Year 7 Annual Implementation Report

Texas GEAR UP State Grant Evaluation

August 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contributing Authors

Samantha Spinney, PhD
Brooke Shelley
Jing Sun
Matt McKinney
Bianka Michalski
Thomas Horwood

Prepared for

Table of Contents

Tables

Figures

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AP	Advanced Placement
APR	Annual Performance Report
CTK	Community TechKnowledge
DGB	Data Governance Board
ED	U.S. Department of Education
ELL	English Language Learners
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
GEAR UP	Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
GPA	Grade Point Average
GUIDES	GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System
HS	High School
IGC	Individual Graduation Committee
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MS	Middle School
NCCEP	National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
NSC	National Student Clearinghouse
PBL	Project-Based Learning
PD	Professional Development
PSAT	Preliminary SAT
PSM	Propensity Score Matching
QED	Quasi-Experimental Design
SG	State Grant
STAAR®	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TAC	Texas Administrative Code
TAPR	Texas Academic Performance Report
TEA	Texas Education Agency
THECB	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
TSIA	Texas Success Initiative Assessment
UT-IPSI	The University of Texas at Austin's Institute for Public School Initiatives

Highlights

Year 7 of the evaluation focused on evaluating the implementation of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant (SG) program when participating students were in their first year of postsecondary education. The Texas GEAR UP SG was designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education through state and local partnership grants.

Implementation

At the conclusion of Year 6, 91% of Grade 12 students completed high school, however only 4% met criterion on the SAT and/or ACT to be considered academically prepared for college. Beginning in Year 7, 46% of graduates enrolled in their first year of postsecondary education. College Preparation Advisors continued to provide support to graduates in Year 7 through one-on-one meetings, text messaging, email, and by phone. They advised graduates on topics such as the transition from high school to postsecondary education, financial aid, and course registration.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Support Center also provided support to the Texas GEAR UP SG districts and schools as they developed sustainability plans based on the implementation of the grant in previous years. Planning across districts varied but was most often led by district administrators and Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators. On school campuses, student advising, college visits, and tutoring were all activities that continued to be implemented in Year 7 for follow-on cohorts and were incorporated into district sustainability plans. These activities were most often led or coordinated by school-based community alliances and school counselors.

Potential Promising Practices

- **Offer students opportunities to participate in multiple college visits throughout middle and high school to increase students' exposure to a variety of postsecondary education options.** Opportunities for students to participate in college visits from middle school through high school will expose students to a broad range of postsecondary education options and allow them to explore options that best meet their needs. This will help to ensure that students in postsecondary education have enrolled in an institution that best fits their needs.
- **Allow College Preparation Advisors to have flexible schedules so they are able to meet evolving needs of graduates.** Given the inconsistency of graduates' availability in Year 7 of the Texas GEAR UP SG, flexible College Preparation Advisor schedules allowed students and College Preparation Advisors to meet at times and locations that were conducive to the needs of graduates.
- **Establish immediate and consistent communication with graduates.** Immediately establishing contact with graduates after graduation and maintaining consistent contact through in-person meetings, texts, phone calls, and/or emails helped College Preparation Advisors ensure all graduates in need of support in Year 7 knew how and when to reach out. The immediate establishment of contact and the continued consistent communication

between graduates and College Preparation Advisors, according to College Preparation Advisors, made students more informed of the supports available to them after high school and increased the likelihood that graduates would continue to engage with College Preparation Advisors.

Recommendations

- **Consider designing goals and objectives to promote sustainability throughout the implementation of the grant.** Designing goals and objectives related to sustaining the most effective activities and strategies may help districts and schools maintain the college-going culture fostered by Texas GEAR UP SG for future cohorts. Promotion of sustainability by state-level program staff throughout implementation may also help schools and districts to prioritize sustainability efforts.
- **Involve district and school staff in data collection and monitoring activities.** Providing school staff with data reports that demonstrate the type of participation data collected by program staff and how those data are used to inform programming may help to reinforce the value of data collection at the school after it is no longer a grant requirement.
- **Train school staff on ways to provide student support for college readiness and designate school staff to take ownership of college readiness activities.** Training school staff on information such as college entrance requirements and financial aid may help increase support for students and families regarding preparing for postsecondary education. Designating multiple school staff to take ownership of this information and its dissemination will also likely relieve school counselors as the sole distributor of this information.

Executive Summary

Overview

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded the Texas Education Agency (TEA) a $33 million federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant in federal fiscal year 2012. The purpose of the federal GEAR UP program is to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education through state and local partnership grants. The GEAR UP program addresses the challenges faced by low-income students in attaining postsecondary success in an early and ongoing manner by providing services, activities, and resources to students from Grade 7 through the first year of college. GEAR UP is organized around three goals: (1) increasing postsecondary awareness and aspirations; (2) strengthening academic preparation and achievement; and (3) raising postsecondary participation. The cohort of students and parents from four participating districts are provided services through the Texas GEAR UP State Grant (SG) from Grade 7 (the 2012–13 school year) through their first year of postsecondary education (the 2018–19 school year). This report focuses on implementation in Year 7 of the Texas GEAR UP SG (the 2018–19 school year), while the cohort is in the first year of postsecondary education.

The Texas GEAR UP SG program includes nine project goals and 26 corresponding objectives, provided in Appendix A of the report. Goals pertain to topics related to student services, including advanced coursework, student support services, and summer programs. Other goals intend to increase data-driven instruction (through teacher professional development [PD]), community collaboration, and access to postsecondary information. Further, goals related to outcomes include on-time promotion, improved high school completion at a college-ready level, college attendance, and college retention. In addition to meeting goals at campuses selected to participate in the program, there are objectives to provide statewide information and professional learning for educators to promote college readiness across the state.

Participating schools and their districts are listed in Table ES.1; throughout this summary, schools are identified by letter (e.g., High School H, High School I) in order to protect confidentiality.[1] Program staff facilitate and provide Texas GEAR UP SG services, with support from TEA, statewide collaborators (including the Support Center, which serves as the technical assistance provider), and local stakeholders.[2] Program staff include College Preparation Advisors who are employed by the Support Center and serve students directly (in Years 1 – 6, they served students on their respective high school campuses; in Year 7, they served students virtually or on postsecondary education campuses). Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators remained at the districts in Year 7 to support district and school staff plan sustainability.

---

[1] Texas GEAR UP High Schools are labeled High Schools H through M. The seven Texas GEAR UP Middle Schools were identified as Schools A through G.

[2] The term Texas GEAR UP SG staff is used throughout this report and includes the Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators, College Preparation Advisors, facilitators, tutors, parent liaisons, and data clerks. These are staff located in the districts or at the schools who have key responsibilities to the project either for the district or at the school.

Additionally, the Texas GEAR UP SG program is intended to make a statewide impact, primarily through the provision of the website (i.e., http://www.texasgearup.com), where coordinated information and resources regarding postsecondary opportunities for students and their parents throughout Texas are made available.

Table ES.1. Profile of Texas GEAR UP Schools

District	Middle School (2012–13; 2013–14)	High School (2014–15; 2015–16; 2016–17; 2017–18; 2018–19)
Edgewood Independent School District (Bexar County)	Brentwood, Garcia, Wrenn	Memorial, Kennedy
Somerset Independent School District	Somerset	Somerset
Lubbock Independent School District	Dunbar	Estacado
Manor Independent School District	Decker, Manor	Manor, Manor New Tech

Evaluation of Texas GEAR UP State Grant

The evaluation of the program examines implementation and outcomes (including the relationship between the two) and identifies potential best practices over the seven-year grant period. Evaluation objectives include the following:

- Provide ongoing formative evaluation of implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG (promising practices and recommendations).
- Explore implementation status, mix of implementation, and relationships between implementation and student outcomes.
- Determine the impact on parents, schools, and community alliances.
- Examine access to and use of statewide resources.
- Examine student outcomes.

The longitudinal evaluation design spans seven years and follows a cohort model. Table ES.2 illustrates the timeline and grade level associated with the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort that is the primary focus of the program and evaluation. Appendix B includes additional information about the evaluation design.

Table ES.2. Evaluation Timeline

Grade in School by Grant Year							
	Grant Year 1 2012–13	Grant Year 2 2013–14	Grant Year 3 2014–15	Grant Year 4 2015–16	Grant Year 5 2016–17	Grant Year 6 2017–18	Grant Year 7 2018–19
Primary Cohort	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	First year of post-secondary

This seventh implementation report focuses on formative feedback regarding Year 7 implementation. Because service delivery in Year 7 was so different from previous years, longitudinal comparisons between Year 7 and previous years have not been made. The Year 7 report was informed by analysis of student- and campus-level data from statewide databases, interviews with TEA and its collaborators, data reported through the GEAR UP Integrated Data

Entry System (GUIDES), student surveys, and qualitative interview and focus group data. Year 7 implementation data was submitted in GUIDES in line with the original federal annual performance report (APR) reporting requirements, covering the period between March 1, 2018 to February 28, 2019.[3,4] Figure ES.1 provides an overview of the timing of data collection in each grant year.

Figure ES.1. Implementation Timeline and Evaluation Implementation Data Collections: Years 1–7
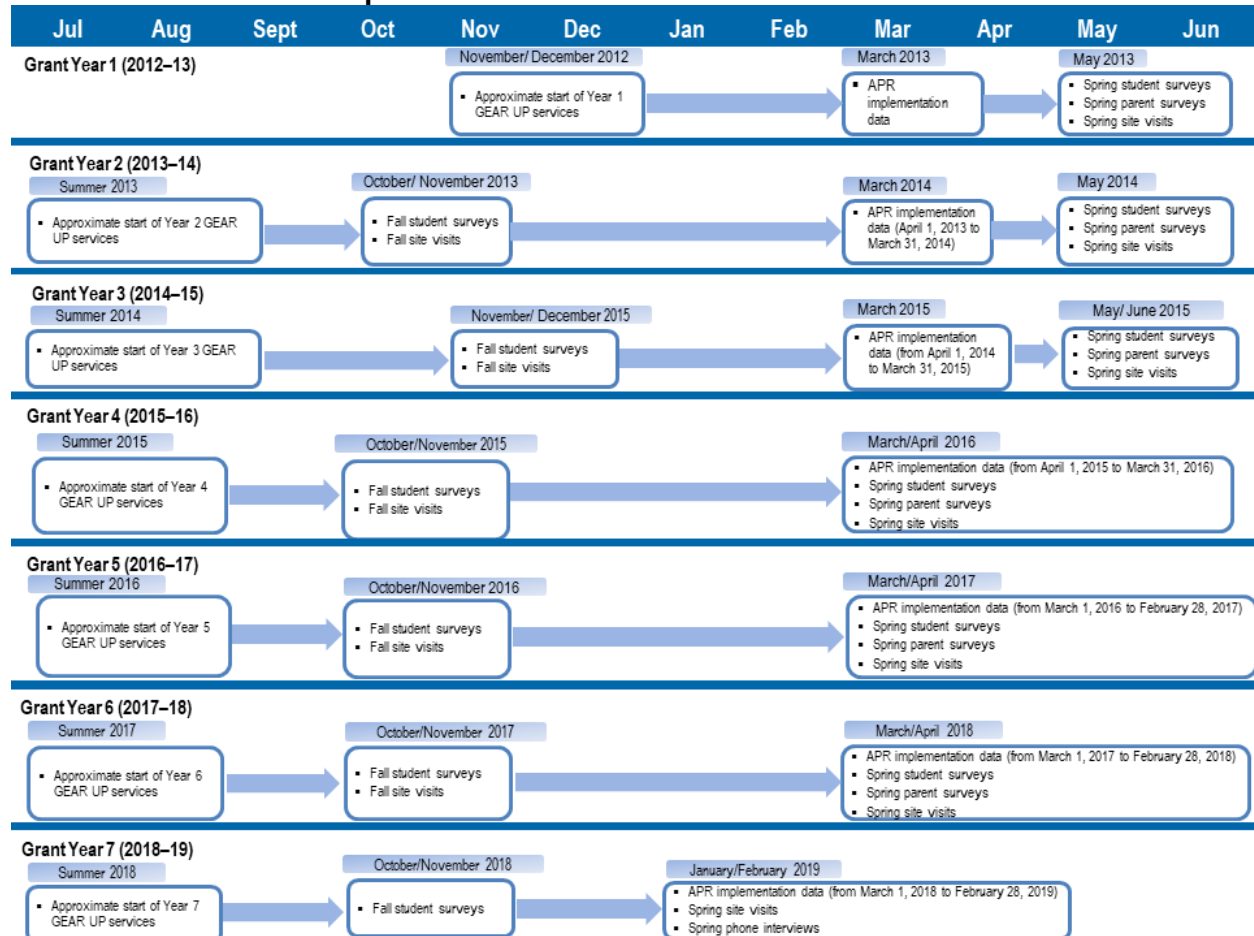
Key Findings: Implementation

The federal GEAR UP program encourages grantees to engage in a wide range of implementation practices to support project objectives. In Year 7, support was provided to the

---

[3] GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System (GUIDES) data used in the Year 7 report are from summer 2018 and the 2018–19 school year, but only through February 28, 2019. In Year 1, the evaluation team made the decision to align annual performance data to the federal reporting requirements. Although the APR reporting timeline has since changed, the evaluation team made the decision to keep the reporting timeline the same for consistency and to make meaningful comparisons across years.

[4] While forming ideas about the program, readers should keep in mind when data were collected because this report does not capture the entire school year of activities.

Texas GEAR UP SG cohort who graduated high school in spring 2018 (the cohort is referred to as graduates in Year 7) as well as the Texas GEAR UP SG high schools as they developed sustainability plans.[5]

Grade 12 students completed high school with mixed levels of readiness. At the conclusion of Year 6, 91% of Grade 12 students completed high school, one percentage point higher than the state average the year prior. Upon completion, less than one-fifth (19%) had earned college credits by graduation. Additionally, 83% participated in the SAT and/or ACT by the end of Grade 12, however only 4% met criterion to be considered academically prepared for college, compared to almost one-quarter (22%) of Texas graduating examinees from the 2016–17 school year.[6] After high school, National Student Clearinghouse data showed that almost half (46%) of graduates were enrolled in their first year of postsecondary education. For comparison, the Texas statewide average for college enrollment was 54.7% for graduates from the class of 2016 (TEA, 2019).

College Preparation Advisors continued to provide advising and counseling services to graduates in Year 7. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of graduates received advising services in the summer and 45% received advising services during the school year from College Preparation Advisors; College Preparation Advisors reported that advising services were offered via in-person meetings, text messaging, phone calls, and emails. Topics discussed during advising sessions included financial aid, course registration, and general transition from high school to postsecondary education. Overall, most (83%) of student survey respondents who met with their College Preparation Advisor reported that they were satisfied with the interaction and communication with their College Preparation Advisor in Year 7.

Texas GEAR UP SG districts and high schools worked with TEA and the Support Center to develop sustainability plans. TEA and the Support Center worked with district staff and Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators to develop sustainability plans based on the Texas GEAR UP SG implementation practices used in previous years. Site visit participants provided insight on the activities sustained through Year 7 or planned to be sustained in future years, including student advising, college visits, and tutoring. Minimal funding for activities and staff as well as staff turnover were cited as challenges to sustaining initiatives.

---

[5] The Year 7 cohort excluded individuals who did not graduate high school in spring 2018. The cohort included all individuals who graduated high school—those who enrolled in postsecondary education in fall 2018 (i.e., postsecondary education students) and those who did not (these individuals are no longer considered students). Accordingly, "graduates" is the most technically accurate description of the individuals receiving Texas GEAR UP SG services in Year 7. Also, while some individuals who were originally part of the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort may have dropped out of school and then later graduated high school and enrolled in postsecondary education, those individuals are excluded from the cohort as the evaluation team does not have access to data regarding their progress.
[6] For more information, see the 2016–17 SAT and ACT results in the 2017-18 Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) at https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/state.pdf.

Table ES.3 provides a high-level overview of the range of implementation strategies engaged in, to any extent, in Year 7. Graduates from all schools received support from all strategies.

Table ES.3. Overview of Texas GEAR UP SG Implementation Strategies by School, Year 7 (Grade 12)

	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
Implementation Strategies						
Student Support Services: Counseling/Advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Summer Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X
FAFSA Completion Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Number of Strategies Implemented (Out of 4)						
	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019; Spring 2018 interview data.
Note: An "X" indicates that a school reported implementing the strategy, although it does not capture the level or quality of implementation (such as the number of students served) for each strategy.

Table ES.4 includes indicators regarding whether each school has met or is on track to meet relevant project objectives in Year 7. All schools met Project Objective 4.2, related to summer programming. No schools met Project Objectives 5.2 and 5.3 which were related to SAT/ACT criterion and college readiness, respectively. Project Objectives 6.1 and 6.2 related to retention and completion of college could not be reported on reliably due to limitations with the available data.

Table ES.4. School Progress Meeting Project Objectives, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

Project Objectives	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
1.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Plan plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average.[7]		X		X	X	X
2.3: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.					X	
4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.						X
4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.3: The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.4: The cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average.		X	X		X	X
5.5: More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.					X	X
6.1: The student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average.	–	–	–	–	–	–
6.2: At the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.	–	–	–	–	–	–

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019 and Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: An "X" indicates that a school is making reasonable progress toward an objective, although it does not capture the completion or attainment of an objective. A " – " indicates that achievement of the objective could not be reliably determined. The full report includes additional details about progress—including successes achieved and challenges faced in implementing the grant in the final year.

---

[7] For additional information on the Foundation High School Plan and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx.

Summary of Implementation: Years 5–7

Table ES.5 summarizes some of the key implementation data comparisons across Years 5 (Grade 11), 6 (Grade 12), and 7 (postsecondary) of the Texas GEAR UP SG.

Table ES.5. Summary Comparison of Year 5 (Grade 11), Year 6 (Grade 12), and Year 7 (Postsecondary) Implementation Data

Implementation Area	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Participation in Texas GEAR UP SG Student Support Services	93% of students participated.	94% of students participated.	Since fall 2018, 45% of graduates met with their College Preparation Advisor.
Student Completion of Courses with Potential to Earn College Credit (AP, Dual Credit, or College)	38% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 41% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 36% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.	27% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 18% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 23% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.	By the end of Year 6, 19% earned college credit through completing a dual credit course and/or earning a three or higher on an AP exam
Knowledge of and Academic Preparation for College	22% of students were on track to graduate college ready in mathematics and English	17% of students were on track to graduate college ready in mathematics and English	16% of Grade 12 students graduated college ready in mathematics and English.
Graduation on the Foundation High School Program	55% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	47% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	87% of Grade 12 students graduated with a distinguished level of achievement.
Postsecondary Education Enrollment	57% of students expected to obtain a four-year degree or higher	39% of surveyed students had decided where to enroll in postsecondary education in fall 2018.	46% of graduates enrolled in postsecondary education after high school.

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019; Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018) and National Student Clearinghouse (October, 2018).

Potential Promising Practices

Based on an analysis of implementation in Year 7, the evaluation team has identified the following set of potential best practices:

- **Offer students opportunities to participate in multiple college visits throughout middle and high school to increase students' exposure to a variety of postsecondary education options.** Opportunities for students to participate in college visits from middle school through high school will expose students to a broad range of postsecondary education options and allow them to explore options that best meet their needs. This will help to ensure that students in postsecondary education have enrolled in an institution that best fits their needs.
- **Allow College Preparation Advisors to have flexible schedules so they are able to meet evolving needs of graduates.** Given the inconsistency of graduates' availability in

Year 7 of the Texas GEAR UP SG, flexible College Preparation Advisor schedules allowed students and College Preparation Advisors to meet at times and locations that are conducive to the needs of graduates.

- **Establish immediate and consistent communication with graduates.** Immediately establishing contact with graduates after graduation and maintaining consistent contact through in-person meetings, texts, phone calls, and/or emails helped College Preparation Advisors ensure all graduates in need of support in Year 7 knew how and when to reach out. The immediate establishment of contact and the continued consistent communication between graduates and College Preparation Advisors, according to College Preparation Advisors, made students more informed of the supports available to them after high school and increased the likelihood that graduates would continue to engage with College Preparation Advisors.

Recommendations

In addition, the evaluation team has identified the following recommendations for future grants and similar programs implemented in the future.

- **Consider designing goals and objectives to promote sustainability throughout the implementation of the grant.** Designing goals and objectives related to sustaining the most effective activities and strategies may help districts and schools maintain the college-going culture fostered by Texas GEAR UP SG for future cohorts. Promotion of sustainability by state-level program staff throughout implementation may also help schools and districts to prioritize sustainability efforts.
- **Involve district and school staff in data collection and monitoring activities.** Providing school staff with data reports that demonstrate the type of participation data collected by program staff and how those data are used to inform programming may help to reinforce the value of data collection at the school after it is no longer a grant requirement.
- **Train school staff on ways to provide student support for college readiness and designate school staff to take ownership of college readiness activities.** Training school staff on information such as college entrance requirements and financial aid may help increase support for students and families regarding preparing for postsecondary education. Designating multiple school staff to take ownership of this information and its dissemination will also likely relieve school counselors as the sole distributor of this information.

1. Introduction

In April 2012, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) was awarded a federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The broad purpose of the federal GEAR UP program is to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Through the Texas GEAR UP State Grant (SG), participating schools provide services to a primary cohort of students from Grade 7 (the 2012–13 school year) through their first year of postsecondary education (the 2018–19 school year).

Texas GEAR UP SG services are intended to serve individual students and their parents, as well as to support teachers through the provision of professional development (PD) and schools/districts through changes in academic rigor. In addition, the Texas GEAR UP SG is intended to make a statewide impact through the widespread provision of coordinated information and resources for students and their parents regarding postsecondary opportunities. TEA contracted with ICF to provide an external, third-party evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP SG, including the annual implementation reports.

Previous annual implementation reports described implementation during each year of the grant (Spinney et al., 2019; Spinney, Shelley et al., 2018; Spinney, O'Donnel et al., 2018; Briggs et al., 2016; Briggs et al., 2015; O'Donnel et al., 2013; herein referred to collectively as "previous implementation reports"). This seventh and final annual implementation report focuses on implementation events that occurred in summer 2018 and during the 2018–19 school year, the year following high school graduation for the Texas GEAR UP cohort students (Class of 2018). As with past annual reports, this report provides a snapshot of how the six Texas GEAR UP SG participating high schools (located in four districts), TEA, and TEA's Texas GEAR UP SG collaborators are implementing the program as well as preliminary outcomes for the Texas GEAR UP SG graduates. In order to maintain confidentiality, as in prior implementation reports, the report references districts by number (District 1 through District 4), and high schools by letter (High Schools H through M). In the first two implementation reports, middle schools were also referenced by letter designations (Schools A through G). Separate comprehensive reports examine outcomes and the relationship between implementation and outcomes.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the relevant research literature on student success and college readiness, along with an understanding of these issues in the context of the state of Texas. The GEAR UP program, in general, and the Texas GEAR UP SG are also described. Finally, this chapter provides an overview of the Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation. Appendix B provides more detailed information regarding the evaluation methodology.

1.1. College Readiness Challenge

1.1.1. The National and Texas College Readiness Challenge
The federal GEAR UP program is focused on supporting college readiness for low income students and students who may not otherwise pursue postsecondary educational opportunities. While it is estimated that by 2020, 62% of Texas jobs will require postsecondary education

(Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2013), only 31% of Texans between ages 25 and 34 had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2017 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018).

In addition, college completion rates in Texas continue to reflect wide gaps based on students' family income. In Texas, based on a cohort analysis of Grade 8 students enrolled in fall 2007, only 14% of economically disadvantaged students had received a higher education degree or certificate (compared to 33% of non-economically disadvantaged students) (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [THECB], 2019). This trend aligns with college completion trends found at the national level, as well. Based on a nationally representative longitudinal study of high school sophomores in 2002, by 2012, 60% of students from high socioeconomic status had attained a bachelor's degree or higher; 29% of students from middle socioeconomic status had attained the same; and 14% of students from low socioeconomic status had attained the same (Kena et al., 2015).

College enrollment and completion rates in Texas also reflect differences according to race and ethnicity. In Texas, 58.3% of White, 50.5% of Hispanic, and 53.5% of African-American high school graduates from the class of 2016 had enrolled in a Texas institution of higher education (TEA, 2019). Additionally, in Texas, of the total Hispanic population in 2017, 14.5% earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24.2% of African-American and 38.6% of White, non-Hispanic populations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). College enrollment gaps according to race and ethnicity at the national level differ from Texas. Specifically, in 2017, the immediate college enrollment rate for White and Hispanic high school graduates throughout the U.S. was 69% and 67%, respectively, higher than the rate for African-American (58%) high school completers (McFarland et al., 2019).

