?

	2005	2004	2003	2002
Yes	78.5%*	70.4%	70.0%	95.0%
No	3.9%	3.8%	4.8%	4.8%
I am not sure	17.7%*	25.7%	25.2%	0.2%

What might prevent your child from seeking financial aid for college?

	2005	2004
Nothing, my child will seek financial aid.	63.9%*	44.7%
My child is not planning to go to college.	4.2%*	11.2%
My child may not meet college requirements.	11.4%*	34.0%
I do not have enough information about it.	16.1%*	42.6%
The process is too difficult.	5.5%*	12.5%
The process is too time consuming.	2.6%	6.0%
My family has money to pay for college.	2.7%	6.4%
Other	12.9%*	23.3%

*Indicates significant difference from previous year.

APPENDIX G: GEAR UP TEACHER SURVEY, SPRING 2005

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. I understand the purpose of the GEAR UP program.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

2. GEAR UP staff members respond to my questions/requests in a timely manner.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION:

3. I had a GEAR UP tutor(s): YES or NO. If you did not have a tutor, why not? (Type in your response.)

* If you answered YES to the previous question, please complete Questions 4-7. If not, please skip to Question 8.

4. Most of the time, my tutor(s) provided
 - a. One-on-one instruction within my classroom.
 - b. One-on-one instruction outside of my classroom.
 - c. Small group instruction within my classroom.
 - d. Small group instruction outside of my classroom
 - e. Random assistance to any student within my classroom
 - f. Other (Type in your response.):

5. Most of the time, my tutor worked with
 - a. Only GEAR UP students that are identified by me.
 - b. Only GEAR UP students that are identified by GEAR UP project staff.
 - c. Primarily identified GEAR UP students and a few others needing help.
 - d. Any students needing help, GEAR UP or not.

6. I believe that the students benefited from their participation in the GEAR UP Tutoring Program.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree

**Why or why not? (Type in your response.)

7. I would recommend having a GEAR UP tutor to a fellow teacher.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree

**Why or why not? (Type in your response.)

8. I am able to use the GEAR UP College and Career Center to support my classroom instruction.
- Frequently
 - Occasionally
 - Never
 - I do not know anything about the College and Career Center.
9. What factor(s) influenced your use or non-use of the GEAR UP College and Career Center.
(Type in your response.)

ENHANCED GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

10. In order to be prepared for college, I believe that my students still need the following types of help:
- Additional academic tutoring
 - Additional college visits
 - Information on college financial assistance
 - Advanced level courses
 - Mentoring
 - Career exploration activities
 - Personal guidance counseling
 - Test preparation
 - Technology classes
 - College information
 - No more help is needed.
 - Other (Type in your response.):

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. I obtained helpful professional development information from the GEAR UP project staff.
- Yes, they provided a lot of information.
 - They provided some information.
 - No, they did not provide any information.
12. I was able to take advantage of more professional development opportunities this year because of the availability of GEAR UP funds. YES or NO. If you answered NO, why not? (Type in your response.)

13. In the area of professional development, it would help if GEAR UP could provide:

- a. Detailed information regarding the various ways GEAR UP can support my professional development.
- b. Information about upcoming professional development opportunities.
- c. Training related to my content-area.
- d. Training related to effective instructional strategies.
- e. Training related to test preparation (TAKS or PSAT/SAT)
- f. Opportunities to engage in ongoing curriculum development.
- g. Other (Type in your response.):

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

14. A GEAR UP Parent Support Specialist supported me this year. YES or NO. If you did not interact with a GEAR UP parent support specialist, why not? (Type in your response.)

15. GEAR UP's Parent Support Specialist helped me in the following ways:

- a. Making phone calls to parents.
- b. Making home visits to parents.
- c. Scheduling parent/teacher meetings.
- d. Arranging for transportation to the school for parents.
- e. Participating in parent/teacher meetings.
- f. No help received.
- g. Other (type in your response.):

16. I would like the GEAR UP Parent Support Specialist to help me in the following ways:

- a. Help me contact individual parents
- b. Participate in teacher/parent meetings and conferences
- c. Provide more information to parents concerning school calendars, end of course exam schedules, etc.
- d. Other (Type in your response.):

GENERAL COMMENTS: Please provide any other comments that you may have regarding GEAR UP. Your input is appreciated!

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