While 54% of Texas eighth graders in 2007 enrolled in a postsecondary institution following their high school graduation, nearly one quarter (23%) of eighth graders from 2007 earned a postsecondary credential (THECB, 2019). These data suggest that many of those students did not enter college-ready, decreasing the likelihood that they earned a credential. Although improving enrollment is a critical first step in increasing college attainment, students must also be prepared at a level that will move them from enrollment to graduation. Despite the improvements made in recent years regarding college and career readiness in Texas high schools, a large portion of students continue to enter postsecondary education without meeting the state's college readiness standards and must rely on developmental education to prepare them for college-level material. In 2018, 39.7% of first-time students entering higher education were not considered college ready by the state (THECB, 2019), a three percentage point decrease from 2017. Two-year colleges are particularly likely to encounter students that are not college ready, with 58.4% of first-time students entering without having met college readiness standards compared to 15.8% of first-time students entering Texas universities (THECB, 2019). The impact on students in terms of time, money, and outcomes is significant when students have not achieved college readiness standards and require developmental education. Specifically, only 21.4% of two-year college students who are below the state readiness standard when they enter college end up completing college within six years of college entry, compared to 44.2% of students who enter college ready (THECB, 2019).

The Texas GEAR UP SG provides an opportunity to support schools serving high percentages of low-income students in new approaches to college readiness—including increasing students'

motivation to pursue college. According to a study based on students' motivation to attend postsecondary education, the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the form of interacting with others, once achieved, nurture motivation for an individual (Abel, Guiffrida, Lynch, & Wall, 2013). GEAR UP programs, including the Texas GEAR UP SG, typically engage in a range of implementation activities that encourage and build on students' motivations to set postsecondary education as a goal, provide academic support to students to increase their academic preparedness, educate students about postsecondary enrollment, and prepare them for the financial costs associated with postsecondary attendance.

Understanding high school graduation in Texas is important because it is a necessary milestone toward college enrollment. The Texas high school Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate slightly increased from 89.1% for the class of 2016 to 89.7% for the class of 2017 (TEA, 2018). The graduation rate for students in the class of 2017 identified as being economically disadvantaged (86.9%), however, was almost three percentage points lower than the state average (TEA, 2018). These trends reinforce the need for Texas GEAR UP SG to support schools with high percentages of students identified as being economically disadvantaged. English language learners (ELL), Hispanic, and African-American youth are also targeted by the Texas GEAR UP SG. TEA data show the graduation rates for these student populations are improving but are still below the overall state rate. For example, students identified as ELL at any point between Grades 9 and 12 in the class of 2017 had a much lower high school graduation rate (75.5%) than the state (89.7%) for the class of 2017. Both Hispanic and African-American groups continued to lag behind White, non-Hispanic youth in the state as well, with a class of 2017 graduation rate of 87.7% and 86.1%, respectively (compared to 93.6% for White, non-Hispanic). Chapter 2 will provide details regarding graduation data for the class of 2018 from the Texas GEAR UP SG schools.

In addition to high school graduation, another way for students to prepare for enrollment in higher education is to earn college credit while in high school through dual credit (college and high school) courses and gain exposure to the rigorous content in Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Ideally, academic rigor in AP courses exposes students to the typical demands of a college course. Participation in AP courses is another area where various student groups continue to lag in Texas, although progress has also been made (TEA, 2017).

Specifically, 28.2% of Texas high school students in Grades 11 and 12 took at least one AP exam in the 2017—18 school year, a 0.7 percentage point decrease from the previous year; this is one percentage point higher than the national average (27.2%; College Board, 2019a). Although participation is equitable, performance for some student groups is low. According to a 2018 College Board data release, the student groups with the lowest mean AP scores in Texas were African-Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians/Alaska Natives, with the average scores on a five-point scale at 1.97, 2.16, and 2.36, respectively; this is compared to 2.92 for White students and 2.57 overall in Texas (College Board, 2019b). Texas GEAR UP SG, which stresses academic rigor and student engagement in AP courses, has the potential to be part of the effort to help reduce achievement gaps between student groups on AP exams.

1.1.2. About the Federal GEAR UP Program

In response to the national college readiness challenge, the federal GEAR UP program seeks to improve postsecondary enrollment and completion for low-income students. The GEAR UP program addresses the challenges faced by low-income students in attaining postsecondary success in an early and ongoing manner, providing services, activities, and resources to students from Grade 7 through the first year of postsecondary education. The goals of the program include: (1) increasing postsecondary awareness and aspirations, (2) strengthening academic preparation and achievement, and (3) raising postsecondary participation. Figure 1.1 presents these goals as a pyramid, with each goal building on previously attained goals (CoBro Consulting, 2010).

Figure 1.1. Overall GEAR UP Goals

Raise Postsecondary Participation

Strengthen Academic Preparation and Achievement

Increase Postsecondary Awareness and Aspirations

Source: CoBro Consulting (2010)
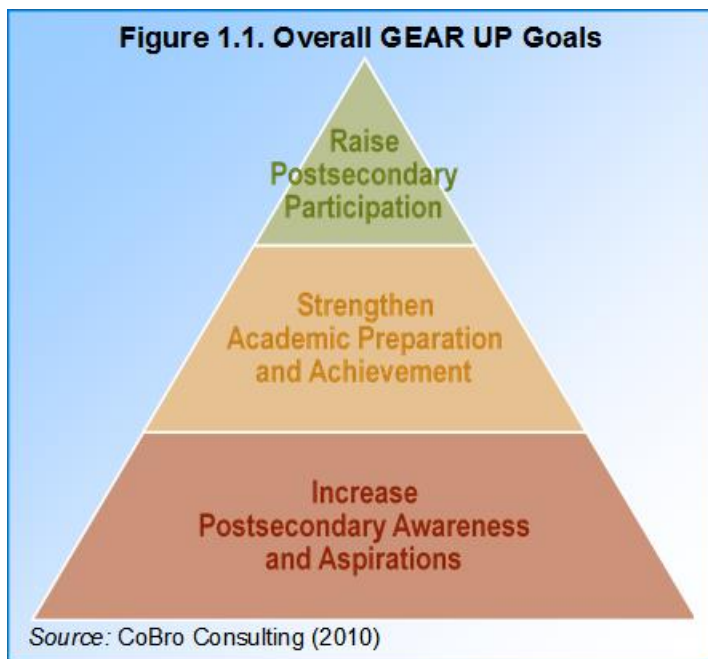
1.2. Overview of Texas GEAR UP State Grant

Texas GEAR UP SG began serving students in July 2012 through two primary strategies: (1) a district intervention package, which supports the targeted districts' college readiness and success initiatives; and (2) statewide initiatives, which provide guidance, information, and resources related to college access, readiness, and success for all Texas districts and communities. In Year 7, the district intervention package included supports to graduates from participating high schools and supports to the participating districts regarding the sustainability of Texas GEAR UP SG. In Year 7, the statewide initiative included the provision of GEAR UP-specific supports across the state through a variety of TEA college and career information resources.

TEA selected districts to participate in the Texas GEAR UP SG grant based on data from the 2009–10 school year related to poverty and the risk of dropping out of school. At that time, all seven Texas GEAR UP SG middle schools in the four selected districts had greater percentages of students identified as being economically disadvantaged and at risk (i.e., those

students identified as being at risk for dropping out of school based on having one or more of 13 factors), compared to the state. The seven middle schools also had higher-than-state-average enrollments of Hispanic/Latino students and three of the schools also had large African-American student populations. Both Hispanic/Latino and African-American students are historically underrepresented in higher education (Editorial Projects in Education, 2013; Krogstad, 2016). Table 1.1 shows a list of the schools who participated in the Texas GEAR UP SG in each school year. Table E.1 in Appendix E presents demographic data for students in Year 7. As previously stated, schools are identified by a letter and districts by a number throughout this report in order to mask the school and maintain the confidentiality that was promised for the site visits.

Table 1.1. Texas GEAR UP SG Schools

District	Middle Schools (2012–13; 2013–14)	High Schools (2014–15; 2015–16; 2016–17; 2017–18; 2018–19)
Edgewood Independent School District (Bexar County)	Brentwood, Garcia, Wrenn	Memorial, Kennedy
Lubbock Independent School District	Dunbar	Estacado
Manor Independent School District	Decker, Manor	Manor, Manor New Tech
Somerset Independent School District	Somerset	Somerset

Note: While Texas GEAR UP SG graduates are no longer in high school in Year 7, they continue to be served irrespective of their educational status in Year 7.

1.2.1. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Management and Collaboration

TEA, the grant recipient and fiscal agent, provided oversight and management of the Texas GEAR UP SG. Specifically, TEA provided grants to participating districts, conducted oversight of funds, and provided management and oversight of contracts. Additionally, TEA ensured that the Annual Performance Report (APR) is submitted to the ED in a timely manner to meet federal reporting requirements.

In Year 7, the following two organizations supported grant implementation: the Texas GEAR UP SG Support Center (a technical assistance provider, herein referred to as the Support Center) and Signal Vine. TEA collaborated directly with the Support Center, which worked directly with Signal Vine.

SUPPORT CENTER

The University of Texas at Austin's Institute for Public School Initiatives (UT-IPSI) Office for College Access manages and staffs the Support Center, the Texas GEAR UP SG technical assistance provider. The Support Center includes full-time staff who focus on the grant including six College Preparation Advisors who provide advising and support to Texas GEAR UP SG cohort graduates on financial aid, academic achievement, and postsecondary education retention. College Preparation Advisors continued to meet one-on-one with graduates in-person as well as via text, phone, and email. In Year 7, this approach changed from prior years given the dispersal of graduates following high school graduation; advising was conducted through a combination of phone conversations, email, texting, and in-person meetings at college

campuses. Group workshops for the graduates were also facilitated and coordinated by Support Center staff.

Support Center staff reported that they also provided schools and districts with support in Year 7 to sustain activities and initiatives implemented by Texas GEAR UP SG in Years 1–6. Specifically, Support Center staff provided webinars and also conducted in-person meetings and site visits to support planning for sustainability with Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators and district administrators. An area of need that the Support Center targeted was the use and collection of student data. Staff worked with schools and districts to help them understand the data collected by Texas GEAR UP SG staff, the value of those data, and how to build an infrastructure to collect and maintain similar data. The Support Center provided schools with documents similar to what they have provided in previous years, including data definitions, data elements that should and could be collected, and how to set targets and goals. Additionally, the Support Center encouraged districts and schools to continue to participate in professional development and training offered through the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), which works with ED to provide professional development to the national GEAR UP community.[8]

SIGNAL VINE

Signal Vine is a two-way texting platform used by for colleges, non-profits, state education agencies, and various GEAR UP grants—including the Texas GEAR UP SG. The Support Center used Signal Vine to send out texts to graduates regarding relevant topics, announcements of upcoming deadlines and due dates, reminders for various tasks, and surveys.

Additionally, Signal Vine provided the Support Center with monthly data reports that included information on texts sent, received, who was included, profiles of the recipients (e.g., school, location, education status), and the content of the messages.

1.2.2. District Leadership

As described in Section 1.2.1, the Support Center provided leadership to Texas GEAR UP SG District Coordinators who worked with district and school administrators to prepare for the sustainability of Texas GEAR UP SG activities, initiatives, and/or strategies. Of the four District Coordinators, two were new to the role in Year 7 and spent time familiarizing themselves with the grant objectives and data so that they were able to adequately support schools and districts in their sustainability efforts. Among the tasks district leaders and Coordinators focused on in Year 7 was the development of sustainability plans with the support of TEA and the Support Center.

---

[8] More information about NCCEP may be found at https://www.edpartnerships.org.

1.3. Evaluation Objectives, Research Questions, and Project Objectives

1.3.1. Year 7 Evaluation Objectives and Research Questions

The evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP SG program over the seven-year grant period has focused on providing formative feedback on grant implementation and summative feedback on grant outcomes. Evaluation activities related to grant implementation have been focused on identifying promising practices and recommendations for future implementation. A full list of evaluation objectives and research questions are listed in Appendix A.

1.3.2. Year 7 Project Objectives

This report includes findings aligned to the project goals and objectives set by TEA. Table 1.2 provides a status of each project objective in Year 7 and notes whether the objective was previously addressed or is addressed in this report. All the objectives addressed in this report are shaded in light blue and include the location where relevant findings are addressed.

Table 1.2. Texas GEAR UP SG Project Objectives

Project Goal 1: Improve instruction and expand academic opportunities in mathematics and science.		
Project Objective 1.1	By the end of the project's second year, 30% of cohort students will have completed Algebra I in the 8th grade. By the end of the project's third year, 85% of students will have completed Algebra I.	Determined to have been met in AIR 3
Project Objective 1.2	By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Plan plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 7, Chapter 2
Project Goal 2: Increase access to and success in quality advanced academic programs.		
Project Objective 2.1	By the end of the project's fourth year, all participating high schools will make opportunities available for each student to complete 18 hours of college credit (through AP, dual credit, or concurrent enrollment) by the time he or she graduates from high school.	Determined to have been met in AIR 4
Project Objective 2.2	By the end of the project's fifth year, 60% of the cohort, including limited English proficient (LEP) students, will complete a pre-Advanced Placement (AP) or AP course.	Determined to have been met in AIR 5
Project Objective 2.3	By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.	See AIR 7, Chapter 2
Project Goal 3: Provide PD for strong data-driven instruction		
Project Objective 3.1	All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and project-based learning (PBL).	Determined not to have been met in AIR 6

Project Objective 3.2	Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.	Determined not to have been met in AIR 6
Project Goal 4: Provide a network of strong student support services to promote on-time promotion and academic preparation for college.		
Project Objective 4.1	By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.	See AIR 7, Chapter 3
Project Objective 4.2	Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.	See AIR 7, Chapter 3
Project Objective 4.3	By the end of the project's third year, the on-time promotion rate of cohort students will exceed the state average.	Determined not to have been met in AIR 4
Project Objective 4.4	By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.	Determined not to have been met in AIR 6
Project Goal 5: Promote high school completion and college attendance		
Project Objective 5.1	By the end of the project's fourth year, all cohort students will complete the ACT Aspire or the Preliminary SAT (PSAT). By the end of the project's fifth year, all cohort students will complete the SAT or ACT.	Determined not to have been met in AIR 6
Project Objective 5.2	By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 7, Chapter 2
Project Objective 5.3	The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 7, Chapter 2
Project Objective 5.4	The cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 7, Chapter 2
Project Objective 5.5	More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.	See AIR 7, Chapter 3
Project Goal 6: Support first-year college retention.		
Project Objective 6.1	The student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average.	See AIR 7, Chapter 3
Project Objective 6.2	At the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.	See AIR 7, Chapter 3
Project Goal 7: Provide postsecondary information and opportunities		
Project Objective 7.1	By the end of the first year, the state office will make information regarding college options, preparation, and	Determined to have been met in AIR 2

	financing will be made available to students, parents, and educators throughout the state.	
Project Objective 7.2	By the end of the first year, information and workshops aimed at linking college attendance to career success will be available to 100% of cohort students and their parents.	Determined to have been met in AIR 2
Project Objective 7.3	Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.	Data is no longer being tracked; see AIR 6 for most recent discussion of data
Project Objective 7.4	By the end of the project's fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.	Determined not to have been met in AIR 6
Project Goal 8: Build and expand community partnerships		
Project Objective 8.1	All participating districts will form business alliances that support higher student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.	Determined to have been met in AIR 5
Project Objective 8.2	Participating campuses will form alliances with governmental entities and community groups to enhance the information available to students regarding scholarships, financial aid, and college awareness.	Determined to have been met in AIR 5
Project Goal 9: Promote college readiness statewide		
Project Objective 9.1	Annually increase the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Texas Gateway and face-to-face trainings.	Data is no longer being tracked; see AIR 4 for most recent discussion of data
Project Objective 9.2	By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD.	Determined to have been met in AIR 6

* Some Project Objectives from previous years continued to be addressed in the Year 7 Annual Implementation Report. Project Objective 4.1, regarding comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring in Year 2, was able to continue to be measured in subsequent years and was a topic of interest to program staff; as such, the evaluation team has continued to report on this objective in each year following Year 2. Project Objective 4.2, regarding students being involved in summer programs designed to help them work at or above grade level, continued to be measured each year after Year 2 through Year 7.

1.4. Evaluation Design and Methods

The Texas GEAR UP SG implementation evaluation has used a mixed-methods longitudinal design to evaluate the Texas GEAR UP SG over the seven years of the program. Data collected by TEA have been used when possible (e.g., Texas Academic Performance Reports [TAPR]). GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System (GUIDES) data submitted by the schools and the Support Center regarding Texas GEAR UP SG activities and services have provided a primary source of implementation data, supplemented by site visits and survey data.

The appendices of this report provide additional details regarding evaluation methodology and results:

- Appendix B provides additional information regarding the evaluation design, methods, data sources, and analyses.
- Appendix C provides an overview of the data submitted to GUIDES.
- Appendix D contains copies of the student survey and interview and focus group protocols.
- Appendix E includes all results from the GUIDES analysis.
- Appendix F includes all results from the survey analysis; in particular, Tables F.1–F.4 describe the survey administration and respondents; the remaining tables describe findings.

Data Sources included in the Year 7 Analysis of Annual Implementation

- GUIDES data (March 1, 2018– February 28, 2019)
- GEAR UP graduate survey in fall 2018
- Site visits to all six schools in January 2019 which included interviews and focus groups
- Telephone interviews with program staff at TEA, the Support Center (including College Preparation Advisors), and TEA collaborators in January–February 2019
- Extant data (e.g., Texas Academic Performance Reports [TAPR], National Student Clearinghouse [NSC])
- Support Center Student survey data regarding current college students' plans for the subsequent school year (2019–20)

1.4.1. Logic Model

The evaluation design depicts how change is conceptualized to occur via the Texas GEAR UP SG (Figure 1.2). The logic model maps the inputs, program implementation activities, and intended outcomes of the program.

The first column on the left identifies important inputs for the program. These inputs are the existing conditions that the students, parents, and schools bring with them as they begin participation in the Texas GEAR UP SG. Many of these inputs are not subject to change by the program (e.g., economic status, education level). The next column shows the school-based activities provided to students, teachers, and parents; also included is the development of materials for statewide distribution. Outputs related to levels of participation are the extent to which individual students, parents, and teachers participate in such activities and the patterns of participation. Understanding what activities are implemented and the trends in participation are critical to understanding the potential effect of participation on outcomes.

Several outcomes of the project have been measured annually to establish changes in trends related to Texas GEAR UP SG activities. For example, perceptions of grant activities are measured each year to understand changes over the course of the grant period. These and other annual measures inform the evaluation's longitudinal analyses.

Figure 1.2. Texas GEAR UP Evaluation Logic Model

OUTCOMES

Inputs

Student Characteristics
- Number of students in Grade 7 primary cohort
- Economically disadvantaged status (free/reduced lunch eligible)
- Limited English Proficiency status
- Race/Ethnicity
- Gender
- Special education status
- At-risk status

Schools and Teachers
- 100% Title I
- district/campus graduation rate and annual dropout rate
- Teacher years of experience, degree

Parents/Community
- Parents' aspirations and expectations
- Parent/community education level
- Parent/community employment status

Program Implementation/Process/Activities
- Improve instruction and expand mathematics and science opportunities.
- Increase access to, and participation and success in, advanced academic programs.
- Provide strong student support services.
- Promote high school completion and college attendance.
- Provide professional development for differentiated instruction, vertical teaming, advanced instructional strategies, and project-based learning.
- Increase availability of post-secondary information and knowledge-building opportunities.
- Build and expand community collaborations.
- Promote college readiness statewide.

Outputs/Participation
- Number of students participating in mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring programs
- Number of students enrolled in summer programs and institutes
- Number of school-based school completion and college attendance activities offered to students
- Number of high school college credit courses taken (e.g., advanced placement, dual credit, concurrent enrollment)
- Number of state publications distributed regarding college options, preparation, and financing
- Number of participants in workshops and information sessions
- Number of new community collaboration

Short Term (Year 1 and Annually)
- Annual number/percentage of students in the primary cohort working at or above grade level
- Percentage of primary cohort enrolled in/completing pre-Algebra or equivalent; successful completion of Algebra I in Grade 8
- Annual number/percentage of students being promoted on time
- Student aspirations and expectations for postsecondary enrollment and financial literacy

- Annual number/percentage of students in the primary cohort working at or above grade level
- Percentage of primary cohort enrolled in/completing pre-Algebra or equivalent; successful completion of Algebra I in Grade 8
- Annual number/percentage of students being promoted on time
- Student aspirations and expectations for postsecondary enrollment and financial literacy

- Annual change in percentage of teachers and counselors completing college process training
- Annual change in number of vertical teams meetings across middle and high school
- Annual number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning

- Parent expectations and aspirations regarding postsecondary enrollment/success and financial literacy
- Annual parent attendance at workshops and information sessions
- Number of parents accessing resource sites
- Number/percentage of parents attending college awareness activities
- Annual number and type of community collaborations and alliances established

Intermediate (Years 2–5)
- Number of students meeting or exceeding the college-ready criterion on the ACT/SAT[a]
- Average number of college applications*
- Number/Percentage of the primary cohort completing high school on time
- Number/Percentage graduating with an endorsement or with distinguished level of achievement
- Number/Percentage of students in the primary cohort enrolled in postsecondary education in the fall following high school graduation, in the spring after high school graduation, and a second year after high school graduation*
- Number/Percentage of students in the primary cohort enrolled in college remediation courses (mathematics and English)*

- Percentage of teachers in target districts and across the state trained through at least one Texas GEAR UP opportunity
- Parents' perceptions of the workshops and information sessions (focus groups, interviews, or surveys)
- Parents' expectations and aspirations regarding postsecondary enrollment/success and financial literacy

Long Term (Year 6+)
- Number of students meeting or exceeding the college-ready criterion on the ACT/SAT[a]
- Average number of college applications*
- Number/Percentage of the primary cohort completing high school on time
- Number/Percentage graduating with an endorsement or with distinguished level of achievement
- Number/Percentage of students in the primary cohort enrolled in postsecondary education in the fall following high school graduation, in the spring after high school graduation, and a second year after high school graduation*
- Number/Percentage of students in the primary cohort enrolled in college remediation courses (mathematics and English)*

Assumptions

Program Implementation/Process/Activities: The evaluation team assumes that processes and activities will change, will be ongoing, and will have varied effects on project outputs and outcomes. As program elements and activities are implemented, evaluators will identify specific expected outputs and short- and long-term outcomes. This process will continue during each stage of the project.

Outputs/Participation: Evaluators will monitor changes in outputs as a result of project processes and activities. We will also assess, to the extent possible, the relationship between changes in outputs and short- and long-term outcomes.

Short-Term and Long-Term Outcomes: Several outcomes will serve as annual measures of program success, including, for example, STAAR results, grade-level performance, and so forth. Items marked with an asterisk (*) will be compared to project goals, historical performance, matched comparison groups from like students and schools, or the state average performance on these measures. Successful attainment of short-term outcomes will also be considered in understanding successful completion of long-term outcomes.

[a] PSAT is the Preliminary SAT. ACT Aspire is the pre-ACT test. SAT and ACT are tests used for college admission.

1.5. Overview of the Report

This annual implementation report addresses the evaluation objectives with respect to Year 7 implementation activities. Information regarding student completion of high school in Year 6 is found in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 presents postsecondary experiences of graduates, their participation and perceptions of the Texas GEAR UP SG, and their postsecondary education progress. Chapter 4 includes findings related to sustainability planning and implementation in the Texas GEAR UP SG districts and schools. A summary of findings, along with actionable recommendations and potential promising practices, is provided in Chapter 5.

1.5.1. Limitations

In Year 7, a significant limitation is that GUIDES data on graduate participation in ongoing Texas GEAR UP SG services and activities were not recorded systematically for the purposes of the evaluation. While GUIDES data were previously entered by school-based GEAR UP staff (e.g., data clerks) to track data for the APR, in Year 7, these data were entered by College Preparation Advisors to manage the cases of individual Texas GEAR UP SG graduates (not for the purpose of tracking data). The data reported in Year 7 primarily originated from checklists and case management notes and were more narrative in nature than the quantified data used in Years 1–6. In addition, while there were processes used to systematically validate data in Years 1–6 to ensure accuracy for the APR, based on the nature of and uses for the data in Year 7, such processes were not utilized. Finally, while data included documentation of graduates who participated in Year 7 services and activities, it is not clear what lack of documentation implies. Lack of documentation could suggest that either College Preparation Advisors did not reach out to some graduates to offer services or that they did do so, but that some graduates chose not to participate. Lack of documentation could also suggest that while some graduates may have received services, their participation in services was not documented. Although ICF analyzed and reported on GUIDES data in Year 7 to the extent possible, extreme caution is urged in interpreting any findings from GUIDES data.

Another limitation of the annual implementation reports in general is that they are based on incomplete data for the year—data reported through March 31 (in Years 1–4) or February 28 (Years 5–7) instead of through the end of the school year.[9] The evaluation team made the decision to report on data from this time period in order to align the findings from the implementation reports to the original timeline for the APR that is required to be delivered to ED as part of the GEAR UP grant.

---

[9] GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System (GUIDES) data used in the Year 7 report are from summer 2018 and the 2018–19 school year, but only through February 28, 2019. In Year 1, the evaluation team made the decision to align annual performance data to the federal reporting requirements. Although the APR reporting timeline has since changed, the evaluation team made the decision to keep the reporting timeline the same for consistency and to make meaningful comparisons across years.

2. High School Completion

This chapter presents findings related to the completion of high school by Texas GEAR UP SG Grade 12 students at the end of Year 6. Outcomes addressed in this chapter are related to high school graduation, college credits earned in high school, and college readiness. Relevant findings are also presented in Appendix E (Tables E.2–E.8). Since findings pertain to the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort while they were in Grade 12, the cohort is referred to as "students" throughout this chapter.

2.1. Graduation

Texas GEAR UP SG has multiple indicators for measuring graduation. Project Objective 5.4 states that the cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average. The most recent state four-year graduation rate, for the class of 2017, is 89.7%.[10] In spring 2018, 90.7% of Texas GEAR UP SG students graduated, exceeding the state average by one percentage point (Table E.3, Appendix E).[11] Of all Texas GEAR UP SG spring graduates, 9% did not meet the end-of-course requirements for graduation but still qualified to graduate by Individual Graduation Committee (IGC) determination.[12] Students graduating via IGC determination ranged from 1% at Schools L and M to 17% at School H (see Table E.4, Appendix E).[13]

Another project objective related to graduation is Project Objective 1.2, which states that by the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students graduating on the Foundation High School Program plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average.[14] According to GUIDES data, most (87.7%) Texas GEAR UP SG students graduated on the Foundation High School Program with an endorsement, and nearly that same number (87.3%) of graduates additionally received the distinguished level of achievement (Table E.2, Appendix E). This exceeds the state average of 85.4% for the class of 2018; accordingly, Project Objective 1.2 was met.

2.2. College Credits Earned

While in high school, students had two primary avenues in which to earn college credit—by earning a score of three or higher on AP course examinations and through successful completion of dual credit courses. Project Objective 2.3 states that by the end of the project's

---

[10] For more information, see the 2017 graduation findings in the 2016–17 Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2016–17 at https://tea.texas.gov/acctres/dropcomp_2016-17.pdf.
[11] Note that these data do not include summer graduates; accordingly, it is possible that an even higher percentage of Texas GEAR UP SG students graduated than the state average.
[12] A student who failed the end-of-course assessment for no more than two of five required courses may receive a Texas high school diploma if the student was determined to be qualified to graduate by an Individual Graduation Committee (Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code Section [TAC] §101.3022).
[13] For more information, see the Annual Individual Graduation Committee Data, 2017–18 at https://tea.texas.gov/acctres/dropcomp/igc_data_1718/
[14] For additional information on the Foundation High School Program and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx.

sixth year, at least 50% of students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.

While each of the Texas GEAR UP SG high schools offered dual credit and AP courses (with at least some students from each school participating in an AP examination), GUIDES data showed that fewer than one-fifth of students completed a dual credit course while in high school (18%) and even fewer students earned a three or higher on an AP exam (3%) by the end of Year 6. Overall, 19% of students completed a dual credit course and/or earned a three or higher on an AP exam. While the project objective was not met overall, over three-quarters (79%) of Grade 12 students from School L completed a dual credit course and thus were able to meet the objective (Table E.5, Appendix E).

2.3. Indicators of College Readiness

Performance on college entrance exams serves as an important indicator of academic readiness for college. Project Objective 5.2 states that by the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the SAT or ACT will meet or exceed the state average. To meet criterion, Texas GEAR UP SG students must have scored 1180 or greater on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Mathematics sections of the SAT or 24 or greater composite score on the ACT. While most students participated in the SAT or ACT in Grade 11 or Grade 12 (83%), as shown in the GUIDES data, only a small percentage of those that participated met criterion (4%) on either exam (Tables E.6 and E.7, Appendix E). Specifically, 4% met criterion on the SAT and 1% met criterion on the ACT. Students' overall average score on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Mathematics sections of the SAT was 888 and a composite score of 18 on the ACT. The most recent state average data is from the 2016–17 school year in which almost one-quarter (22%) of the state's graduating examinees met criterion.[15] Accordingly, Project Objective 5.2 was not met.

Project Objective 5.3 states that the number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average. In the context of Texas GEAR UP SG, college readiness has been defined as meeting the College Board's College and Career Readiness Benchmarks in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (an SAT score of 480) and Math (an SAT score of 530), meeting criterion on the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) (a score of 351 or greater on Reading and a score of 350 or greater on Mathematics), or meeting criterion on the ACT (an English ACT score of 19, a Mathematics ACT score of 19, and a composite score of 23).[16] By the end of Year 6, approximately 14% of Grade 12 students were considered college ready in mathematics and English. Of those who graduated high school in Year 6, 16% were college ready in mathematics and English. Both groups were below the 2016–17 state average of 47.0% (Table E.8, Appendix E). Accordingly, Project Objective 5.3 was not met.[17]

---

[15] For more information, see the 2016–17 SAT and ACT results in the 2017-18 Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) at https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/state.pdf.
[16] SAT and ACT cutoff scores for graduating college ready were determined based on the criteria required to be exempt from the TSIA as stipulated in 19 TAC §4.54, 2019, amended to be effective February 28, 2018.
[17] For information on the state average for students who graduated college-ready in 2017, please visit the 2017–18 TAPR: https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/state.pdf

2.4. Summary

At the conclusion of Year 6, 91% of Texas GEAR UP SG students graduated from high school, exceeding the state average by one percentage point and meeting Project Objective 1.2. In addition, fewer than one-fifth (19%) of Grade 12 students earned college credit while in high school (Project Objective 2.3 was not met). Students' college readiness was also measured at the conclusion of Year 6. Overall 83% of students participated in the SAT and/or ACT by Grade 12. Of these participants, only a small percentage (4%) met criterion on either assessment (a score of 1180 or greater overall on the SAT or a score of 24 or greater on the ACT) to indicate that they were academically prepared for college. Accordingly, Project Objectives 5.2 and 5.3 were not met.

3. The Postsecondary Experience

This chapter provides an overview of the status of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates' educational status in Year 7, services received in Year 7, and their overall perceptions of Texas GEAR UP SG. Relevant findings are also presented in Appendix E (Tables E.1 and E.9–E.17) and Appendix F (Tables F.1–F.15, Appendix F). Throughout this chapter, the individuals receiving Texas GEAR UP SG services in Year 7 are referred to as "graduates."[18]

3.1. The Primary Cohort in Year 7

Overall, there were 1,367 students who graduated from a Texas GEAR UP SG high school in 2018 and were therefore eligible to receive Texas GEAR UP SG services in Year 7 (regardless of whether or not they were enrolled in their first year of postsecondary education). As shown in Table E.1, 79% of these graduates were Hispanic/Latino and 9% had limited English proficiency (LEP).

3.1.1. Fall 2018 Enrollment Status

Postsecondary enrollment was one of the primary goals of Texas GEAR UP SG and relates to Project Objective 5.5 which states that more than 50% of cohort students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation. According to data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), 46% of all Texas GEAR UP SG graduates enrolled in either a four-year or two-year school after completing high school, narrowly missing the Project Objective (Table E.9, Appendix E).[19] High Schools L and M both had more than 50% of their graduates enrolled in college, however. For comparison, the Texas statewide average for college enrollment was 54.7% for graduates from the class of 2016 (TEA, 2019).

Twenty percent of graduates were enrolled in a four-year institution and 25% were enrolled in a two-year institution (Table E.9, Appendix E). In addition, more graduates enrolled in a public institution (43%) than a private institution (3%) in fall 2018 (Table E.10, Appendix E).

The student survey gathered information from GEAR UP graduates who enrolled in their first year of postsecondary education in fall 2018 as well as those who did not enroll (see Tables F.1–F.5 for details on survey administration and respondents). Because the number of survey respondents only represented 9% of graduates and primarily represented graduates who were attending postsecondary education (in comparison to the majority of graduates who did not

---

[18] The Year 7 cohort excluded individuals who did not graduate high school in spring 2018. The cohort included all individuals who graduated high school—those who enrolled in postsecondary education in fall 2018 (i.e., postsecondary education students) and those who did not (these individuals are no longer considered students). Accordingly, "graduates" is the most technically accurate description of the individuals receiving Texas GEAR UP SG services in Year 7. Also, while some individuals who were originally part of the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort may have dropped out of school and then later graduated high school and enrolled in postsecondary education, those individuals are excluded from the cohort as the evaluation team does not have access to data regarding their progress.

[19] Note that 46% represents the percentage of graduates that the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was able to find and track accordingly; it is possible that there were additional graduates who enrolled in a four-year or two-year school but who were not tracked by NSC.

enroll in postsecondary education in fall 2018), findings are not generalizable to the larger population of graduates and should be interpreted with caution.[20] The most frequently reported reason for not enrolling in postsecondary education was "I wanted to wait before enrolling in college" (48%) followed by "I wanted to work" (39%), "I needed to work" (26%) and "I did not apply to any schools" (26%) (Table F.6, Appendix F).

College Preparation Advisors, who met with more students during the summer and fall than those who responded to the graduate survey, reported during phone interviews that the reason most did not enroll was the desire to work full time. According to a College Preparation Advisor in District 4,

> "They found jobs that are decent paying for their age…They devoted their time to that…, a lot of number running I tried to do with them to let them know that it's a nice paying job for an 18 or 19 year old but, long run, can they sustain the lifestyle they want?"

3.1.2. Types of Financial Aid Received

Financial aid is critical to supporting college enrollment for students from low-income families. Although extant data regarding types of financial aid received by graduates were not available, the graduate survey included a question about aid received. As shown in Figure 3.1, the most common types of financial aid that Texas GEAR UP SG graduate survey respondents reported using in Year 7 included Pell grants (60%), one or more scholarships (58%), and federal student loans (42%). The types of financial aid reportedly used least often among the survey respondents included a work-study position within the college (11%), a part-time or full-time job (26%), and other grants (33%) (Table F.7, Appendix F). According to College Preparation Advisors, among the graduates enrolled in postsecondary education, many worked a full-time or part-time job during the fall 2018 semester to supplement the costs of attending postsecondary education.

---

[20] ICF received 129 surveys out of the 995 possible graduates who opted into receiving Signal Vine text messages or had valid phone numbers. This represents a response rate of 13% and 9% of Year 7 graduates overall.

Figure 3.1. Graduate-Reported Financial Support Used for College, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

n=105

Category	Percentage
I received a Pell Grant	60%
I received one or more scholarships	58%
I received federal student loan(s)	42%
My family has helped me	38%
I received other grants	33%
I have a part-time or full-time job	26%
I received a work-study position with the college	11%
Other	8%
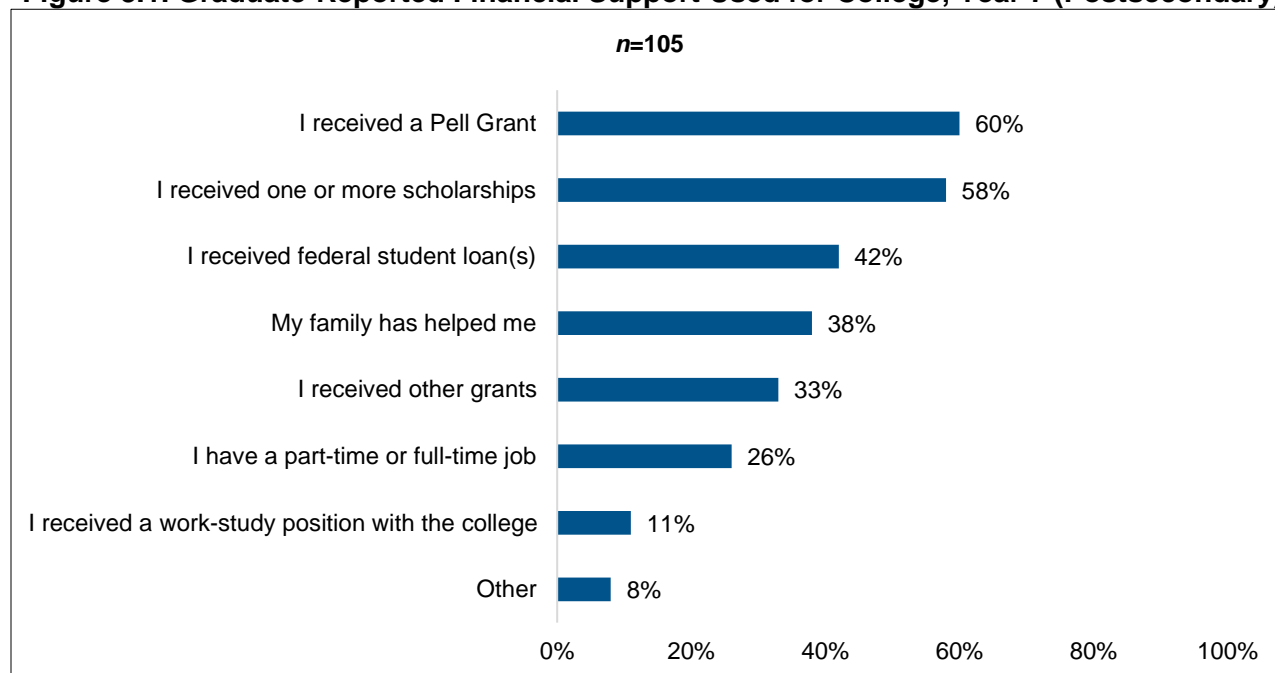
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

3.2. Participation in and Perceptions of Texas GEAR UP State Grant Activities and Services

Unsurprisingly, in Year 7, there was a notable departure in the number and type of Texas GEAR UP SG activities offered and delivered to graduates, compared to what students received in Years 1–6 while in middle school and high school. According to GUIDES data, the primary activity delivered to graduates during summer 2018 and the 2018–19 school year was advising by College Preparation Advisors.[21] This section will describe the advising services offered, participation rates for receiving services, and the satisfaction levels with those services.

3.2.1. Participation in Summer and Fall Advising Services

Summer programming has been a key strategy for Texas GEAR UP SG since the start of the grant. Project Objective 4.2 states, "Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness." According to data recorded in GUIDES by College Preparation Advisors, nearly two-thirds (65%) of graduates met with their College Preparation Advisor at least once in summer 2018 (Table E.11, Appendix E). Accordingly, Project Objective 4.2 was met. Of those graduates who met with their College Preparation Advisor during the summer, most met one time (29%) (Table E.11 in Appendix E). Summer advising services were administered virtually or in-person; nearly half (41%) of the

---

[21] Note that the only GUIDES data entered in Year 7 were data recorded by College Preparation Advisors to support case management.

graduates received virtual advising and only 8% received in-person advising (Table E.12, Appendix E). No other summer programming was reported in GUIDES for Year 7.

Advising services continued during the 2018–19 school year.[22] Participation in advising in fall 2018 provides insights regarding how the Texas GEAR UP SG made progress on Project Objective 4.1, which states that by the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data. While Objective 4.1 is contextualized around Year 2, it continues to retain value in evaluating Year 7 implementation even though teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data were not recorded in Year 7 since graduates were no longer enrolled in high school.

According to GUIDES data, fewer than half of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates (45%) met with their College Preparation Advisor at least once in fall 2018 either through an in-person or virtual meeting, indicating that Project Objective 4.1 was not met in Year 7 (Table E.13, Appendix E). Of those who met with their College Preparation Advisor, most met twice (19%) (Table E.13 in Appendix E). Graduates attending postsecondary education also reported seeking support services on their campus (Table E.14, Appendix E). According to GUIDES data, of the graduates who met with their College Preparation Advisor in fall 2018, 10% reported to their College Preparation Advisor that they had met with a professor, 6% reported that they had attended a tutoring session, and 3% reported that they had visited their campus writing center. Because of limitations with GUIDES data in Year 7, it is likely that higher percentages of graduates enrolled in postsecondary education received these additional campus supports and either did not report those activities to their College Preparation Advisors or did not meet with their College Preparation Advisors to have those data entered into GUIDES.

3.2.2. Advising Mode and Frequency

College Preparation Advisors reported during phone interviews that they advised and counseled graduates throughout Year 7 via in-person meetings, texts, and phone calls. College Preparation Advisors expressed that while in-person meetings with graduates to discuss postsecondary education topics were their preferred mode of communication, they were not always able to meet this way due to conflicting schedules and student communication preference.

For general outreach and mass communication, College Preparation Advisors indicated that they most often communicated through text messages with graduates, both through personal phones and Signal Vine. College Preparation Advisors reported that they used Signal Vine less often in Year 7 than in prior years because they found graduate phone numbers in the Signal Vine platform to often be outdated. College Preparation Advisors from Districts 1, 3, and 4 also used social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and in some cases Twitter, to interact with graduates either through announcement posts or direct messages.

As shown in Figure 3.2, over one-third of graduate survey respondents (37%) reported that they communicated with their College Preparation Advisor at least once per month (see also Table

---

[22] Data reported in fall 2018 are more comprehensive than in spring 2019; accordingly, the ICF evaluation team decided to only report support services data for fall 2018.

F.8, Appendix F). Another 40% of respondents reported communicating with their College Preparation Advisor 1–3 times overall since 2018. Finally, approximately one-quarter of respondents (24%) reported having not met with their College Preparation Advisor.

Figure 3.2. Graduate-Reported Frequency of Communication with College Preparation Advisors, Year 7 (Postsecondary)
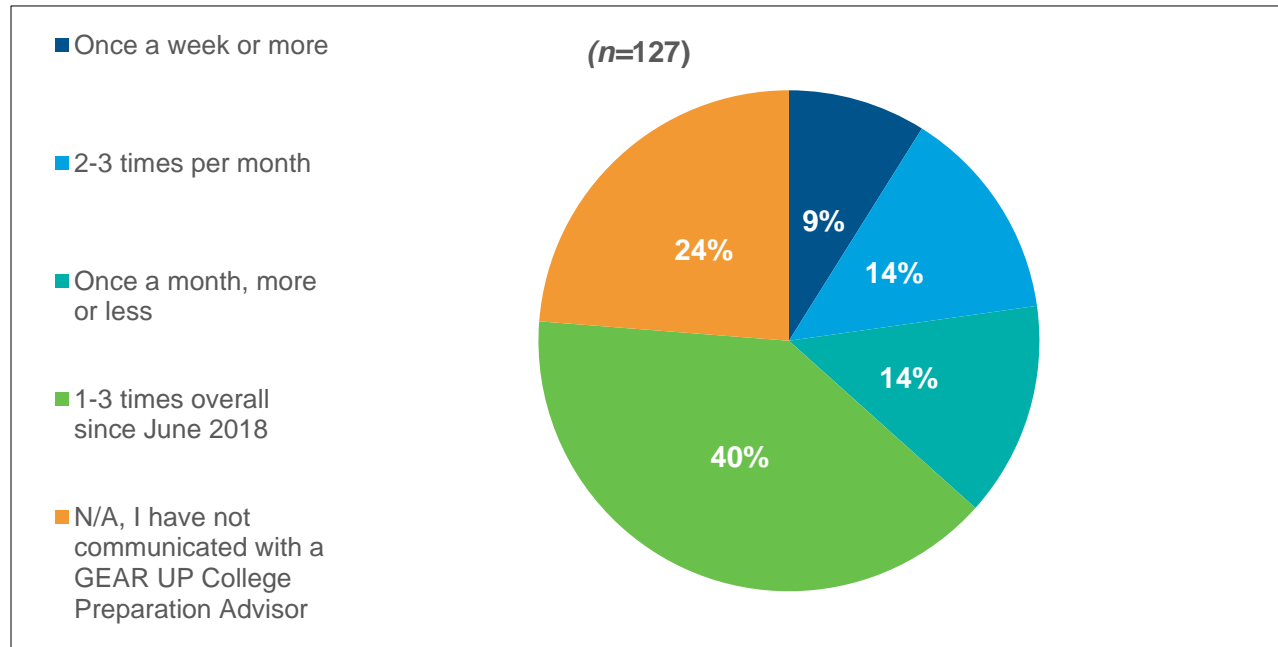
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

In contextualizing the frequency of communication, College Preparation Advisors described a unique, rotating schedule tailored to their own work schedule and the location of their students at various school campuses. College Preparation Advisors explained that they developed their schedules for college campus visits throughout the week, usually in public spaces, and prioritized campuses with the most students. According to one College Preparation Advisor,

> "I have around 100 kids that I keep up with in some way, shape, or form constantly. Practically once a week…We're supposed to see the kids at least four times a semester, so I think I did pretty well with that. I interacted with them at least four times with at least 80% of my kids that were enrolled somewhere."

For some districts, College Preparation Advisors noted that their own flexibility in creating their schedules allowed for increased participation among graduates as schedules were able to be arranged to maximize the amount of time students were available to attend workshops or discuss various topics. Despite the efforts made by College Preparation Advisors to increase engagement with their graduates, either one-on-one or through group sessions, all College Preparation Advisors noted that some graduates were consistently unresponsive to the various forms of outreach. According to one College Preparation Advisor, "I feel like…it's hit or miss…Some students I will text, and they will reply every time. Other students I will text and sometimes they reply, sometimes they don't."

3.2.3. Topics Discussed during Advising

According to graduate survey data, approximately three-quarters of survey respondents who enrolled in their first year of postsecondary education in fall 2018 reported that they spoke to their College Preparation Advisor about their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (see Figure 3.3). Other frequently discussed topics included college life, course schedules, college academics, and financial aid. Least discussed topics included tutoring/mentoring, transferring, and other topics (Table F.9, Appendix F).

Figure 3.3. Topics Discussed with College Preparation Advisors, Year 7 (Postsecondary)
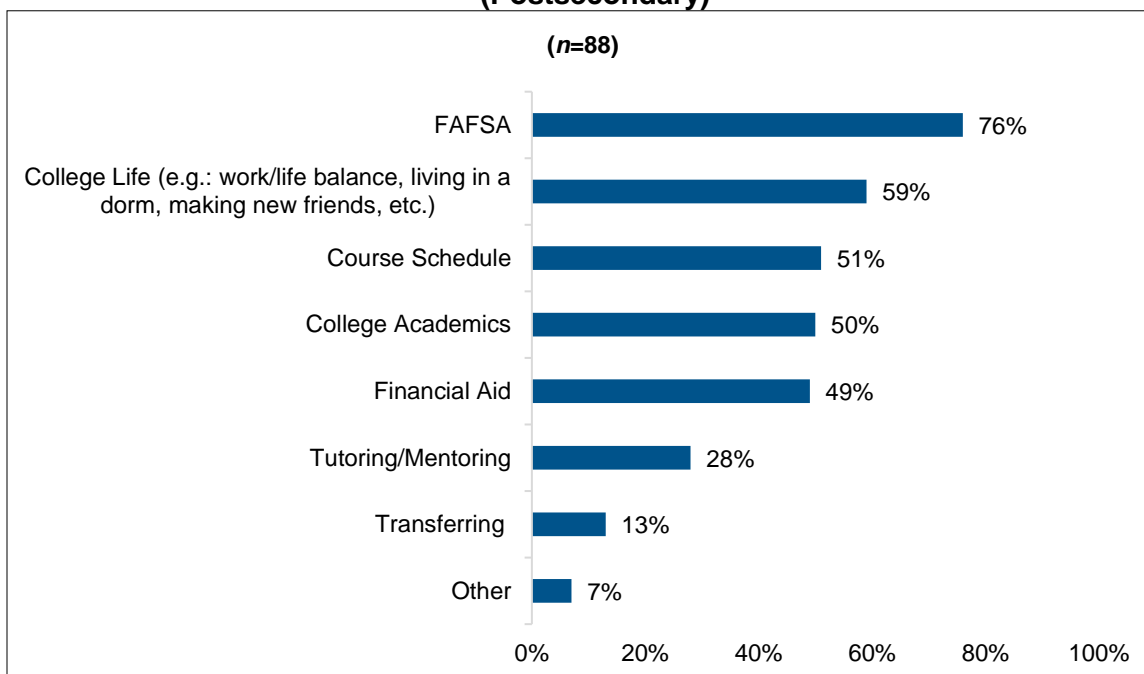
(*n*=88)

Topic	Percentage
FAFSA	76%
College Life (e.g.: work/life balance, living in a dorm, making new friends, etc.)	59%
Course Schedule	51%
College Academics	50%
Financial Aid	49%
Tutoring/Mentoring	28%
Transferring	13%
Other	7%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages do not total 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

As shown in Figure 3.4, over half (57%) of the graduate survey respondents who did not enroll in their first year of postsecondary education in fall 2018 indicated that they discussed how to apply or enroll in a postsecondary education with their College Preparation Advisor. Other frequently discussed topics included personal life, FAFSA and/or financial aid. Topics such as the military or job/employment were the least discussed (Table F.9, Appendix F).

Figure 3.4. Topics Discussed with College Preparation Advisors, Year 7 (Postsecondary)
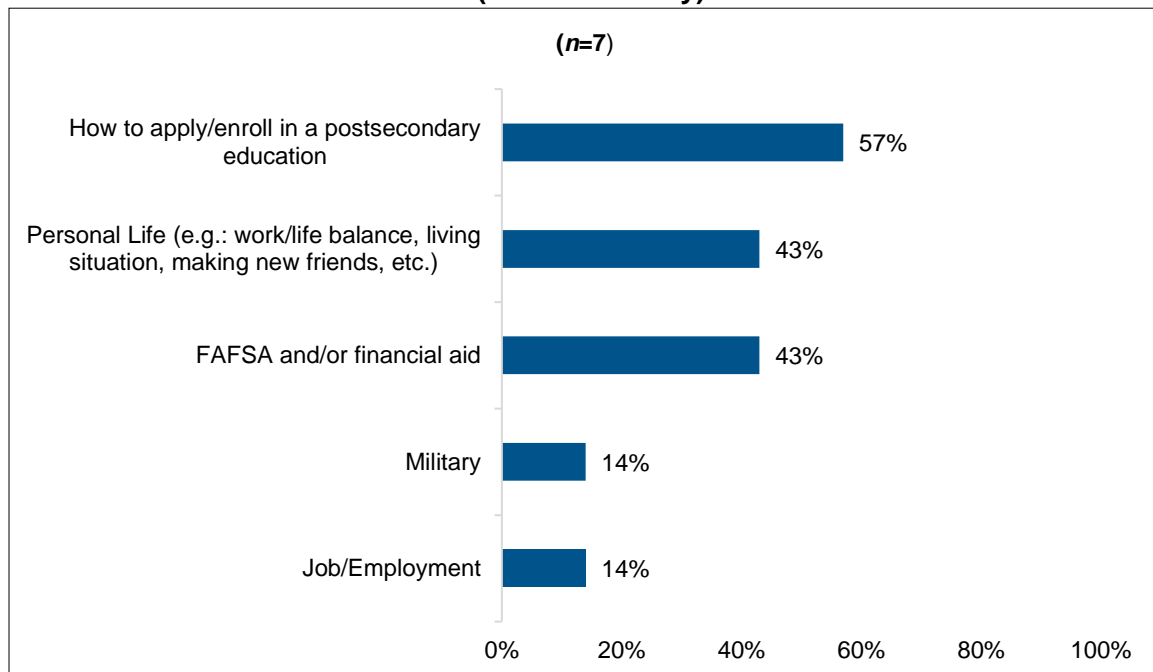
(*n*=7)

Topic	Percentage
How to apply/enroll in a postsecondary education	57%
Personal Life (e.g.: work/life balance, living situation, making new friends, etc.)	43%
FAFSA and/or financial aid	43%
Military	14%
Job/Employment	14%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages do not total 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

College Preparation Advisors reported during telephone interviews that many of the topics were similar across graduates and that the time of year played a role in the topics of interest. More specifically, topics discussed during summer 2018 advising included enrollment in postsecondary schools and preparation for orientation. In fall 2018, College Preparation Advisors reported that they discussed degree mapping and planning, finalization of tuition loans and other general financial aid forms, internship or employment opportunities, registration for courses, transfer of transcripts to new schools, general college lifestyle questions, and in some cases, how to send test scores to colleges if graduates did not enroll in fall 2018. A concern of some graduates was the fact that College Preparation Advisors will no longer be able to support Texas GEAR UP SG graduates after Year 7. According to one College Preparation Advisor, some graduates continued to request extra levels of interaction to help them with unfamiliar or uncomfortable situations. When asked for an example, the College Preparation Advisor described volunteering to sit in on campus meetings with students, as the students "feel more comfortable with someone there who they know."

3.2.4. Satisfaction with Advising

Overall, over three-quarters (83%) of graduate survey respondents reported being *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with their interaction and communication with their College Preparation Advisor in Year 7, as shown in Figure 3.5 (Table F.10, Appendix F).

Figure 3.5. Levels of Satisfaction with Interaction/Communication with College Preparation Advisors by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)*
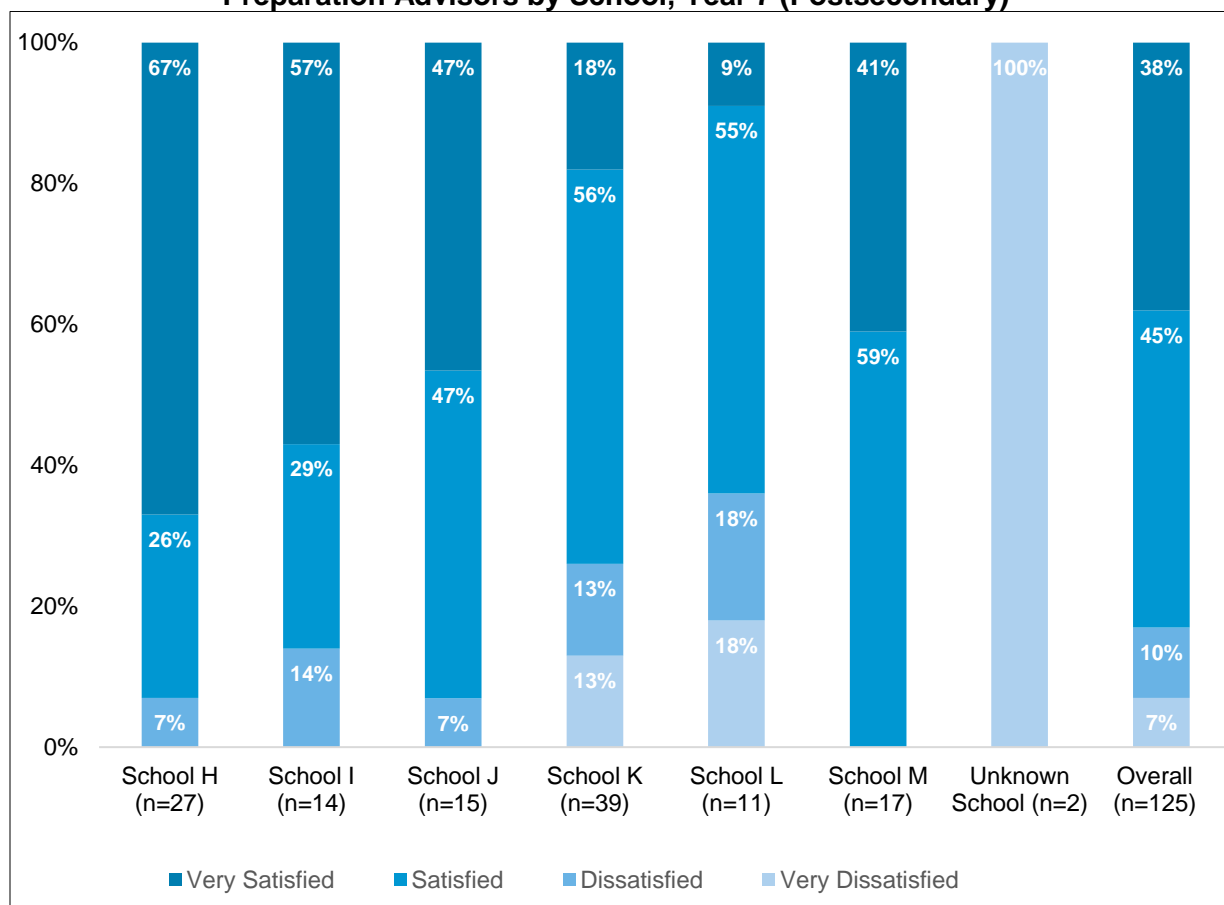
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

* Student levels of satisfaction differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(15)32.8=$, *p*<.01.

3.3. Postsecondary Education Progress

This section explores graduates' perceptions of their postsecondary academic readiness as well as preliminary data on retention and being on track to completion.

3.3.1. Perceptions of Student Readiness for College

Nearly half of graduate survey respondents (48%) reported that their high school prepared them well or mostly prepared them for postsecondary education. This varied greatly across each of the six Texas GEAR UP SG high schools. As shown in Figure 3.6, the percentage of graduates who believed their high school prepared them well ranged from 0% to 31%, while the percentage of graduates who believed their high school mostly prepared them ranged from 18% to 67% (Table F.11, Appendix F).

Figure 3.6. Graduate Perceptions of Their Preparedness for Postsecondary Education by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)*
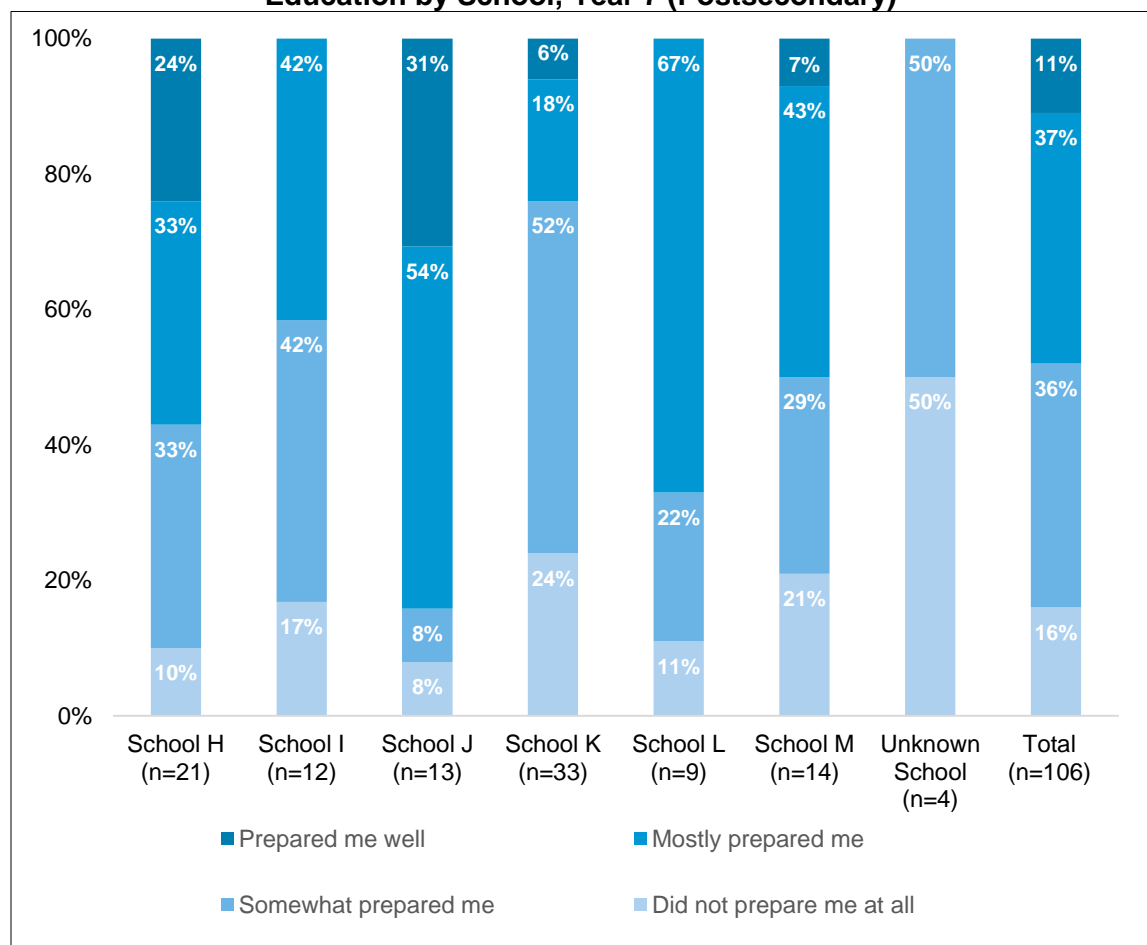
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

* Student preparedness was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(15)=25.7$, p<.05.

Mean scores of graduate respondents' perceptions of preparedness were also compared across schools as shown in Figure 3.7. School J had the highest mean score regarding perceptions of postsecondary preparedness, with a mean score of 3.08 (*Mostly prepared me*) while School K had the lowest mean score of 2.06 (*Somewhat prepared me*) (Table F.11, Appendix F).

Figure 3.7. Graduate Perceptions of Their Preparedness for Postsecondary Education by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)*

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
* Students' self-reported mean level of student preparedness differed significantly across the schools: $F(5, 96) = 3.3$, $p < 0.01$.

College Preparation Advisors were asked for their perceptions of graduates' readiness for postsecondary education in phone interviews. Overall, while some College Preparation Advisors perceived graduates to be somewhat ready for postsecondary education, most expressed that they did not believe many of their graduates to be as academically ready. College Preparation Advisors in District 4 noted that many graduates did not pass the TSIA. According to one College Preparation Advisor, "What happened is that so many of our students were not TSI[A] ready, so they spent a whole fall semester taking remedial classes." Another College Preparation Advisor at School M identified the same issue but noted that some graduates passed the TSIA over the summer.

College Preparation Advisors also mentioned specific academic subjects that proved to be most challenging for graduates; specifically, algebra and science were difficult for students to grasp in their first year of college. According to a College Preparation Advisor at School I, "They told me that they didn't feel as academically prepared and even though we try to prepare them…I think they had just an overwhelming sense of that they're behind and they felt that way in all aspects." Another College Preparation Advisor described the ability to manage personal time as a challenge graduates had to face, particularly in making their own schedule rather than having it set for them.

3.3.2. Retention

Project Objective 6.1 states that the student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average. Although extant data from GUIDES were not available to the ICF evaluation team to measure progress toward this objective, the Support Center administered a survey in May 2019 which provides some insights

regarding retention.[23] Of the graduates who responded to the Support Center survey, 89% reported enrolling in a college, university, or career and technical program during the summer or fall after high school and 84% reported still being enrolled as of May 2019, a five percentage point decrease (Table F.13, Appendix F). The most recent TAPR data showed that while 59.2% of the class of 2015 enrolled in college in fall 2016, 48.6% continued college enrollment in their second year of college (an eleven percentage point decrease).[24] Although it appears that graduates were on track to meet to Project Objective 6.1, given that fewer than one-quarter (22%) of graduates responded to the Support Center survey and the likelihood that additional college students will decide not to continue postsecondary education between May 2019 and the fall 2019 semester, progress toward Project Objective 6.1 could not be reliably reported at the time of report publication.

In ICF's graduate survey administered in fall 2018, graduates were asked about their plans for the spring semester. While nearly all (94%) respondents enrolled in postsecondary education indicated that they planned to remain enrolled at the same school in the spring 2019 semester, 4% reported that they were unsure of their plans for the spring semester, and 2% indicated that they planned to enroll in a different school in the spring semester (see Table F.12, Appendix F). To provide insights on this finding, College Preparation Advisors were asked about the various reasons students planned to transfer schools in the spring 2019 or fall 2019 semesters, change their enrollment status to part-time, or decide to not continue postsecondary education after the fall 2018 semester. College Preparation Advisors expressed that the reasons varied. According to a College Preparation Advisor at School L,

> "Case by case. One particular student, being on campus in the dorm, the culture of the dorm life, she didn't like it…Another student was at [four-year college]. She's African-American. There is an issue of diversity on that campus that does not sit well with her. There are other students talking of transferring. I don't think they have."

Graduates who were not currently enrolled in their first year of postsecondary education were also asked about their plans to enroll in spring 2019. As shown in Figure 3.8 below, nearly half (48%) of the respondents indicated that they planned to enroll in college for the first time in the spring; 43% indicated that they were unsure of their plans, and 10% indicated that they do not plan to enroll in any postsecondary education in spring 2019 (see also Table F.12, Appendix F).

---

[23] 303 graduates responded to this survey, which represents 22% of all graduates in Year 7. Accordingly, caution should be exercised in interpreting findings from the survey.
[24] For information on the state average retention rates, please visit the 2017–18 TAPR: https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/cgi/sas/broker?_service=marykay&_debug=0&single=N&batch=N&app=PUBLIC&ptype=H&_program=perfrept.perfmast.sas&level=state&search=distnum&namenum=&prgopt=2018/tapr/ps_outcomes.sas

Figure 3.8. Graduates' Plans For The Spring Semester, Year 7 (Postsecondary)*
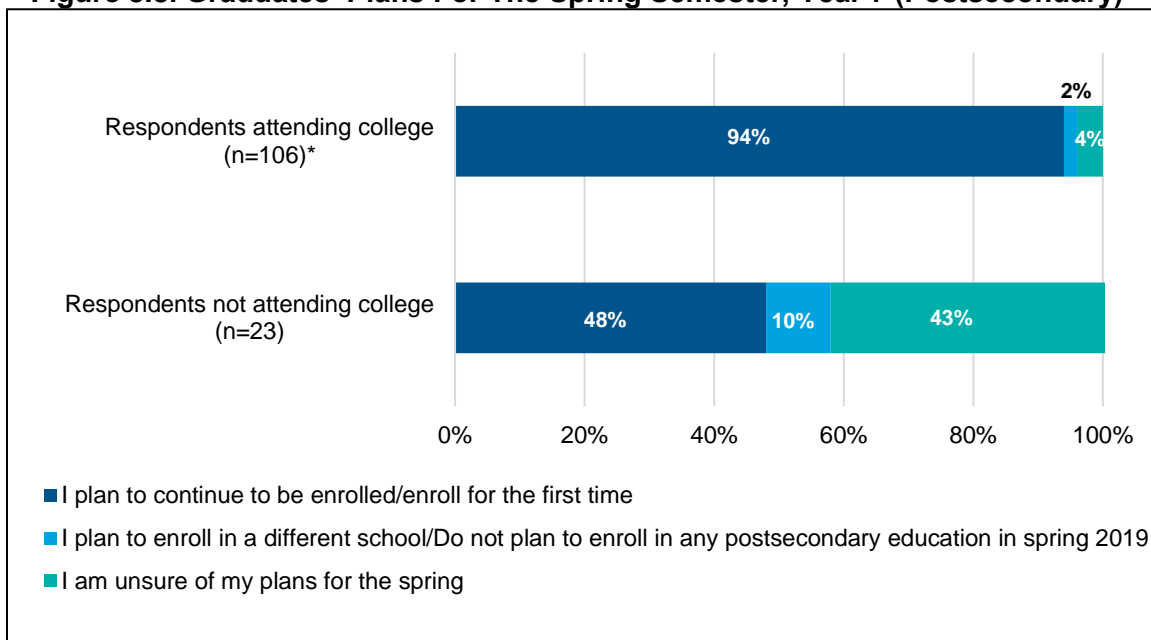
Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
 *The response option, "I do not plan to enroll in any college in Spring 2019" was offered to all respondents in college but had a 0% response rate.

3.3.3. On Track to Complete College

Project Objective 6.2 states that at the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.

To help measure progress toward this objective, the Support Center's survey included questions regarding how directed students were toward completing a degree, certificate, or other credential using the Community College Taxonomy's classification system. This system classifies community college students as strongly directed, moderately directed, or not directed regarding college completion based on factors in their first year of enrollment related to completion and persistence, intentions, attendance intensity, and program of study (Horn, 2009). The Support Center's May 2019 survey used questions to gather data related to these factors to determine if Texas GEAR UP SG graduates were strongly directed, moderately directed, or not directed. The survey questions included:

1. Did you enroll in a college, university, career or technical program the summer or fall after high school?
2. Are you currently enrolled in a college, university, career or technical program?
3. Are you on track to get a 2.0 and above grade point average (GPA)?
4. Are you on track to take more than 15 credits?
5. Do you intend to achieve a college, university, career or technical degree, certificate or credential?

Moderately directed students responded yes to at least one of the five questions. Strongly directed students responded yes to at least questions 2, 3, and 5.

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of all respondents were considered strongly directed toward completing a degree, certificate, or other credential; 19% of graduates were found to be moderately directed; and 17% of respondents were found to be not directed (Table F.14, Appendix F). While statewide college completion data are available from TAPR, using these data would not offer a valid comparison for several reasons: the survey was administered at the end of the first year of postsecondary education (not upon degree completion); the results from the survey depended on the Community College Taxonomy's framework for classifying students as on track (versus measuring actual degree, certificate, or credential attainment); the survey respondents represented only 22% of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates (while the state data includes data for the entire graduating class), and the survey relied on self-reported data (versus data reported to the state). Overall, progress toward Project Objective 6.2 could not be reliably determined at the time of publication.

Support Center survey findings also showed that 84% of respondents indicated that they are on track to earn a GPA of at least 2.0 at the end of their spring 2019 semester. Additionally, nearly three-quarters (71%) of graduates reported being on track to take more than 15 credits the following semester. Nearly all graduate respondents (92%) reported that they intended to achieve a college, university, or career and technical college degree, certificate, or certification. For more information, see Table F.15, Appendix F.

3.4. Reflections on the Texas GEAR UP SG

In the fall 2018 graduate survey, Texas GEAR UP SG graduates were asked about their level of satisfaction with GEAR UP overall, since they began the program. As shown in Figure 3.9, the vast majority (89%) of graduate respondents were either *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with Texas GEAR UP SG overall. Across schools, the percentage of students who indicated they were *Very Satisfied* ranged from 85% at School H to 18% at School L (Table F.10, Appendix F).

Figure 3.9. Levels of Satisfaction the Texas GEAR UP SG by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)*

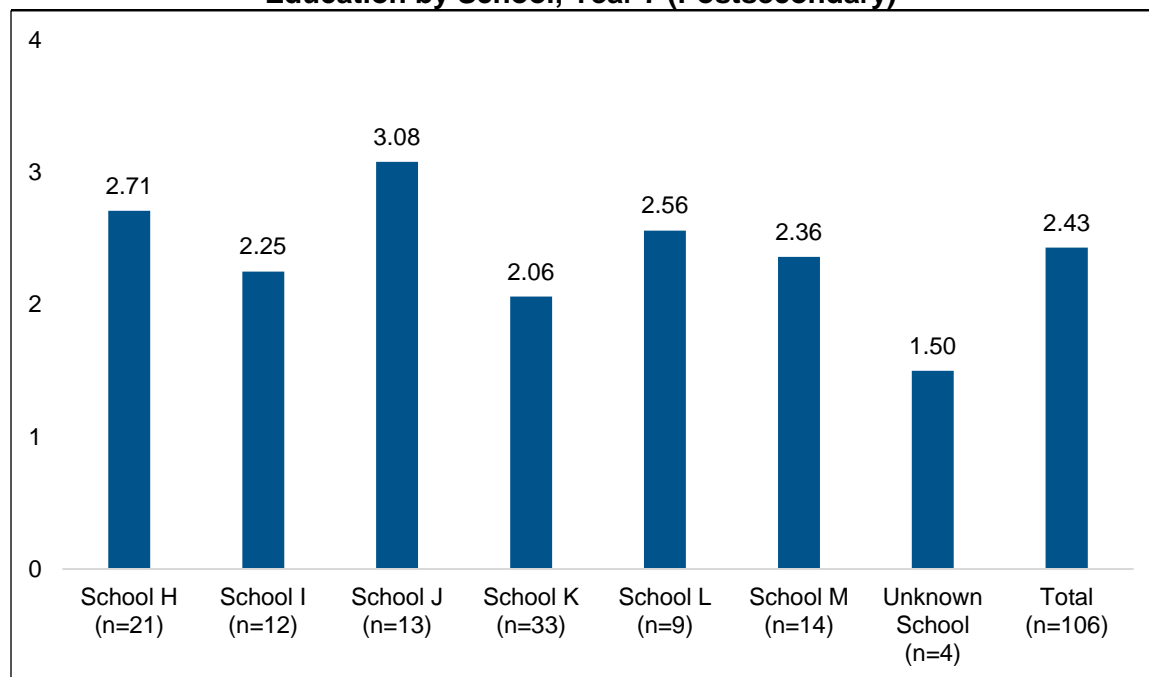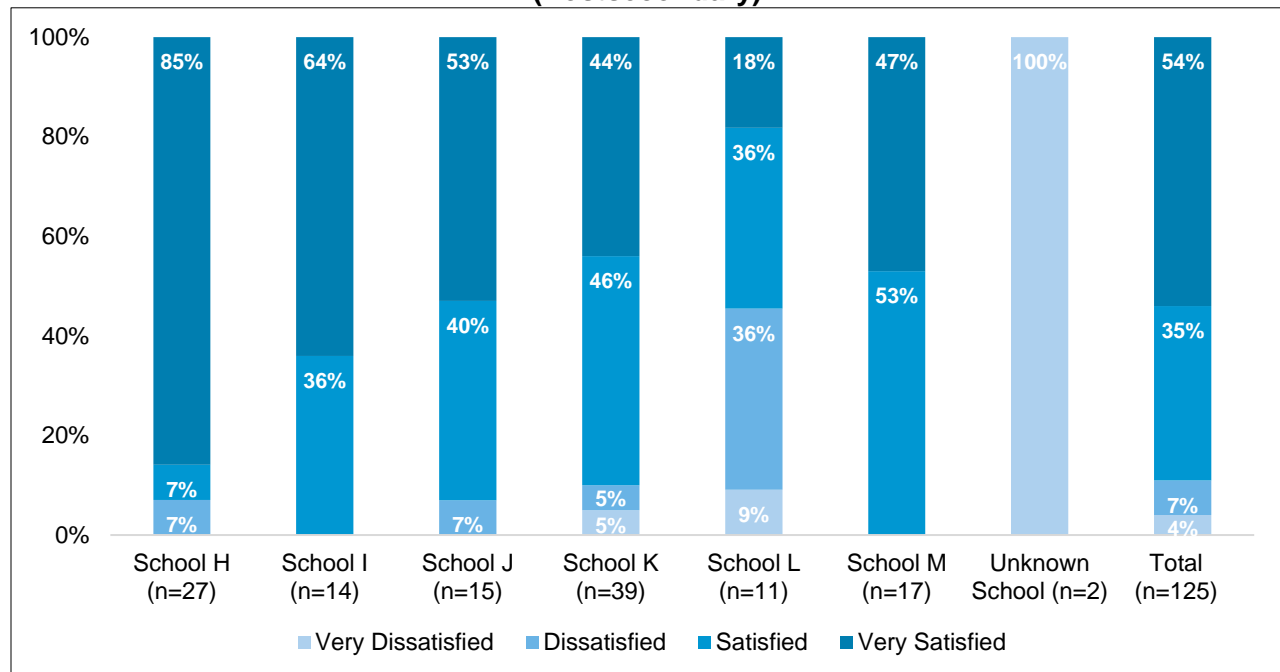*Source:* Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
*Student levels of satisfaction differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(15)=37.5$, *p*<.001.

3.5. Summary

In Year 7, according to NSC data, 46% of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates enrolled in either a four-year or two-year school (Project Objective 5.5 was not met). Graduates primarily reported receiving a Pell grant (60%) and scholarships (58%) to finance their postsecondary education. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of graduates met with their College Preparation Advisor either virtually or in-person in the summer following graduation (Project Objective 4.2 was met). During fall of Year 7, 45% of graduates met with their College Preparation Advisor at least once (Project Objective 4.1 was not met). College Preparation Advisors reported in interviews that they set their own schedules to meet the availability of the students they served, often meeting with graduates in-person on their college campuses or virtually via phone, email, or text. Most (83%) graduate survey respondents reported being either very satisfied or satisfied with the interaction/communication with their College Preparation Advisor in Year 7.

According to data from a May 2019 Support Center survey, 89% of graduates reported enrolling in their first year of postsecondary education in the summer or fall after high school; however, 84% reported that they were still enrolled at the time of survey administration in spring 2019 (a five percentage point decrease). Additionally, survey data suggest that 65% of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates were considered strongly directed toward completing a degree, certification, or other credential. Overall, data were too limited to reliably report progress on Project Objective 6.1 on retention or 6.2 on being on track for college completion.

When asked about their overall satisfaction with the Texas GEAR UP SG since they started in the program, 89% of graduate survey respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the program.

As previously stated, there were significant limitations in the available data and so extreme caution should be exercised in interpreting these findings. The evaluation team's graduate survey only represented 9% of graduates and the Support Center's survey represented 22% of graduates. Findings may not be generalizable to the graduate population. In addition, the GUIDES data reported in Year 7 primarily originated from checklists and case management notes and were more narrative in nature than the quantified data used in previous years. Based on the nature of and uses for the GUIDES data in Year 7, processes to systematically validate data were not used. Finally, while data included documentation of graduates who participated in Year 7 services and activities, it is unclear how comprehensive this documentation is and what lack of documentation implies.

4. Sustainability of Texas GEAR UP SG

Among the focus areas for Texas GEAR UP SG in Year 7 was sustaining effective and successful initiatives and activities implemented during the previous six years. This chapter includes findings from site visits and interviews regarding the planning for and progress school and districts made towards sustainability in Year 7. Since the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort has graduated from high school, unless otherwise noted, students referred to in this section are students from follow-on cohorts.

4.1. Planning for Sustainability

According to TEA, a primary objective in Year 7 was for participating districts to focus on efforts to sustain Texas GEAR UP SG activities and initiatives and implement sustainability plans in Year 7. According to a representative from TEA,

> "…the goal [of the sustainability planning was] that after the grant is completely gone there are remnants of all that has been created in the last six years…that [the grant] has somehow changed the school, changed the district."

TEA expected that sustainability plans included strategies for: (1) continuing professional development for school staff to help students increase postsecondary education readiness, (2) continuing positions like the Texas GEAR UP SG parent liaisons to support parent and family needs, and (3) maintaining relationships developed by Texas GEAR UP SG with community colleges and other organizations.

Strategic Goal Planning

District 1 site visit participants reported that they strategically designed their Texas GEAR UP SG sustainability plan to align with their district improvement plan. The goals included in the sustainability plan reflected the campus culture and the district's implementation ability. The District Coordinator reported that, "The sustainability plan is based on our district improvement plan and campus plan, so [the sustainability plan, district improvement plan, and campus plan] capture what we're doing here [and] what everyone else is doing in the district."

After each district submitted their initial draft of an 18-month sustainability plan as requested by TEA, TEA and the Support Center reviewed them and provided further guidance on an individual basis on how to make the plans—and in particular, the goals and action plans—more specific. In addition, the Support Center delivered technical assistance webinars to districts to support their planning efforts. TEA suggested that the lack of detailed goals reflected the lack of consistent sustainability discussions in schools and districts throughout the life of the grant. Participants across several participating high schools reported during site visits that specific guidance on what to include in sustainability plans as well as ideas or examples of how to replicate the Texas GEAR UP SG activities without the grant budget would have been helpful as they helped to draft the sustainability plans.

School administrators also provided feedback during interviews with the evaluation team on their progress to finalize their sustainability plans:

- An administrator from School K said that if they had a report on the progress of graduates, then it would have given them a better understanding on which Texas GEAR UP SG activities to sustain.
- Districts 2 and 4 staff reported that they conducted meetings to discuss the sustainability plan and how to revise it with their Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators.
- The District 2 Coordinator, who was new to the district in Year 7, met with district staff to build relationships and learn about key grant stakeholders. This District Coordinator also emphasized that even though the schools within that district have different sustainability plans, the two schools were expected to carry out those plans at equal levels of sustainability.
- The District 4 Coordinator said that he/she would have liked to discuss district-level curriculum objectives with district staff, so that the district objectives would align to the academic readiness and college exam preparedness objectives in the Texas GEAR UP SG sustainability plan.

District Coordinators across all districts provided varying levels of support to staff as they developed sustainability plans, which included communication of district sustainability plans to school administrators and staff:

- The District 2 Coordinator described his/her role in Year 7 as an administrative support across the district for college, career, and military readiness to ensure that all staff successfully carried out the district vision.
- The District 3 Coordinator reported providing insight to district staff on the implementation of the grant in previous years to help inform which activities and initiatives to sustain as well as how to implement them.
- The District 4 Coordinator compiled material in a single toolkit to inform current and future administrators of sustained practices, including how to implement those practices in the future without dedicated Texas GEAR UP SG staff. The Coordinator also worked with district staff to revise the sustainability plan to be more specific.
- A community alliance and counselor in School I explained that the District Coordinator continued to lead and coordinate efforts such as college visits and provide students with SAT, ACT, and TSIA information in Year 7; both individuals reported that they will lead the implementation of these activities in the future.

During Year 7, district staff meetings were held to plan for sustainability; most school administrators reported that they did not attend these district-level meetings. Administrators at Schools I and L said they would have liked to have contributed to these meetings because they felt they had a better understanding of their schools' operations and believed their knowledge could have influenced strategies and initiatives to better target the needs of their campuses. Specifically, an administrator from School I commented,

> "I wouldn't mind being a part of [district-level meetings]… Some of the things that they had set up from middle school were not ideal for high school level. It made it kind of hard for us to meet some of the things that they had wanted us to meet… That would be ideal if somebody from the campus level was involved so that we could have that input."

However, because district staff oversee all levels of education (i.e., elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools) and have the power to develop plans that coordinate efforts across all levels, the Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinator in District 4 believed that the district staff were the appropriate staff to develop the sustainability plan. The Coordinated stated,

> "[District staff] have the ability to have those conversations with the curriculum director, with the superintendent, and see how all this is going come together at the end for all of the other initiatives…some leaders at the campuses may not completely see the whole entire vision of how [the Texas GEAR UP SG] comes into place with everything else that's already an initiative… And so, I think that a person like at the top can absolutely ensure that all those things happen and also with budgets for the initiative."

School-based staff did participate in sustainability meetings on their campuses, most of which were coordinated by counseling staff. Among the topics discussed at these meetings were funding, student advising, college visits, and family engagement. Community alliances at each campus, such as Advise Texas and other college advising organizations, and counselors in Schools H, I, and K reported that they participated in either monthly or quarterly meetings with school staff regarding the expectation for all school staff to promote college readiness on their campuses as well as how the sustainment of Texas GEAR UP SG activities can support these efforts. In District 3, the Coordinator reported that they began to meet with counselors and school-based community alliances in fall 2018 to discuss which Texas GEAR UP SG activities from previous years they wanted to continue or modify. However, due to lack of availability and perceived interest of counseling staff, the check-in meetings did not continue into the spring semester. The District Coordinator said he believed these check-ins would have been a helpful way to support counselors and community alliances as they planned for sustainability. A school administrator from this district noted that he/she would have liked to have met with staff members for similar discussions but had not had the chance to hold any meetings.

Sustainability planning and implementation at the school-level was led by District Coordinators, community alliances, administrators, and counselors. Events were planned and coordinated by these staff; advising and one-one-one meetings to discuss preparation for postsecondary education with students were conducted by community partners and counselors. The counselors and community alliances at School K said they struggled to do both college advising and other college readiness activities because they had many students in need of one-on-one college advising. Counseling staff also had to prioritize academic counseling and coordinating college visits and school-wide events to promote college readiness. According to administrators at Schools L and M, additional counselors would help support this additional burden.

4.2. Data and Continuous Improvement

Many site visit participants discussed their efforts to sustain strategies to track student-level data in Year 7. District Coordinators, counselors, and administrators from Districts 1 and 3 described the data tracking systems as well as indicators and variables that Texas GEAR UP SG staff maintained and then passed on to school and district staff in Year 7. Schools reported that they continued to collect data related to FASA completion, test scores (e.g., SAT, ACT,

TSIA, and AP), and college application submissions. In Districts 1, 2, and 3, site visit participants explained that counselors and community alliances led the data collection activities in Year 7 given their leadership in student advising at the schools. According to the District 4 Coordinator, district staff managed data collection and tracking. The data tracking and information systems used by Texas GEAR UP SG staff in previous years was not passed on at School J according to counselors; however the counselors reported that they have continued to use Google Docs, as they have in the past, to track information and data that they believed to be similar to what Texas GEAR UP SG staff tracked. Site visit participants in Districts 2 and 3 described data that was not tracked in Year 7, as it was by Texas GEAR UP SG staff in previous years, as well as data that schools and districts may consider tracking in the future. Among the suggested data was student and parent FAFSA completion, job shadowing, college visits, and school event attendance.

An administrator from School L and the Coordinator from District 3 explained that their schools lack the human and time capacity to collect the full range of data collected by Texas GEAR UP SG staff. The School L administrator noted that while the school counselor does currently track some student data, the burden is already too high. They do, however, have some information about students' perceived readiness for postsecondary education because students participated in a related survey. The District 3 Coordinator added that counselors were reluctant to add more data collection and monitoring tasks to their workload, particularly data collection tasks implemented by Texas GEAR UP SG staff, because they found the grant required an abnormally large amount of data. Among the challenges related to data collection in Year 7, a School M administrator and District 2 Coordinator explained that limited understanding of the Texas GEAR UP SG (including the associated data) and staff turnover throughout the grant, made it difficult to effectively track data at the same level that it was tracked at by Texas GEAR UP SG staff in prior years. The School M administrator reported that given his short time at his school (two years), he was unfamiliar with how the Texas GEAR UP SG was implemented in previous years and was therefore unsure which data were useful to collect and track to foster a college-going culture in his school. Because he was new in Year 7, the District 2 Coordinator said that he was unaware of data that were tracked so unsure of what data would be helpful for the district to continue to track.

4.3. Sustainability of Services and Activities

Sustained services and activities varied across schools and districts in Year 7. Among the activities and services discussed by Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators and school staff were tutoring and test preparation, opportunities to participate in advanced courses, college campus visits, one-on-one student advising, and family information sessions.

All schools continued to offer one-on-one student advising led by counseling staff and school-based community alliances. Community alliances from Districts 1, 3, and 4 worked with Texas GEAR UP SG staff in Year 6 and were familiar with the approach to advising and student support employed by College Preparation Advisors; however, the community alliances were committed to implementing the advising strategies (which were often similar to those of Texas GEAR UP SG staff) developed by their respective organizations. Financial aid, test preparation, college applications, and post-graduate planning were some of the topics discussed in college advising.

Desire to Integrate Career and Industry Data into Postsecondary Readiness

An administrator from School L reported that their school would integrate industry and career data into their student career exploration supports. Insights on "in-demand" jobs, particularly those in their local area and in industries promoted by local policymakers, as well as the level and type of education needed for these careers, may be used to frame discussions on postsecondary preparation and planning.

School administrators and staff who conducted advising sessions across schools in Year 7 described how difficult it was to meet with all of the students. Counselors from Schools J, K, and L reported that the lack of staff to conduct student advising was a barrier to providing quality services to all students. Describing this experience, an administrator from School H said, "We're a little bit down on the resources. How do you serve 12 to 1,300 kids without the [College Preparation Advisors]? Because they did have an impact on the students."

A counselor at School L reported that they would like to increase the number of students who have access to advising services by increasing the number of community alliances based in their district and/or school. A School M community alliance reported frustration in the seeming lack of coordination in Year 7 between the counseling staff and the community alliance that provided student advising services. A representative from the community alliance explained that he/she believed all school staff should collaborate more to provide the necessary level of support to successfully prepare students for postsecondary education. The representative added that he/she believed that to provide the support, more school staff should be more well-informed on topics such as college applications and financial aid.

Dissemination of college readiness information continued in Year 7. According to site visit participants, college readiness information was provided to students on posters and banners through school hallways, cafeterias, and/or in designated classrooms. The Coordinator in District 3 explained that the schools in their district did not have as much signage compared to Year 6 since Texas GEAR UP SG staff placed them throughout the school in the prior year. A counselor from School H reported that information regarding scholarships and financial aid was disseminated by counseling staff through newsletters and emails. The information included important deadlines, scholarship information, and campus-wide college readiness activities. To promote student success, School J continued to include students who received scholarships acceptances to postsecondary education programs in campus announcements; this helped encourage and maintain student interest in postsecondary education plans.

Future College Campus Visits

The District 4 Coordinator and school counselors described a planned initiative for conducting college visits for all middle school and high school students each year. Starting in the sixth grade, students will go on one college visit a year at a different type of postsecondary education institution (e.g., four-year college, community college, private school) during each grade to expose students to a variety of institutions over many years. In Grade 11, students will participate in a survey that records their postsecondary education preferences; this will help to inform the college visits that staff will schedule for students. By the time students are in Grade 12, they will have had many opportunities to learn about the schools and programs that may best fit their needs.

Due to the decreased Texas GEAR UP SG funding at the high schools in Year 7, counselors and administrators in Schools H, K, J, and M reported there were fewer college visits in Year 7 than in previous years. However, across all schools, school staff believed that college visits increased motivation and exposure of colleges for students. An administrator from School J said,

"The parents were really appreciative of the fact that some of these kids, they've never been out of town, they didn't have an opportunity to see what another college would look like outside of Texas, and so that was great. I guess just really seeing the excitement that it stirred up in the parents and the students, to be able to provide that exposure to their students…And it really goes a long way in helping them visualize and make their plan a reality."

Site visit participants also provided insight on activities and initiatives related to student academic success. School administrators across all the schools and districts agreed that test preparation is a necessity for college readiness. With the support from community alliances, School J sustained test preparation opportunities and offered them after school, before school, and on weekends. School I incorporated test preparation in the classroom curriculum. A counselor from School J reported believing that students' increase in State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) scores were due to the additional tutoring offered through Texas GEAR UP SG. Because of this finding, a counselor explained that the school sustained enhanced tutoring opportunities in Year 7. A District 2 administrator and a School I administrator reported that they sustained dual enrollment course opportunities in Year 7. In School M, a counselor noted that the school made efforts in Year 7 to ensure that "the right kids are in the right courses for the right reasons." These efforts included reviewing student grades, attendance, and test scores as well as obtaining teacher recommendations. As a result of the increased expectations for enrollment in these courses, however, counselors reported that they had to offer fewer dual credit courses because fewer students were qualified to enroll.

Site visit participants also discussed sustaining parent and family events. An administrator from School K noted that community alliances assisted with the organization of parent nights in Year 7. The District 1 Coordinator mentioned that parent afterschool activities continued to occur, and they had hosted three to four events by the time of the site visit. A School H administrator reported that even though the school continued to host family FAFSA and college events, the family turnout was still low even when they did provide food. Due to lack of staff to assist in the organization of events, the District 3 Coordinator reported that the school was unable to

continue to host as many FAFSA or parent nights; despite the decreased number of events, the parent turnout did not decrease according to the Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinator.

> **Need for Intentional and Targeted Parent and Family Support**
>
> A School J community alliance from a local organization to support youth in their community explained that Texas GEAR UP SG served as a hub for parents and families of the graduates to learn about college and how to prepare their children for it; he went on to add that the district does not have the level and type of communication needed to engage parents in the way that Texas GEAR UP SG did while at the school. He explained that many parents in their community work multiple jobs and do not have the availability to meet with school staff to learn about postsecondary options and financial aid on a regular basis. Texas GEAR UP SG staff were able to meet this need, but the school did not continue to do so in Year 7. In addition to providing support, the community alliance explained that Texas GEAR UP SG meetings and events offered a place for parents to discuss their children's progress and plans with other parents – which is a place that did not exist in their community in previous years since many parents were unlikely to run into teachers or other school staff at places such as restaurants or grocery stores where informal conversations and encouragement to seek out opportunities could take place.

4.4. College-Going Culture

Site visit participants across schools described collaboration and having a shared vision as key components to sustaining a schoolwide college-going culture. A community alliance representative from School H said,

> "I feel like it starts from day one at the school… [you need to] say, 'These are our goals, these are things that I want for the kids,' and then I feel like you just naturally find the bridge where we all are sharing the same goal... But I think it's really just having good communication and sharing things with each other."

Some school administrators noted, however, that high turnover rates and lack of awareness among school and district staff made the collaboration and shared vision difficult to maintain.

> **The Importance of District-Wide Meetings with School Staff**
>
> The Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinator and multiple school staff in District 2 described district-wide school meetings held once a month. School staff across the elementary, middle, and high school campuses together brainstormed potential college and career readiness initiatives to implement in all schools in the district. Staff members shared successful initiatives and determined how these initiatives may be replicated on other campuses.

Administrators from Schools H and M noticed that it was difficult to have teachers and staff integrate Texas GEAR UP SG goals and objectives because they were often unaware of the goals and objectives and/or unaware of the role they played in enhancing the school's college going culture. According to the School M administrator, this made it difficult to sustain any changes in culture fostered by Texas GEAR UP SG. School M staff added that the lack of staff with time to provide targeted college readiness support to students also contributed to lower college-going culture at their school. An administrator from School H noted staff turnover as a barrier, explaining, "People come and go and that's been one of the challenges for GEAR UP. Even if we trained the teachers…those teachers leave." A School L

administrator commented that it was difficult for teachers to sustain the culture—by providing support on applications, scholarships, and financial aid—in Year 7 due to the minimal resources left by the Texas GEAR UP SG.

Schools also reported that they struggled in Year 7 to maintain a college-going culture among their students, with students' families, and within their local communities. According to a School J community alliance, Grade 12 students in Year 7 were less motivated to prepare for college by completing their FAFSA and submitting applications in a timely manner than the Texas GEAR UP SG students were the previous year. This community alliance described the students' attitudes on college readiness:

> "Some of our kids haven't even filled out their FAFSA as seniors. And some of them haven't even applied to schools, and they say they want to go to college, but it's not a proactive approach now. It's more of a, 'I don't know what I'm doing, so I don't want to ask anybody what to do about it.' Then when they get their information, it's kind of late."

Similarly, according to a counselor at School I, students were interested in postsecondary education, however they were also unsure about how to go about the college application process. Both the school counselor and a community alliance representation from School I perceived students to either have unclear goals, too high expectations, or limited opportunities due to their desire to pursue postsecondary education at a local institution.

A school alliance representative from School H and a counselor from School J reported that students' influence on their peers helped to build a college-going culture after seeing their older peers apply and enroll in postsecondary education. Site visit participants from Districts 1, 2, and 4 perceived some members within their respective communities to be unaware or uninterested of the importance of a college education, which made it difficult for schools to share information on postsecondary education. A community alliance representative from School H observed the low college-going culture within the local community by saying,

> "So the community affects that college-going culture here in the school of course. And it just makes it a little difficult. Yes, I've seen some progress myself, personally, from that time to now. It's just not like what you would want."

In School J, a community alliance representative noted that the school did not communicate often with families. The District 2 Coordinator also found family engagement to be difficult with families who have limited proficiency with English and those who have not gone to college.

4.5. Summary

TEA and the Support Center worked with districts and schools at the end of Year 6 through Year 7 to create 18-month sustainability plans, which included the development of new goals and action plans for successfully implementing the sustainability plans.

Site visit participants discussed efforts to sustain efforts to track student-level data, college advising, college visits, test preparation opportunities, and parent/family events. Common feedback from participants was that while their schools/districts made efforts to continue these activities in Year 7, their schools/districts did not have the capacity among current personnel nor

the time to continue these activities as they had in previous years. High turnover among school and district leaders and staff was also reported to be a barrier to sustainability. Site visit participants additionally provided insight into sustaining a college-going culture in Year 7. Despite reported challenges to sustaining this culture, site visit participants reported that communication and having a shared vision was an important strategy for fostering a college-going culture and strengthening postsecondary education outcomes for students.

5. Summary of Findings, Recommendations, and Next Steps

5.1. Findings

At the conclusion of Year 6, 91% of Texas GEAR UP SG students graduated from high school, exceeding the state average by one percentage point; with this overall graduation rate Project Objective 1.2, which states that the cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average, was met. As they completed high school, less than one-fifth (19%) of Grade 12 students graduated with college credits earned while in high school through dual credit courses completed and/or a score of three or greater on an AP exam. Students' college readiness was also measured at the conclusion of Year 6. Overall 83% of students participated in the SAT and/or ACT by Grade 12. Of these participants, only a small percentage (4%) met criterion on either assessment (a score of 1180 or greater overall on the SAT or a score of 24 or greater on the ACT) to indicate that they were academically prepared for college.

In Year 7, according to NSC data, 46% of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates enrolled in either a four-year or two-year school. For comparison, the Texas statewide average for college enrollment was 54.7% for graduates from the class of 2016 (TEA, 2019). Of those in postsecondary education, the most often reported type of financial aid self-reported by graduates was the Pell grant (60%), followed by scholarships (58%). Support for graduates was available in the summer after their high school graduation. According to GUIDES data, nearly two-thirds (65%) received services from their College Preparation Advisor either virtually or in-person. During fall of Year 7, the percentage of graduates who met with their College Preparation Advisor at least once decreased by 20 percentage points to 45%. Graduate survey respondents were most likely to report that at the time of the survey administration (October 2018) they had communicated with their College Preparation Advisor 1–3 times since June 2018. College Preparation Advisors reported in interviews that they set their own schedules to meet the availability of the students they served, often meeting with graduates in-person on their college campuses or virtually via phone, email, or text. Graduates and College Preparation Advisors reported that they discussed topics such as financial aid, course scheduling, and the transition from high school to postsecondary education. To examine retention rates, data from a May 2019 Support Center graduate survey was analyzed. According to survey findings, 89% of graduates reported enrolling in their first year of postsecondary education in the summer or fall after high school; however, 84% reported that they were still enrolled at the time of survey administration in spring 2019 (a five percentage point decrease). Additionally, survey data suggest that 65% of Texas GEAR UP SG graduates were considered strongly directed toward completing a degree, certification, or other credential.

The student survey also included questions pertaining to students' feedback on the overall Texas GEAR UP SG program and their satisfaction with their College Preparation Advisor. Overall, most (83%) respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the interaction/communication with their Texas GEAR UP SG College Preparation Advisor in Year

7. In addition, 89% of graduates reported that they were very satisfied or satisfied with Texas GEAR UP SG.

Texas GEAR UP SG districts and schools also received support in Year 7 to plan for and begin sustaining activities, strategies, and initiatives implemented by Texas GEAR UP SG staff in Years 1–6. TEA and the Support Center worked with districts and schools at the end of Year 6 through Year 7 to create 18-month sustainability plans, which included the development of new goals and action plans for successfully implementing the sustainability plans. According to site visit participants, sustainability planning was led by mostly district-level staff and Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators in some cases, with minimal input from school staff. However, some site visit participants reported that their school did some sustainability planning in Year 7 with input from administrators, District Coordinators, school-based community alliances, and counselors. These staff also led and supported the implementation of activities sustained from Texas GEAR UP SG.

Many site visit participants discussed their efforts to sustain strategies to track student-level data in Year 7. Schools and districts reported on site visits that they continue to collect data such as FAFSA completion, test scores (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSIA, and AP), and college application submissions. The lead collector of these data varied across schools; it was conducted primarily by school-based community alliances who provided college advising services and counselors. Respondents from Districts 2 and 3 reported that they did not feel that their schools and districts had the personnel capacity nor the time to collect student data and monitor it regularly at the same level as done by Texas GEAR UP SG staff. Some district and school administrators also reported that school staff turnover in recent years made it difficult to keep staff well-informed and knowledgeable about the data collected and the purpose each served.

The sustainment of other Texas GEAR UP SG activities varied across schools. College advising was offered to varying students by school-based community partners and counselors. However, site visit participants from most schools reported that the school did not have the capacity to provide advising to all students. While site visit participants from all schools valued the experience that students may gain from college visits, staff from Schools H, K, J, and M said that they were unable to offer the same number of visits to students in Year 7 that were offered to the Texas GEAR UP SG students in previous years. Schools also reported that they made efforts to sustain test preparation opportunities as well as parent and family events. Site visit participants additionally provided insight into their effort to sustain the overall college-going culture facilitated by Texas GEAR UP SG in Year 7. While site visit participants had varying perspectives on the college-going culture, many reported that communication between all stakeholders (e.g., district staff, school staff, students, community alliances) regarding strategies for fostering a college-going culture was essential for strengthening postsecondary education outcomes.

5.2. Potential Promising Practices

Based on an analysis of implementation in Year 7, the evaluation team has identified the following set of potential best practices:

- **Offer students opportunities to participate in multiple college visits throughout middle and high school to increase students' exposure to a variety of postsecondary education options.** The District 4 Coordinator explained that in Year 7, the district began planning to conduct annual college visits for students in Grades 7–11, with the intention of exposing students to a variety of postsecondary education options (e.g., public schools, private schools, universities, community colleges). The Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinator added that students will have opportunities in Grade 12 to visit postsecondary education institutions that they are considering attending to help them determine college fit. In this plan, the schools to be visited by Grade 12 students will be determined through the responses to a survey administered by school counselors that will ask students about the schools and programs they are considering for their postsecondary education.

- **Allow College Preparation Advisors to have flexible schedules so they are able to meet evolving needs of graduates.** Texas GEAR UP SG College Preparation Advisors reported that they were able to set their own schedules—including time and location—in Year 7, which helped them to meet with graduates in locations and at times that were convenient for the graduates. Because graduates had their own varying course and work schedules in Year 7 across multiple campuses, having a flexible schedule enabled College Preparation Advisors to meet with graduates in-person and be responsive to graduates' texts, emails, and phone calls. One College Preparation Advisor reported that to maximize opportunities to meet with graduates, he set strategic hours when he would be available to meet in-person at a local community college attended by many of the graduates he served in Year 7.

- **Establish immediate and consistent communication with graduates.** College Preparation Advisors reported that they leveraged the relationship that they built with Texas GEAR UP SG students while they were in high school to maintain contact with them throughout the summer between high school and postsecondary education and ensure that graduates remained on track to succeed in their first postsecondary year. The immediate establishment of contact and the continued consistent communication between graduates and College Preparation Advisors, according to College Preparation Advisors, made students more informed of the supports available to them after high school and increased the likelihood that graduates would continue to engage with College Preparation Advisors. They also described a variety of techniques they used to keep in touch with graduates after high school, including a spreadsheet with contact information and a log of communication for each graduate, attempts to reach every graduate from their respective school immediately after graduation, and frequent reminders to graduates that they are available for any support or help needed. Though College Preparation Advisors reported that it was challenging to establish contact with every graduate (due to the lack of responses), the consistent and regular communication helped to ease graduates' transition into postsecondary education and ensure they had a reliable source of support in Year 7.

5.3. Recommendations

The evaluation team has also identified the following recommendations for implementation of future grants in terms of how to implement similar programming in contexts outside of the Texas GEAR UP SG:

- **Consider designing goals and objectives to promote sustainability throughout the implementation of the grant.** School staff reported that they found it difficult to develop sustainability plans and to sustain the implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG initiatives because they lacked familiarity with grant implementation during Years 1–6. For future programs, state-level staff may want to consider designing goals and objectives that promote sustainability and promote sustainability throughout the grant as a priority for implementation. In addition, districts and schools may want to consider integrating their own sustainability goals and objectives tailored to the needs of their students and the capacity of their staff. This may encourage school staff to feel accountable for maintaining successful strategies and may encourage new staff, especially administrators and counselors, to become more engaged with program implementation and sustainability. Year to year documentation of sustainability goals, plans for meeting them, the rationale for sustainability (i.e., evidence that strategies were successful and should be sustained), and how similar program goals were met may also help new staff support sustainability goals and objectives and provide the necessary leadership for the school to meet those goals and objectives.

- **Involve district and school staff in data collection and monitoring activities.** School staff across all schools commented about the burden of the perceived large amount of data required to be collected for the Texas GEAR UP SG in Years 1–6 of the grant. In Year 7, many also stated that they were unaware of the data collected by Texas GEAR UP SG staff so they did not sustain any related efforts. Providing data outputs to school staff, information on how grant staff used the data to target students or tailor their services to students and their families, as well as suggestions on how replicate the data infrastructure in other programs may help school staff do the same or enhance their own data collection and monitoring systems. Ultimately, this may help staff more efficiently identify students in need of specific supports.

- **Train school staff on ways to provide student support for college readiness and designate school staff to take ownership of college readiness activities.** Providing training to school staff on topics such as college entrance requirements and financial aid may help increase their capacity to provide support to students and their families as they explore postsecondary education options throughout high school. Designating school staff to disseminate college information (such as scholarship information, college and financial aid application deadlines, career exploration activities, upcoming SAT, ACT, and TSIA opportunities, and test preparation materials) and promoting the role of these designated staff to students and families may increase students' likelihood to seek out the information and resources. Additionally, designating multiple school staff to disseminate information will likely relieve school counselors as the sole distributor of this information.

REFERENCES

Abel, D., Guiffrida, D., Lynch, M., Wall, A. (2013). Do reasons for attending college affect academic outcomes? A test of a motivational model from a self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of College Student Development*, *54*, 121–137. Retrieved from https://www.warner.rochester.edu/files/news/files/academicsuccess.pdf

Briggs, A., O'Donnel, B., Horwood, T., Sun, J., Dervarics, C., Alexander, A., & Sanderson, A. (2015). *Year 2 annual implementation report: Texas GEAR UP State Grant evaluation.* Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=25769822614

Briggs, A., O'Donnel, B., Horwood, T., Sun, J., McKinney, M., Sanderson, A., Shelley, B., Alexander, A. (2016). *Year 3 annual implementation report: Texas GEAR UP State Grant evaluation.* Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=51539610251.

Carnevale, A., Smith, N., and Strohl, J. (2013). *Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020.* Retrieved from https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.SR_.Web_.pdf

CoBro Consulting. (2010). *A guide to GEAR UP program evaluation: Optimal research design, methodology, and data elements.* Retrieved from http://media.wix.com/ugd/bf258d_a952a600caa84bfe85c6f55fe7cdab7e.pdf

College Board. (2019a). State Report of AP Exams: Grades 11 and 12. [*Report of AP Exams: Grades 11 and 12 (2018)*]. Available from https://research.collegeboard.org/programs/ap/data/participation/ap-2018

College Board. (2019b). AP data – 2018. [*Texas state report data file*]. Available from https://research.collegeboard.org/programs/ap/data/participation/ap-2018

Editorial Projects in Education, Inc. (2013). Texas—State graduation brief, 2013. A special supplement to *Education Week's Diplomas Count 2013 Second Chances: Turning Dropouts Into Graduates.* Bethesda, MD: Author.

Horn, L. (2009). *On track to complete? A taxonomy of beginning community college students and their outcomes 3 years after enrolling: 2003–04 through 2006* (NCES 2009-152). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.

Kena, G., Musu-Gillette, L., Robinson, J., Wang, X., Rathbun, A., Zhang, J., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Barmer, A., & Dunlop Velez, E. (2015). *The condition of education 2015* (NCES 2015-144). Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015144.pdf

Krogstad, J. M. (2016). *5 facts about Latinos and education.* Retrieved from http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/07/28/5-facts-about-latinos-and-education/

McFarland, J., Hussar, B., Zhang, J., Wang, X., Wang, K., Hein, S., Diliberti, M., Forrest Cataldi, E., Bullock Mann, F., & Barmer, A. (2019). *The condition of education 2019* (NCES 2019-144). Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2019144

O'Donnel, B., Briggs, A., Dervarics, C., Horwood, T., Sun, J., Alexander, A., Zumdahl, J., & Rhodes, J. (2013). *Year 1 annual implementation report: Texas GEAR UP State Grant evaluation.* Retrieved from http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769807659&libID=25769807662

Spinney, S., O'Donnel, B., Horwood, T., Shelley, B., Sun, J., & McKinney, M. (2018). *Year 4 annual implementation report: Texas GEAR UP State Grant evaluation.* Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=51539620982

Spinney, S., Shelley, B., Sun, J., McKinney, M., Johnson, S., Falls, K., Horwood, T., & O'Donnel, B. (2018). *Year 5 annual implementation report: Texas GEAR UP State Grant evaluation.* Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=51539625854&libID=51539625848

Spinney, S., Shelley, B., Sun, J., McKinney, M., Michalski, B., & Horwood, T. (2019). *Year 6 annual implementation report: Texas GEAR UP State Grant evaluation.* Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=51539630174&libID=51539630167

Texas Education Agency. (2017). *Number of Texas students taking Advanced Placement increases for class of 2016.* TEA News Release Online. Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/News_Releases/2017/Number_of_Texas_students_taking_Advanced_Placement__increases_for_Class_of_2016/

Texas Education Agency. (2018). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2016–17.* Retrieved from https://tea.texas.gov/acctres/dropcomp_2016–17.pdf

Texas Education Agency (2019). 2017–18 Texas Academic Performance Report. Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2018/index.html

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2019). *2019 Texas public higher education almanac.* Retrieved from http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/12371.PDF?CFID=99188150&CFTOKEN=92988901

U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). *2017 American community survey 1-year estimates.* Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_1YR_S1501&prodType=table

APPENDIX A: Evaluation Questions and Project Goals

A.1 Texas GEAR UP SG Evaluation Questions

Table A.1 provides an overview of the evaluation questions addressed in this Year 7 implementation report. The list of evaluation questions will be expanded as appropriate to each report. In addition, several of the research questions described below focus on understanding when and how implementation changes. For this report, the focus is on Year 7 of implementation only.

Table A.1. Texas GEAR UP SG Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Questions
1. Implementation of Texas GEAR UP SG Strategies and Identification of Potential Best Practices
1.1 To evaluate implementation of GEAR UP strategies intended for teacher professional development (PD) to improve academic rigor (AR) and data-driven instruction
1.1.1 When and to what extent did grantees implement PD strategies?
1.1.2 When and how did grantees provide PD regarding vertical team preparation and implementation to middle school (MS) and high school (HS) teachers? Were appropriate teachers from all schools on the vertical team able to attend the PD?
1.1.3 What are perceptions of teachers who attend given PD regarding: training itself, impact on teacher practice, and impact on vertical alignment, as appropriate to training?
1.1.4 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to implementing PD opportunities? If barriers to implementing were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
1.1.5 In what ways do GEAR UP trained teachers report implementing data driven strategies? Differentiated instruction? PBL?
1.1.6 How do training opportunities remain consistent / change over time in order to be appropriate for a) teachers who have not yet had the opportunity to attend training? b) Teachers who attended trainings in prior year?
1.2 To evaluate implementation of student support services GEAR UP strategies
1.2.1 What types of information were utilized to identify students for participation in student support services implementation activities?
1.2.2 When and to what extent did grantees implement student support services strategies with students? What percentages of students are identified for student support services based on first six weeks of school as compared to at other times in school year?
1.2.3 What are perceptions of students, parents, and staff of student support services implementation strategies?
1.2.4 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to implementing student support services strategies? If barriers to implementing were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
1.2.5 Each year of the grant, what types of information are grantees making available to students? How do grantees inform students about opportunities to learn about college attendance and career success? How many activities are held for students to attend? How and to what extent do grantees provide information to students regarding what information is available through the state office?
1.2.6 By the end of each year, how many students (%) participate in each type of college readiness activity conducted by the grantees? How many activities does each student attend? What patterns of participation can be identified?
1.2.7 What are students' levels of understanding regarding a range of topics linked to understanding college and career readiness (e.g., college aspirations/expectations, college options, being college ready at each grade level, financing college)? Do students report having gained knowledge over the year based on information and activities provided by the grantee? Change over years of the evaluation?
1.3 To identify potential best practices
1.3.1 What practices implemented by the grantees might be identified as potential best practices based on short-term outcomes? What outcomes, if any, exist that support any long term impact of early implementation of potential best practices?
1.3.2 What practices implemented by grantees (students, parents, staff) are perceived by grantees to be effective, and therefore a potential best practice?

Evaluation Questions
1.3.3 What individual strategies and/or mix of strategies are related to achieving desired GEAR UP outcomes? Are perceptions of potential best practices aligned with analysis based on outcomes? If not, what might explain such gaps?
2. Family, School and Community Impact
2.1 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on families (parents)
2.1.1 Each year of the grant, what types of information are grantees making available to students' families? How do grantees inform families about opportunities to learn about college attendance and career success? How many activities are held for parents to attend? How and to what extent do grantees provide information to parents regarding what is available through the state office?
2.1.2 By the end of each year, how many parents (%) attend each type of activity conducted by the grantees? How many activities does each parent attend?
2.1.3 Each year it is measured, what are parents' levels of understanding regarding a range of topics linked to understanding college and career readiness (e.g., college options, being college ready at each grade level, financing college)? Do parents report having gained knowledge over the year based on information and activities provided by the grantee? To what extent does parent knowledge change over the course of the grant?
2.1.4 What information or opportunities do parents' perceive to have been most relevant in informing them regarding college and career readiness?
2.1.5 What barriers and facilitators do schools and parents report regarding participation in college readiness activities? If barriers were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
2.2 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on school curriculum (academic rigor)
2.2.1 At the end of each year of the grant, how many hours of college credit are students in each school able to earn (i.e., through AP, dual credit or concurrent enrollment)?
2.2.2 How many grantees (%) have made available at least 18 hours of college credit that students can earn while in high school?
2.2.3 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to making college credit available to students and to student participation in college credit earning courses? If barriers to implementing were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
2.3 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on community alliances
2.3.1 At the end of each grant year, how many partnerships have schools formed with business alliances? In what ways and how often have business partners offered opportunities for career exploration to students?
2.3.2 At the end of each grant year, how many partnerships have schools formed with government entities? Community groups? In what ways and how often have partners offered opportunities for career exploration to students? Opportunities to provide information regarding scholarships, financial aid, college awareness and readiness?
2.3.3 What are the perceptions of the school and of the community partners regarding the partnership as it relates to meeting GEAR UP goals? What facilitators and barriers to partnerships are reported? If barriers were identified, to what extent were grantees able to overcome such barriers and how? Do grantees anticipate and are they able to overcome barriers in following years?
3. Statewide Impact
3.1 To evaluate the impact of GEAR UP on statewide availability of information and professional learning opportunities
3.1.1 By the end of year 1, what types of information regarding college readiness have been made available through the state? Are there any topics relevant to college readiness not yet available?
3.1.2 What steps if any has the state office taken to communicate to schools and families about information available?
3.1.3 Each year, how many GEAR UP professional learning opportunities are made available to educators (e.g., Project Share, face-to-face)? How many educators, including those not at current GEAR UP campuses, are participating in such opportunities?
3.1.4 At the end of year 7, how many school districts (%) have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource (i.e., materials, professional development)?
4. Cost and Sustainability Outcomes
4.1 To evaluate use of GEAR UP funding
4.1.1 At the end of each year and over the course of the grant, how do grantees report using grant funds? Matching funds? What changes over time occur in how funding is used?
4.2 To evaluate sustainability of GEAR UP implementation
4.2.1 To what extent are grantees able to sustain activities initiated with the GEAR UP cohort with following cohorts of students? Are some types of activities easier to sustain than others? How does cost factor into sustainability? To what extent do grantees prioritize sustaining activities perceived to be best practices?

Evaluation Questions
4.2.2 What facilitators and barriers can be identified to sustaining GEAR UP activities? Do perceptions of these change over the course of the grant funding?

A.2 Texas GEAR UP SG Project Goals and Objectives

Project objectives that were addressed in even a preliminary manner were presented within the report. The following is a list of all project objectives outlined by Texas Education Agency (TEA) in the federal grant proposal.

Table A.2. Texas GEAR UP SG Project Goals and Objectives

Project Objectives
Project Goal 1 – Improve instruction and expand academic opportunities in mathematics and science
Project Objective 1.1: By the end of the project's second year, 30% of cohort students will have completed Algebra I in the 8th grade. By the end of the project's third year, 85% of students will have completed Algebra I.
Project Objective 1.2 - By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Plan plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average. [25]
Project Goal 2 – Increase access to and success in quality advanced academic programs.
Project Objective 2.1: By the end of the project's fourth year, all participating high schools will make opportunities available for each student to complete 18 hours of college credit (through AP, dual credit, or concurrent enrollment) by the time he or she graduates from high school.
Project Objective 2.2: By the end of the project's fifth year, 60% of the cohort, including limited English proficient (LEP) students, will complete a pre-Advanced Placement (AP) or AP course.
Project Objective 2.3: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.
Project Goal 3 – Provide PD for strong data-driven instruction.
Project Objective 3.1: All core content teachers will have the opportunity to participate in training with regard to differentiated instruction, advanced instructional strategies, and PBL.
Project Objective 3.2: Teams of teachers at the middle and high schools will complete at least five days of vertical teams preparation and implementation each year.
Project Goal 4 – Provide a network of strong student support services to promote on-time promotion and academic preparation for college.
Project Objective 4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.
Project Objective 4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.
Project Objective 4.3: By the end of the project's third year, the on-time promotion rate of cohort students will exceed the state average.
Project Objective 4.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, 70% of GEAR UP students will have knowledge of, and demonstrate, necessary academic preparation for college.
Project Goal 5 – Promote high school completion and college attendance.
Project Objective 5.1: By the end of the project's fourth year, all cohort students will complete the ACT Aspire or the PSAT. By the end of the project's fifth year, all cohort students will complete the SAT or ACT.
Project Objective 5.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 5.3: The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 5.4: The cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 5.5: More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.
Project Goal 6 – Support first-year college retention.

---

[25] For additional information on the Foundation High School Program and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx.

Project Objectives
Project Objective 6.1: The student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average.
Project Objective 6.2: At the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.
Project Goal 7 – Provide postsecondary information and opportunities.
Project Objective 7.1: By the end of the first year, the state office will make information regarding college options, preparation, and financing will be made available to students, parents, and educators throughout the state.
Project Objective 7.2: By the end of the first year, information and workshops aimed at linking college attendance to career success will be available to 100% of cohort students and their parents.
Project Objective 7.3: Each year, at least 50% of cohort parents, including parents of current and former LEP students, will attend at least three college awareness activities.
Project Objective 7.4: By the end of the project's fifth year, teachers and counselors will complete training in the college admissions and financial aid process.
Project Goal 8 – Build and expand community partnerships.
Project Objective 8.1: All participating districts will form business alliances that support higher student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.
Project Objective 8.2: Participating campuses will form alliances with governmental entities and community groups to enhance the information available to students regarding scholarships, financial aid, and college awareness.
Project Goal 9 – Promote college readiness statewide.
Project Objective 9.1: Annually increase the number of educators participating in GEAR UP professional learning, including through Texas Gateway and face-to-face trainings.
Project Objective 9.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 40% of Texas school districts will have utilized at least one Texas GEAR UP statewide resource, including materials and PD.

APPENDIX B: Evaluation Design, Methods, and Analytics

This report is focused on implementation of Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant (SG) in Year 7. Sections B.1–B.3 and B.5 detail the overall evaluation design. Section B.4 details the data sources and data collection for the Year 7 report.

B.1. Longitudinal Design

The Texas GEAR UP SG longitudinal evaluation is based on a cohort model design. Texas GEAR UP SG services were provided to Grade 7 students, referred to as the primary cohort, in participating districts beginning in the 2012–13 school year and continued through the first year of enrollment at a postsecondary institution (the 2018–19 school year).

There are three additional cohort groups that are included in the evaluation design. The retrospective comparison group consists of students who are one-grade level ahead of the Texas GEAR UP SG cohort—the students at the Texas GEAR UP SG schools who were in Grade 8 in the 2012–13 school year. The other two comparison groups, the two follow-on cohorts, consist of students who began Grade 7 at the GEAR UP schools in 2013–14 (the year after the primary cohort) and 2014–15 (two years after the primary cohort). Examining trends in outcomes in the retrospective and follow-on cohorts compared to the primary cohort allows Texas Education Agency (TEA) to better understand how the program has potentially created change at the school level. For example, the third year of implementation includes data on completion of Algebra I in Grade 8 for three cohorts of students (i.e., Grade 8 in the 2012–13 school year [comparison retrospective cohort], Grade 8 in the 2013–14 school year [primary cohort], and Grade 8 in the 2014–15 school year [comparison follow-on cohort]). The potential cohorts of interest are presented in Table B.1.

Table B.1. Texas GEAR UP SG Cohorts of Data Collected During the Seven-Year Grant

	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Retrospective Cohort	Baseline: Prior to GEAR UP	Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5
Primary Cohort	Baseline: Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5	Grant Year 6
Follow-on Cohort 1	Baseline: Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5	Grant Year 6	Grant Year 7
Follow-on Cohort 1	Baseline: Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Grant Year 5	Grant Year 6	Grant Year 7	
Total number of cohorts for data in each grade	4	4	4	4	4	3

B.2. Quasi-Experimental Design

In addition to comparisons that will be made based on longitudinal aspects of the design, the ICF team is utilizing a quasi-experimental design (QED). The Texas GEAR UP SG schools were not selected randomly to participate, ruling out a true experimental design. Still, it is important to understand outcomes within the Texas GEAR UP SG schools in comparison to outcomes elsewhere. Specifically, outcomes at the Texas GEAR UP SG schools are being compared to: a) statewide averages (where possible); and b) outcomes in comparison schools selected based on propensity-score matching (PSM) to be as similar as possible to Texas GEAR UP SG participating schools. A student-level PSM is not necessary given that the Texas GEAR UP SG is a school-wide approach (i.e., all students in Grade 7 in the 2012–13 school year had opportunities to participate).

B.2.1 Propensity Score Matching

PSM is the optimal method for establishing an equivalent comparison group in non-experimental studies. PSM refers to a class of multivariate methods for constructing comparison groups based on pairing study subjects, in this case schools, based on what is known about those subjects. Propensity scores represent the estimated probability that a program participant is assigned to an intervention based on observable variables. The evaluation team and Texas GEAR UP SG program staff determined the criteria for matching Texas GEAR UP SG and non-Texas GEAR UP SG comparison schools with various characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch status, grade level, academic achievement in reading and mathematics at baseline, special education/limited English proficiency [LEP] status, completion rates, parent education level). By using PSM to identify a very close non-Texas GEAR UP SG match (or multiple matches) for each Texas GEAR UP SG school, it is possible to estimate the value-added effect of the Texas GEAR UP program. That is, if two schools are found to be similar on a range of characteristics, but students at only one school receive the GEAR UP "treatment," then any potential differences in outcomes may be attributable to GEAR UP participation. Seven middle schools (one per Texas GEAR UP SG school) were selected for the comparison group based on PSM.

Specific details regarding the PSM are in the comprehensive reports.

B.3. Mixed-Methods Approach

The Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation is using a mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative) approach to best address the range of evaluation questions with the data available at a given point in time during the evaluation. The use of multiple methods to collect, analyze, and synthesize information allow for the triangulation of results, producing an in-depth assessment of Texas GEAR UP SG's effectiveness and providing greater confidence in evaluation findings. Much of the data that were collected, as described in the data sources section that follows, are quantitative in nature. Evaluators collected additional qualitative data through open-ended survey items and site visit interviews, allowing the story of Texas GEAR UP SG implementation and impact at each school/district in Year 7 to be told. Findings based on data collected through the range of perspectives are compared against one another throughout reporting of findings.

B.4. Data Sources and Data Collection

Evaluators used several data sources for this report, including data reported through the GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System (GUIDES), extant data provided by TEA, ICF graduate survey data, Support Center graduate survey data, site visit data, and phone interview data. The following sections provide an overview of each data source, including the process of collecting data that were included in this report. Texas GEAR UP SG students are referred to as graduates in this section, given their educational status in Year 7.

B.4.1. GUIDES Data

In Years 1 and 2, annual performance data were collected using a variety of tools. In Year 3, TEA worked with Community TechKnowledge (CTK) to create GUIDES, a customized data collection tool to collect data for the Texas GEAR UP SG. TEA continued to use GUIDES during the 2018–19 school year.

Annual performance data are aligned with requirements for the U.S. Department of Education (ED) APR, submitted by TEA each year in April. Districts are asked to report on implementation and participation at the student level in Texas GEAR UP SG activities from March 1 through the end of February of the current implementation year to align with the original APR timeline. Appendix C has a description of all data that College Preparation Advisors were requested to document in GUIDES.

B.4.2. Extant Data

Extant data refers to data that TEA already collects. TEA provides these data to the evaluation team as appropriate. The following extant data were used in writing this report:

Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR). TAPR contains campus-level performance information about every public school and district in Texas. TAPR also provides extensive profile information about staff, finances, and programs.

Support Center-Collected Data. The Support Center conducted a graduate survey in May 2018 to obtain college-retention data for graduates' second year after high school graduation. These data were provided to the Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation team for inclusion in the evaluation.

B.4.3. Fall 2018 Graduate Survey

In Year 7, Texas GEAR UP SG graduates were surveyed in October 2018. Appendix D includes the survey instrument. The graduate surveys underwent several layers of review and required approval by both ICF's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and TEA's Data Governance Board (DGB).[26] As in recent years, the Year 7 survey was administered online. A link to the survey was delivered to all graduates with a Signal Vine account by the Support Center. Graduates could choose to take the survey in either English or in Spanish. Survey data were collected anonymously.

In order to address the Year 7 evaluation objectives, the Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation team created new survey items based on a range of topics that were pertinent to the first year after

---

[26] Respondents provided their own assent for participation in the surveys.

high school graduation. Content areas on the survey were finalized with TEA and included information regarding such items as a) postsecondary plans and experiences (including current and future plans); b) interactions with College Preparation Advisors in Year 7; and c) overall experience and reflections on their Texas GEAR UP participation.

Of the 995 potential survey respondents (i.e., graduates with Signal Vine accounts), the overall response rate was 13%. Unlike in previous years, the school that students graduated from was self-reported by respondents in the survey. Of the 129 surveys used in analysis, the Texas GEAR UP SG school the respondent was affiliated with is unknown for six cases. Table B.2 provides the response rates by school. Table B.3 highlights respondent demographics compared to the overall sample.

Table B.2. Student Survey Response Rates by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	Number of Eligible Respondents	Number of Valid Student Surveys Received	Student Survey Response Rate
High School H	200	14	7.0%
High School I	139	27	19.4%
High School J	122	15	12.3%
High School K	275	39	14.2%
High School L	86	11	12.8%
High School M	173	17	9.8%
Unknown School	--	6	--
Overall	995	129	13.0%

Source: Eligible respondents include students with active Signal Vine accounts, as reported by the Support Center in Spring 2019; Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).

Table B.3. Overall Student Survey Demographics Compared to School Demographics, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

Categories	Survey		Overall School Sample	
Gender	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Male	45	36.0%	--	--
Female	80	64.0%	--	--
Overall	125	100.0%	--	--
Ethnicity/Race	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Asian	2	1.6%	81	1.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1.6%	6	0.1%
Black or African American	22	17.6%	893	13.7%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	90	72.0%	5,161	79.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	5	0.1%
White	7	5.6%	327	5.0%
Two or more races	1	0.8%	61	0.9%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	1	0.8%	--	--
Overall	125	100.0%	6,534	100.0%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018); Texas Academic Performance Reports, 2017–18.
Note: The data on the overall school sample includes data on the entire school population for each of the six Texas GEAR UP SG schools. For more information regarding demographic data by school, refer to Table F.4 Gender data for the student population is not available in the Texas Academic Performance Reports.

B.4.4. Interviews and Focus Groups

Virtual and in-person (via site visits) interviews and focus groups with district and school-based staff and Texas GEAR UP SG stakeholders are an important feature of the Texas GEAR UP SG evaluation. To ensure that relevant and useful information was gathered in interviews and focus groups, the evaluation team developed five specific protocols: 1) school and district staff (district grant coordinators, administrators, counselors, and school-based community alliances); 2) College Preparation Advisors; 3) TEA collaborators; 4) the Support Center; and 5) Texas GEAR UP SG state director at TEA. The protocols explored knowledge and understanding of the Texas GEAR UP SG, progress towards sustainability, perceptions of implementation activities, barriers and facilitators to participation in Texas GEAR UP SG activities, perceptions of stakeholders regarding promising practices, and awareness of issues related to postsecondary education.

Site visits were completed at each of the six Texas GEAR UP SG high schools in spring 2019. Telephone calls and emails were used to communicate between the evaluation team and each site regarding the visit. Schedules varied by school based on the availability of participants.

School and District Staff Interviews/Focus Groups. While on site, the ICF evaluation team interviewed school/district administrators, district coordinators, counselors, and community alliance representatives. In most cases, interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis. Overall, ICF conducted interviews or focus groups with six school/district administrators, seven counselors, nine community alliances, and four Texas GEAR UP SG Coordinators.

Telephone Interview with Texas Education Agency, College Preparation Advisors, and Collaborators. To understand the role of various collaborators and progress at the state level, the ICF evaluation team conducted interviews with the Texas GEAR UP SG program director at TEA, seven College Preparation Advisors, and with appropriate personnel from each of the

statewide TEA collaborators (including the Support Center) in spring 2019 (see Appendix D for interview protocols). The interview with the TEA Texas GEAR UP SG program director provided information regarding the process of managing the Texas GEAR UP SG grants to districts, coordinating with the other collaborators (see Chapter 1) in Year 7, and potential sustainability efforts. College Preparation Advisors provided insight on supports provided to graduates and progress of graduates in Year 7. Other collaborators provided additional perspectives on Year 7 implementation as well as their overall experiences with the Texas GEAR UP SG.

B.5. Data Analytics

B.6.1. Descriptive & Change Statistics: Implementation Analysis

As noted in Chapter 1, the data available reflect a somewhat shortened period of implementation of the program. The majority of the analyses included descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, averages, ranges). In some cases, the same data were examined in two different ways. For example, on the surveys, level of satisfaction was provided as one of four categories. These data were presented as a percentage indicating a given category or as average satisfaction by numbering the categories from 1 (*Very dissatisfied*) to 4 (*Very satisfied*).

RESPONDENT GROUP ANALYSES

Comparisons by respondent groups were descriptive. Where appropriate, crosstabs (chi-square analyses comparing frequency distribution by group) and analysis of variance (ANOVA)—comparing means by group—were conducted and significant differences between groups were noted. As noted, some analyses were conducted on both GUIDES and survey data. ANOVAs were utilized only to compare means across schools.

School/district was the key grouping variable used in this report. Information on providing implementation was also grouped by provision type (i.e., virtual vs. face-to-face). In the first comprehensive report, students were grouped in several ways including gender, race/ethnicity, LEP status, and special education status. Students were grouped by participation or not in advanced coursework (e.g., are students in advanced courses more or less likely than those who are not to be tutored in that subject). Parent participation was also examined relative to the student characteristics (e.g., were students with special needs or in advanced courses more or less likely to have parents participating in GEAR UP events).

DATA LIMITATIONS

In Year 7, a significant limitation is that GUIDES data on graduate participation in ongoing Texas GEAR UP SG services and activities were not recorded systematically for the purposes of the evaluation. While GUIDES data were previously entered by school-based GEAR UP staff (e.g., data clerks) to track data for the APR, in Year 7, these data were entered by College Preparation Advisors to manage the cases of individual Texas GEAR UP SG graduates (not for the purpose of tracking data). The data reported in Year 7 primarily originated from checklists and case management notes and were more narrative in nature than the quantified data used in Years 1–6. In addition, while there were processes used to systematically validate data in Years 1–6 to ensure accuracy for the APR, based on the nature of and uses for the data in Year 7, such processes were not utilized. Finally, while data included documentation of graduates who

participated in Year 7 services and activities, it is not clear what lack of documentation implies. Lack of documentation could suggest that either College Preparation Advisors did not reach out to some graduates to offer services or that they did do so, but that some graduates chose not to participate. Lack of documentation could also suggest that while some graduates may have received services, their participation in services was not documented. Although ICF analyzed and reported on GUIDES data in Year 7 to the extent possible, extreme caution is urged in interpreting any findings from GUIDES data.

B.6.2. Analysis of Site Visit Qualitative Data

Findings from the qualitative analyses were cross-referenced with findings from quantitative analyses to more completely answer evaluation questions of interest. The evaluation team utilized qualitative analytic software (ATLAS.ti) to code 32 transcribed interviews with program-specific codes.[27]

DATA REVIEW

Evaluators conducted detailed coding of qualitative data using keyword searches and, in some cases, reviewing entire transcripts to look for specific themes. The site visit team also conducted extensive content analysis to identify themes as well as similarities/differences across the sites. The coding team met periodically to establish interrater reliability among coders.

B.6. References

Diamond, A., & Sekhon, J. S. (2013) Genetic matching for estimating causal effects: A general multivariate matching method for achieving balance in observational studies. *Review of Economics and Statistics, 95*(3), 932–945. Retrieved from http://sekhon.berkeley.edu/papers/GenMatch.pdf.

---

[27] ATLAS.ti is a qualitative analytic software. More information about the product can be found at http://atlasti.com/.

APPENDIX C: Texas GEAR UP State Grant GUIDES Data Requested from Grantees, 2018–19

C.1. Summer Melt Meeting Checklist (to be collected beginning Summer 2018)

Service provider information (advisors' names and dates of service) is required, but all other information is desired and only used as a checklist during Summer melt meetings.

Data element (as it appears in GUIDES)	Definition	Further information	Frequency	Justification
Advisor*	Link only to College Prep Advisors from "Other Contacts" list	Used to monitor and examine the scope and extent of Advisors	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of First Meeting*	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY	Required field only for the first meeting	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Second Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors
Date of Third Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors
Date of Fourth Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors
Delivery Method	Indicate if it was delivered in-person or virtual		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors
Exit Survey Complete?	Select Yes/No	Schools has been administering the Senior Exit Survey (SES) to graduating seniors to understand their post-graduation plans	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
FERPA Complete?	Select Yes/No	A FERPA Waiver is a means for students to give	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors

		GEAR UP program permission to discuss and/or disclose their academic records with someone other than themselves (i.e., a parent, guardian, etc.).		Feedback for improvement
Register for Fall classes?	Select Yes/No		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Submit Fall 2018 Schedule to GU advisor	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Registered for orientation?	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Explain SAP and GPA	Mark the checkbox	Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) A review of student Satisfactory Academic Progress toward an eligible degree or certificate is required by federal, state, and institutional rules as one condition for financial aid eligibility.	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Explain W/WP/WF process and deadlines	Mark the checkbox	Students may withdraw from a course with any of the following grades: Withdraw (W), Withdraw Pass (WP), Withdraw Fail (WF). A grade of W indicates that the student withdrew from a class with no effect to the student's GPA.	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Took the TSI Assessment?	Mark the checkbox	The purpose of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is to	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors

		determine if you are ready for college-level work in the areas of reading, writing and math. Success in these areas can help you complete your college degree or certificate program.		Feedback for improvement
Planned Major:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
"Back-up" Major:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Plans to transfer?	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
ACC Classes in HS sent to college?	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
AP/IB Classes sent to college?	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Review professors on ratemyprofessor.com	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Look up Add/Drop deadlines	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Visit Writing Center and Tutoring Center	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Notes	Open ended text field	Space for district staff to make notes in case of special circumstances		Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

Submit Fin Aid Package to GU advisor	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Amount of Work-Study offered?	Currency	Will only be displayed if Work-Study offered.	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Outside Scholarships 2017-18?	Open-ended text field	Will only be displayed if Outside Scholarships offered.	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
FAFSA EFC:	Open-ended text field	The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is a measure of your family's financial strength and is calculated according to a formula established by law	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Parent(s) filed 2017 taxes?	Mark the checkbox	For the 2019–20 FAFSA	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Student filed 2017 taxes?	Mark the checkbox	For the 2019–20 FAFSA	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
PRIORITY FIN AID DEADLINE?	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Complete Cost Analysis worksheet	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Who is your assigned financial aid counselor?	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Summer job?	Yes/No		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Planned Summer Savings	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

Discuss plan to cover Direct Gap	Mark the checkbox	Check if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
If TASFA, when does your DACA expire?	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Have medical insurance? Which?	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Intended Career	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Visit Career Services office	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Career Mentor interest?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Look into First Year Experience Seminar	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Find one campus org and e-mail	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Academic Advisor	Open-ended text field	Enter if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Department Advisor	Open-ended text field	Enter if the item was covered	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Interested in Faculty/Peer Mentor?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Study Abroad Plans?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

1st gen student org/office on campus?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Sign Year 7 Letter of Commitment	Yes/No/No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Fall Mailing address:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Participate in 1 GU summer activity/meeting	Yes/No/No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Explain GU involvement for year 7	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Connect with GU students attending your college	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Applied for housing?	Yes/No/No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Paid housing deposit?	Yes/No/No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Transportation for move in Day?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Housing assignment finalized?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Meal Plan	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
RA Position Interest?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Look up RA application deadline	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

Meningitis Shot proof to college?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Health Center/Contraception	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
CLEP Exam opportunities	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

C.2. First Semester in College Checklist (to be collected beginning Fall 2018)

Service provider information (advisors' names and dates of service) is required, but all other information is desired and only used as a checklist during First Semester in College Check-in meetings.

Data element (as it appears in GUIDES)	Definition	Further information	Frequency	Justification
Advisor*	Link only to College Prep Advisors from "Other Contacts" list	Used to monitor and examine the scope and extent of Advisors	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of First Meeting*	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY	Required field only for the first meeting	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Second Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Third Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Fourth Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Campus Contacts	Check if items below are covered		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

	o Attend office hour of professors for intro meeting o Introduce yourself to your RA o Schedule an intro meeting with each TA o Sign up for Peer/Faculty Mentor o Enroll in a First Year Experience Seminar o Connect with another GEAR UP student on campus o Take tour of the writing center o Take tour of the library o Take a tour of the study abroad office o Take a tour of the multicultural affairs office o Take tour of all-subject tutoring center o Meet the person on campus in charge of o student retention and ask about resources o Visit the student health center o Visit the Financial Aid Office o Visit the office of disability services (if applies) o Visit student life center to ask about orgs			
Financial Aid	Check if items below are covered o Re-submit FAFSA/TAFSA October 1 - December 15) o Get tax transcript of parents 2017 taxes (if applies)		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

	o Get tax transcript of your 2017 taxes (if applies) o Meet your financial aid counselor in person o Attend work study job fair in August (if applies) o Get a great work study job (max=20 hrs./wk) o Visit financial aid office to find campus o Scholarships (need and merit) and apply o Learn about the emergency loan o Prepare 2018 taxes (Jan/Feb)- Parent & Student			
GEAR UP	Check if items below are covered o Submit Fin Aid package letter to GU advisor o Submit Fall schedule to GU advisor o Meet with GU Advisor (in person or virtual) o Attend 1 GU event o Submit end of semester grades		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Academic Preparation	Check if items below are covered o Find class locations prior to first day o Review an essay at the Writing Center o Use the campus tutoring center at least once		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

	o Enroll in an honors program (if applicable) o Find out GPA needed to remain o in good academic standing / keep scholarships o Take any additional placement tests needed o (or test out of certain classes, i.e. languages) o Plan to take a variety of classes in different o Subject areas to explore interests o Meet with an academic advisor to o make a four-year plan o Meet with a study abroad advisor o Plan for receipt of 504 services (if applies) o Create your ideal weekly schedule			
Professional Development	Check if items below are covered o Join a professional organization on campus o Learn about internship opportunities o Visit the campus career services o Attend the campus organization fair (August) o Attend a study abroad info session		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

Residential Life	Check if items below are covered o Participate in at least one hall activity o Participate in at least one campus-wide activity o Buy a great alarm clock o Participate in first week activities o Check out the gym / rec. department o Join a team / class / intramural sport o Join the student organization on campus o Apply to become an RA for next year		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Other	Check if items below are covered o Submit signed FERPA Form to GU Advisor o Provide updated mailing address and contact info to Advisor		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

C.3. Year 1 to Year 2 Transition Meeting (to be collected beginning Summer 2019)

Service provider information (advisors' names and dates of service) is required, but all other information is desired and only used as a checklist during Year 1 to Year 2 Transition Meeting.

Data element (as it appears in GUIDES)	Definition	Further information	Frequency	Justification

Advisor*	Link only to College Prep Advisors from "Other Contacts" list	Used to monitor and examine the scope and extent of Advisors	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of First Meeting*	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY	Required field only for the first meeting	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Second Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Third Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Date of Fourth Meeting	Enter date in the following format: MM/DD/YYYY		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Submit unofficial transcript for 2018-19 year	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Check credit status (30+)	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Registered for Fall classes?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Submit Fall 2019 schedule	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Overall GPA	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
SAP Status	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Any grades of D / F?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Scheduled to graduate in 4 years?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

Probation Status?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Entering major:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Current Major:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Plans to transfer?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Summer 2019 CC Classes?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
CLEP Exam:	Mark the checkbox	CLEP offers 33 exams covering material generally taught in the first two years of college	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Submit Fin Aid Package for 2019-2020 year	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Chosen for verification?	Yes/No/ No information	Required only if Submit Fin Aid is YES	As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Loan Balance Update	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Work-Study/Other Jobs:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Outside scholarships?	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Parent(s) filed 2018 taxes?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Student filed 2018 taxes?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors

				Feedback for improvement
Notify of NEW Fin Aid deadlines (10/31)	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Compare 18-19 and 19-20 awards	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Plan to cover Fall Gap	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Met financial aid counselor in person?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Summer job?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Fall Payment Plan set up?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Intended Career:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Research and apply for internship opportunities	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Professional Org member?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Visited Career Services?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Academic Advisor:	Open-ended text field		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Utilized Campus Tutoring Resources?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

Involved in any campus orgs?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Faculty/Peer Mentor?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Study Abroad Plans?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Enrolled in retention programs? (FYE, TRIO, etc.)	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Summer Reunion Event	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
Explain end of GU program	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
GEAR UP Ambassador Interest?	Yes/No/ No information		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
2nd year residential plan?	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement
RA Position	Mark the checkbox		As it occurs	Caseload progress monitoring for Advisors Feedback for improvement

APPENDIX D: Evaluation Instruments

D.1. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2019: College Preparation Advisor Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

> Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP state grant initiative to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as a College Preparation Advisor for GEAR UP in Year 7. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 45 minutes.*

> Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data to the extent permitted by law; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

> Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*

> Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.

INTERVIEWER QUESTIONS

1. **What have been your roles and responsibilities in GEAR UP this year?**

   a. *Describe your role in the grant this year and how it has been different from previous years.*

2. **Tell me about your level of satisfaction with students' progress in the first six years of the grant. (Probe for academic success/readiness, financial literacy, and postsecondary plans.)**

   a. *Do you think most students were academically prepared for postsecondary education at the end of the last school year? What role do you think GEAR UP played in the level of readiness?*

   b. *How satisfied were you with students' postsecondary plans (e.g., four-year college, two-year college, military, career, etc.)? Were the plans what you expected?*

   c. *Did most students follow-through with the plan they had at the end of high school for this year? For students that changed plans, what were some of the reasons they did so?*

3. **What kinds of summer programs were offered to students between Years 6 and 7?**

    a. *What topics were covered?*
    b. *Do you think they were helpful for students? Why or why not?*

4. **Tell me about the main GEAR UP goals/objectives for this year and strategies to achieve progress.**

    a. *What were the primary goals for this year, from your perspective? (Probe for: postsecondary enrollment and retention.)*
    b. *What elements helped facilitate the goal completion? What barriers did GEAR UP face when trying to meet goals?*
    c. *How did preparing for* **long-term success** *of GEAR UP students fit into executing this year's plan?*

5. **Let's talk about how you are supporting/serving students this year.**

    a. *How have you interacted with students this year? (Probe for one-to-one meetings, texting, group events/workshops. Probe for frequency/duration of interaction.)*

    b. *What factors have facilitated your interaction with students? What barriers do you face in interacting with students? If barriers, how have you/will you address them? To what extent are data systems in place to identify students in need of services? What kind of information/data do you use to guide your interaction with students?*

    c. *How are you supporting/serving GEAR UP graduates that are in postsecondary education this year?*
        i.   *What kinds of supports are most important to them this year?*
        ii. *How do you communicate with them? How often do you communicate?*
        iii. *What topics are they most interested in discussing with you?*
        iv. *Do you think the level of support you are able to offer is sufficient?*

    d. *How are you supporting/serving GEAR UP graduates that are* <u>not</u> *enrolled in postsecondary education?*
        i.   *What kinds of supports are most important to them this year?*
        ii. *How do you communicate with them? How often do you communicate?*
        iii. *What topics are they most interested in discussing with you?*
        iv. *Do you think the level of support you are able to offer is sufficient?*

    e. *What feedback have you received from students about their level of preparedness for postsecondary education?*

6. **What changes have you seen so far this semester regarding enrollment and retention of students in postsecondary education?**

    a. *For the changes you mentioned, do you know why they occurred?*
    b. *Do you expect to see any other changes for students' enrollment going into the second year after high school?*

7. **What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you think it has been for the cohort?**

    a. *Do you think GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not?*
    b. *What recommendations would you make for implementation of GEAR UP or similar grants in the future?*

8. **Is there anything else you would like us to know about GEAR UP?**

                                   Thank you for your time.

D.2. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2019: Collaborator Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. The purpose of this interview is to better understand your role as a collaborator – how your collaboration with TEA and/or IPSI came about and what services or input you provide or will provide to the GEAR UP program. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing GEAR UP. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 30-45 minutes.*

➢ Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data (summary reports may indicate particular organizations by the roles they describe but challenges and successes will be reported confidentially); and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording and the transcript, which will name the organization and individuals interviewed. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking detailed notes. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *You will indicate your consent to participate by answering the questions.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate. ICF will review existing documents such as the original RFP and any in place agreements to guide questions where appropriate.

Interview Questions

1. **In 2-3 sentences, please briefly describe your organization and your role in the organization.**

2. **Please describe your organization's role in supporting TEA/IPSI/AMS Pictures and specifically Texas GEAR UP.**
   a. *How, if at all, has this relationship changed over time?*
   b. *How would you describe the level of communication with TEA/IPSI Support Center/AMS Pictures? Who do you usually communicate with? How has this changed from previous years?*
   c. *Who have you interacted with since spring 2018?*
   d. *What types of supports/services does your organization provide to TX GEAR UP? How has this changed from previous years?*

e.   *What is the current status of the work? What is your organization's current level of involvement? How actively engaged is your organization?*

3.   **What, if any, is the extent of your organization's involvement related to statewide GEAR UP initiatives and at each GEAR UP school (in the 4 districts, 6 high schools)?**
           Statewide Initiative:
a.   *Are you involved in GEAR UP statewide efforts? If so, how?*
b.   *What portion of your organization's work is devoted to supporting the state? Districts? Schools? Students? Parents? GEAR UP staff?*
c.   *How frequently are these services provided? Who initiates/requests these services?*
d.   *How has your involvement changed from previous years?*
     School Programs *[Note: Only ask if direct services to schools are provided. Some TEA collaborators may not work as directly with schools.]:*
e.   *How is the support your organization provides similar/different across sites? Are there specific GEAR UP districts or schools that your organization primarily focuses on? If so, which ones and how was that decided? Who makes that sort of decision?*
f.   *How frequently are these services provided? Who initiates/requests these services?*
g.   *How has your organization's role changed since GEAR UP students graduated from high school?*
h.   *How has your involvement changed from previous years?*

4.   **What, if any, are benefits you see in your organization's role as a GEAR UP collaborator?**
a.   *What factors (facilitators) have helped the collaboration to succeed this year? Have you faced any barriers to a successful collaboration? If yes, have you been able to overcome the barriers and how? What could make it even better?*

5.   **What is your overall impression of GEAR UP? How successful do you feel it has been in the districts?**
a.   *Do you feel that GEAR UP has been able to achieve its goals? Why or why not? What barriers and facilitators were in place to affect this outcome?*
b.   *Do you think GEAR UP has made an impact on the school and district administrations' approach or thoughts towards postsecondary education readiness and awareness?*

6.   **Is there anything else that you would like to share about your work with Texas GEAR UP, TEA and/or other collaborators?**

           This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

D.3. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2019: Support Center Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges in implementing GEAR UP. As an independent, external evaluator, ICF is seeking input that will help in describing the program and the vision for GEAR UP held by TEA. We expect this interview will last 45-60 minutes.*

➢ Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *You will indicate your consent to participate by answering the questions.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.

Interview Questions

1. **Which IPSI staff have supported Year 7 of the TX GEAR UP state grant? How have their roles changed in Year 7?**

2. **What is IPSI's role in promoting sustainability in the districts and schools?**
    a. *What support has IPSI provide to schools and districts for sustainability activities?*
    b. *What successes have you seen so far? Are there any other successes or positive outcomes you're expecting to see by the end of the year?*
    c. *What challenges have you had? Are there any anticipated challenges?*
    d. *How is progress toward sustaining the goals of GEAR UP monitored or measured?*
    e. *What is your level of satisfaction with sustainability so far?*

3. **How has IPSI supported GEAR UP graduates?**
    a. *How has IPSI supported GEAR UP graduates currently enrolled in postsecondary education to ensure they remain enrolled and successfully complete their education?*
    b. *How has IPSI supported GEAR UP graduates who are not currently enrolled in postsecondary education?*

    c.   *What student successes have you seen so far in Year 7? Are there any other successes or positive outcomes you're expecting to see by the end of the year?*

    d.   *What challenges with supporting GEAR UP graduates have you had? Are there any anticipated challenges?*

    e.   *What is your level of satisfaction with the progress GEAR UP graduates have made this year?*

4.   Who are the key players that you have worked with regularly this year and in what ways did you engage with them? (NOTE: This may include non-formal collaborators.)

    a.   *Who are the major (non-school) Texas GEAR UP collaborators this year?*

    b.   *In what ways do you involve collaborators in GEAR UP activities? Has this changed from previous years? This may include involvement with grantees and/or with the statewide initiatives? Any collaborators you would like to see more/less involved?*

    c.   *What factors facilitate your relationship with GEAR UP collaborators this year? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*

5.   How would you describe the current status of the statewide initiative?

    a.   *What has been the primary focus of the statewide initiative this year?*

    b.   *How much progress has been made? How satisfied are you with the progress?*

    c.   *What components of the statewide initiative have been rolled out so far this year? How? To whom? Which of these components are new this year? What steps, if any, have been taken to communicate to schools and families about information/resources available through the statewide initiative this year? If not, what are plans/next steps to make progress towards statewide initiative roll out?*

    d.   *Have any new GEAR UP professional learning opportunities been made available to educators (e.g., Texas Gateway, face-to-face) this year? How are such opportunities communicated statewide? Any challenges in tracking participation statewide?*

6.   Anything else you would like us to know? Anything that would be important in our describing Texas GEAR UP?

          This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

D.4. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2019: Texas Education Agency Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP grant program to better understand strategies that grantees use to meet program goals. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges in implementing GEAR UP. As an independent, external evaluator, ICF is seeking input that will help in describing the program and the vision for GEAR UP held by TEA. We expect this interview will last 45-60 minutes.*

➢ Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *You will indicate your consent to participate by answering the questions.*

Note to interviewer: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Consider prior responses to customize the inclusion, order, and language of questions as appropriate.

Interview Questions

Where appropriate describe anything that has changed over the time since you have been in this role when responding to questions.

1. **Please briefly describe any changes in your role at TEA more broadly and then specifically with Texas GEAR UP this year.**

2. **First, I'd like to talk to you about sustainability efforts in the schools and districts this year. How has this been going so far?**
   a. *What were your expectations for the districts and schools in regards to sustainability this year? Have they met those expectations? Probe/listen for:*
      i. *Infrastructure and College-Going Culture*
      ii. *Academic Rigor and Support*
      iii. *Advising and Counseling*
      iv. *College and Career Readiness*
      v. *Family Knowledge and Engagement*

      vi.   Educator Professional Development
      vii.   Data College and Continuous Improvement
      viii.   Advisory Council

  b. *What is your level of satisfaction with the level of sustainability this year?*
  c. *How would you describe the level of buy-in from district and school administrators?*
  d. *What successes have you seen so far? What do you think facilitated those successes?*
  e. *What challenges have you encountered so far? Have you found any successful approaches for overcoming those challenges?*
  f. *What kinds of support have you and/or TEA provided to the schools and districts for sustainability?*

3. **What is your level of satisfaction with the progress of GEAR UP graduates and their postsecondary enrollment and retention status this year?**
  a. *What successes have you seen so far? What do you think facilitated those successes?*
  b. *What challenges have you seen so far? Have you found any successful approaches for overcoming those challenges?*

4. **Who have you worked with to provide the services and support we've discussed so far? (Probe for IPSI, collaborators, district/school administrators, and district GEAR UP coordinators.)**

5. **How would you describe the current status of the statewide initiative?**
  a. *What has been the primary focus of the statewide initiative this year?*
  b. *How much progress has been made? How satisfied are you with the progress?*
  c. *Are there any new/revised topics that have been made available relevant to college readiness on the website?*
  d. *What components of the statewide initiative have been rolled out so far this year? How? To whom?*
  e. *Have any new GEAR UP professional learning opportunities been made available to educators (e.g., Project Share Gateway, face-to-face) this year? How are such opportunities being communicated statewide?*
  f. *If opportunities are available, how many educators, including those not at current GEAR UP campuses, are participating in such opportunities and what are some of the opportunities this year? Any challenges in tracking participation statewide? Plans to overcome those challenges? If opportunities are not yet available, what are plans/next steps to make progress on making these available? Are there any additional opportunities you would like to offer?*
  g. *What factors facilitate working on the GEAR UP statewide initiative this year? Have you faced any barriers? If so, have you been able to overcome those barriers or do you have plans to try to overcome?*

6. **What are your overall thoughts about the implementation of this state grant?**
  a. *What is your level of satisfaction with student outcomes (academic achievement, postsecondary enrollment, etc.)?*
  b. *What changes would you make for implementation of a state GEAR UP grant in the future?*

7. **Anything else you would like us to know? Anything that would be important in our describing Texas GEAR UP?**
              This concludes our discussion. Thank you so much for your ideas and your time.

D.5. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Spring 2019: School District Staff Interview Protocol

Interviewer Guidelines:

➢ Note to briefly discuss the purpose of the interview: *The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Texas GEAR UP state grant initiative to better understand effects and impacts of GEAR UP in your school/district. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the sustainability of GEAR UP activities and learn about the impact of GEAR UP on your school/district. Your contribution to the evaluation effort is extremely valuable and will give you the opportunity to share your perspective on the successes, benefits, and challenges associated with implementing and sustaining GEAR UP initiatives. Please know that ICF is an independent, external evaluator. We expect this interview to take approximately 1 hour.*

➢ Convey to interview participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview is voluntary and all data collected will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop the interview at any time; (3) the information will be held in confidence by the evaluation team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ Ask permission to record the interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you choose not to have the interview recorded, we will be taking notes but will not include your name in reporting. Any transcripts of the conversation shared with TEA will have all identifying information removed.*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin. *Please review and sign the consent form.*

Background: TEA provided funding for districts to create an 18-month action plan to address sustainability of GEAR UP activities and goals at the district and campus level. We are interested in learning more about what has been implemented so far, how it has been implemented, and successes/challenges encountered.

Notes to interviewer:

- Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.
- There are options throughout the protocol to customize questions according to whether the participant is school or district staff and whether the staff member is new or returning. Interviewers should plan ahead to determine how to customize the protocol accordingly based on who is being interviewed.
- Reported plans for the 2018–19 school year should be reviewed prior to conducting the site visits in order to add any site-specific probes.
- Note that some grantees—Manor and Somerset—are part of a new GEAR UP grant. Interviewers should help to clarify that questions are regarding Year 7 of the last GEAR UP grant.

1. **Briefly tell me about your role in your school/district.**
   a. ***If not already known:*** *Are you new or returning staff?*
   b. *What role do you have in sustaining GEAR UP activities at your school/district?*
   c. ***If returning staff in 2018–19 school year:*** *How has your role changed, if at all, since the GEAR UP cohort left your school?*
   d. *Who else is involved in sustaining GEAR UP activities? What are their roles?*

2. **How is your school/district sustaining the activities, initiatives, and/or strategies originally implemented through GEAR UP?**
   a. *Probe/listen for:*
        i. *Infrastructure and College-Going Culture*
        ii. *Academic Rigor and Support*
        iii. *Advising and Counseling*
        iv. *College and Career Readiness*
        v. *Family Knowledge and Engagement*
        vi. *Educator Professional Development*
        vii. *Data College and Continuous Improvement*
        viii. *Advisory Council*
   b. *What successes have you seen so far? Are there any other successes or positive outcomes you're expecting to see by the end of the year?*
   c. *What challenges have you had? Are there any anticipated challenges?*
   d. *How is progress toward sustaining the goals of GEAR UP monitored or measured?*
   e. *Are there any supports that TEA or the Support Center could have provided over the course of the grant to better build sustainability activities into the grant program?*

3. **What partnerships or alliances that were initiated by GEAR UP have you maintained or created, if any?**
   a. *What role do they have in supporting college readiness at your school/district?*
   b. *Has the role of any school/district partners or alliances changed this year as a result of their relationship with GEAR UP?*
   c. *What is the composition and role/responsibilities of the Advisory Council required by TEA for the final years of grant funding?*

4. **Beyond the sustainability activities already discussed, are there any other ways you are using and/or planning to use GEAR UP funding this school year?**
   a. *How did you reach the decision to use funding in this way?*

5. **Please describe the college-going culture at your school/district. Are you satisfied with the culture? Why or why not?**
   If returning staff:
   a. *What impact do you think GEAR UP had on the college-going culture at your school/district?*
   b. *How has the college-going culture changed at your school/district since the GEAR UP cohort and staff left the campus(es), if at all?*
        i. *If participant is based at a school (not district): How does the level of college awareness of current students compare to that of the GEAR UP cohort?*

6. **On a scale of one to ten, with one being not successful at all and ten being 100% successful, how successful do you believe GEAR UP has been, overall, in *promoting college awareness and readiness* at your school/district?**
   a. *What additional impacts, that we haven't discussed already, did GEAR UP have on your school/district, students, families, and staff?*
   b. *Are there any components of GEAR UP that you would have changed or would preferred to have been implemented differently?*
   c. *Would you recommend participation in GEAR UP to other high schools/school districts?*

7. **Is there anything else about your school or GEAR UP that you think is important for me to know?**

Thank you for your time.

D.6. Texas GEAR UP State Grant Fall 2018: Graduate Survey

GEAR UP Student Survey, Fall 2018

Reminder: Please complete a brief set of questions this fall to learn about your first year out of high school and your plans for the future.

The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the impact of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant (SG). Because you were enrolled in a GEAR UP school in the 2017-18 school year, we would like to include you in the study of the Texas Education Agency GEAR UP program. As a part of this important research, you are being asked to complete a short survey which should take approximately 5-10 minutes. Please answer the following questions about your experiences, future plans, and opinions about GEAR UP. Filling out this survey is voluntary, and you may choose to skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. Your answers will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and all findings will be reported by summarizing data across students—individual responses will not be reported. Your name will not be on the survey and ICF will not share your individual responses with GEAR UP staff, parents/guardians, or any school staff.

The study presents minimal risk to you. Study participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students to prepare for postsecondary education. Where appropriate, GEAR UP grantees can use the information learned to adjust GEAR UP programming.

If you have any questions about the study or your rights as a study participant, you or your parent/legal guardian can call Thomas Horwood, ICF at (703) 934-3000.

By selecting "I agree to take this survey," you agree that you understand the purpose of the study and agree to take the on-line survey. If you select "I do not agree to take this survey," you will not be presented with the option to take the survey. If you need to stop the on-line survey before completing it and return to it at a later time, you will be able to do so.

- ○ I agree to take this survey.
- ○ I do not agree to take this survey *(Skip to end of survey).*

1. **All Respondents: Please indicate your current educational status since completing high school.**
   a. I am not enrolled in postsecondary education. *(Hide questions 3, 5, 6, 7, 9)*
   b. I am enrolled in vocational or trade school. *(Skip to question 3, hide questions 2, 4, 10)*
   c. I am enrolled in a two-year or community college. *(Skip to question 3, hide questions 2, 4, 10)*
   d. I am enrolled in a four-year college or university. *(Skip to question 3, hide questions 2, 4, 10)*

2. **Respondents who selected option (a) in Q1 only: Please select the reason(s) why you are not currently enrolled in postsecondary education.** *(Select all that apply)*
   a. I needed to work. *(Skip to question 4)*
   b. I was not accepted into the school(s) I applied. *(Skip to question 4)*
   c. My SAT scores and/or grades were not high enough. *(Skip to question 4)*
   d. I did not apply to any schools. *(Skip to question 4)*
   e. I wanted to work. *(Skip to question 4)*
   f. I have family commitments. *(Skip to question 4)*
   g. I decided to join the military. *(Skip to question 4)*
   h. I wanted to wait before enrolling in college. *(Skip to question 4)*
   i. Other (please describe): _____ *(Skip to question 4)*

3. **Respondents who selected options b–d in Q1 only: How well do you think that high school prepared you for your first semester of postsecondary education? High school...**
   a. Did not prepare me at all. *(Skip to question 5)*
   b. Somewhat prepared me. *(Skip to question 5)*
   c. Mostly prepared me. *(Skip to question 5)*
   d. Prepared me well. *(Skip to question 5)*

4. **Respondents who selected option (a) in Q1 only/NOT in college: What are your plans for the spring?**
   a. I plan to enroll in college for the first time. *(Skip to question 8)*
   b. I <u>do not plan</u> to enroll in any postsecondary education in spring 2019. *(Skip to question 8)*
   c. I am <u>unsure</u> of my plans for the spring. *(Skip to question 8)*

5. **Respondents who selected options b–d in Q1 only/IN college: What are your plans for the spring?**
   a. I <u>plan</u> to continue to be enrolled at my current school. *(Skip to question 7)*
   b. I <u>plan</u> to enroll in a different school. *(Skip to question 7)*
   c. I <u>do not plan</u> to enroll in any college in spring 2019.
   d. I am <u>unsure</u> of my plans for the spring. *(Skip to question 7)*

6. **Respondents who selected (c) in Q5 only: Why aren't you planning to enroll in postsecondary education next semester?** *(Select all that apply)*
   a. I do not want to attend school anymore.
   b. I need to work.
   c. I want to work.
   d. I have family commitments.
   e. I decided to join the military.
   f. I cannot afford it.
   g. The classes are too difficult.
   h. My grades are not good enough.
   i. I want to take some time off, but plan on returning.

      j.   Other (please describe): _____

7. **Respondents who selected options b–d in Q1 only: Please indicate all of the financial support you used to pay for tuition, fees, and books in the fall 2018 semester.** *(Select all that apply)*

      a.   I received federal student loan(s).
      b.   I received a Pell grant.
      c.   I received one or more scholarships.
      d.   I received a work-study position with the college.
      e.   I received other grants.
      f.   I have a part-time or full-time job (not part of a work-study program at the college).
      g.   My family has helped me.
      h.   Other (please describe): _____

8. **All Respondents: How frequently have you communicated (e.g., phone, email, etc.) with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor from your high school since June 2018?**

      a.   N/A; I <u>have not</u> communicated with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor. *(Skip to question 11)*
      b.   1-3 times overall since June 2018
      c.   Once a month, more or less
      d.   2–3 times per month
      e.   Once a week or more

9. **Respondents who selected options b–d in Q1 (in postsecondary ed) <u>AND</u> options b–e in Q8 only: What topics have you discussed with the College Preparation Advisor?** *(Select all that apply)*

      a.   My financial aid award package(s)
      b.   On-campus tutoring and/or mentoring
      c.   Course scheduling
      d.   College academics
      e.   How to apply to transfer to a different postsecondary education institution in the future
      f.   FAFSA
      g.   College life (e.g., work/life balance, living in a dorm, making new friends, etc.)
      h.   Other (please describe): _____

10. **Respondents who selected option (a) in Q1 (not in postsecondary ed) <u>AND</u> options b–e in Q8 only: What topics have you discussed with the College Preparation Advisor?** *(Select all that apply)*

      a.   How to apply/enroll in postsecondary education in the future
      b.   FAFSA and/or financial aid
      c.   Job/employment
      d.   Military
      e.   Personal life (e.g., work/life balance, living situation, making new friends, etc.)
      f.   Other (please describe): _____

11. **All Respondents: What is your level of satisfaction with the interaction/communication with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor since June 2018?**

      a.   Very satisfied
      b.   Satisfied
      c.   Dissatisfied
      d.   Very dissatisfied

12. **All Respondents:** **What is your level of satisfaction with GEAR UP overall, since you began the program?**
    a. Very satisfied
    b. Satisfied
    c. Dissatisfied
    d. Very dissatisfied

13. **All Respondents:** **From which high school did you graduate?**
    a. Estacado High School
    b. Kennedy High School
    c. Manor High School
    d. Manor New Tech High School
    e. Memorial high School
    f. Somerset High School

14. **All Respondents:** **What is your gender?**
    a. Female
    b. Male

15. **All Respondents:** **What is the language you use <u>most often</u> *at home*? (Please select only one)**
    a. English
    b. Spanish
    c. Both English and Spanish
    d. Another language (please specify: _____)

16. **All Respondents:** **What is the language you use <u>most often</u> *with friends*? (Please select only one)**
    a. Only English
    b. Only Spanish
    c. Both English and Spanish
    d. Another language (please specify: _____)

17. **All Respondents:** **Are you Hispanic/Latino? (Please select only one)**
    a. No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
    b. Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
    c. Yes, Puerto Rican
    d. Yes, Cuban
    e. Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

18. **All Respondents:** **What is your race? (Select ALL that apply)**
    a. American Indian or Alaska Native *(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. This area may include, for example, native Indians from the United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.)*
    b. Asian *(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, and the Philippine Islands.)*
    c. Black or African American *(A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.)*
    d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander *(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii or other pacific islands such as Samoa and Guam.)*

    e.   White *(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe (including Spain), North Africa, or the Middle East.)*

    f.   I do not wish to share

Thank you. Your time and answers are greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX E: Implementation Analyses Technical Detail

E.1. Characteristics of Graduates Participating in Texas GEAR UP State Grant

Table E.1. Graduate Demographic Characteristics by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	Number of Graduates	Hispanic/Latino Graduates	Limited English Proficient
School H	287	96.2%	12.9%
School I	239	97.5%	5.0%
School J	135	45.9%	0.7%
School K	372	66.1%	16.4%
School L	93	49.5%	7.5%
School M	241	88.0%	4.6%
Overall	**1367**	**78.6%**	**9.4%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.

E.2. Graduation

Table E.2. Percentage of Students Who Graduated on Foundation High School Program with Endorsement or Distinguished Level of Achievement, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	Number of Students Who Graduated	% Graduated with Foundation High School Program and Endorsement	% Graduated with Foundation High School Program with Distinguished Level of Achievement*
School H	325	287	84.7%	84.7%
School I	264	239	90.8%	90.8%
School J	149	135	80.7%	80.0%
School K	417	372	87.6%	86.8%
School L	98	93	98.9%	97.8%
School M	254	241	88.0%	87.6%
Overall	**1507**	**1367**	**87.7%**	**87.3%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.
Note: Calculation of graduates does not include students who graduated summer 2018.
* Percentage of Graduated with Foundation High School Program and Endorsement or Foundation High School Program with Distinguished Level of Achievement was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 14.3$, $p < 0.001$.

Table E.3. Percentage of Grade 12 Students Who Graduated in Spring 2018, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	% of Students Who Graduated in Spring 2018
School H	325	88.3%
School I	264	90.5%
School J	149	90.6%
School K	417	89.2%
School L	98	94.9%
School M	254	94.9%
Overall	**1507**	**90.7%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.
Note: Calculation of graduates does not include students who graduated summer 2018.

Table E.4. Percentage of Graduates Who Graduated by an Individual Graduation Committee (IGC), Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	% Traditional Graduates	% IGC Graduates
School H	287	83.3%	16.7%
School I	239	91.2%	8.8%
School J	135	91.1%	8.9%
School K	372	89.2%	10.8%
School L	93	98.9%	1.1%
School M	241	98.8%	1.2%
Overall	**1367**	**90.9%**	**9.1%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.
Note: Calculation of graduates does not include students who graduated summer 2018.

E.3. College Credits Earned

Table E.5. Percentage of Students Who Earned College Credits through Dual Credit Courses and Advanced Placement (AP) exams, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	n	Completed a Dual Credit Course*	Earned a 3 or Above on an AP Test	Dual-credit or 3 or Above on an AP Test
School H	325	10.8%	4.3%	13.2%
School I	264	10.2%	1.9%	11.4%
School J	149	4.7%	1.3%	6.0%
School K	417	11.5%	0.7%	12.2%
School L	98	78.6%	0.0%	78.6%
School M	254	28.3%	6.3%	32.3%
Overall	**1507**	**17.7%**	**2.7%**	**19.4%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.
* Percentage of dual credit course completion was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 296.2$, *p* < 0.001.

E.4. College Readiness

Table E.6. Percentage of Students That Took the SAT or ACT in High School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	*n*	Took SAT or ACT in Grade 11	Took SAT or ACT in Grade 12	Took SAT or ACT in Grade 11 and/or 12
School H	325	10.2%	73.2%	83.4%
School I	264	11.7%	72.7%	84.5%
School J	149	70.5%	11.4%	81.9%
School K	417	4.6%	72.4%	77.0%
School L	98	11.2%	83.7%	94.9%
School M	254	17.3%	72.0%	89.4%
Overall	**1507**	**16.1%**	**67.3%**	**83.4%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.

Table E.7. Percentage of Students That Met Criterion on SAT and/or ACT, Year 6 (Grade 12)

School	Number of Students Who Took the SAT by Grade 12	SAT Total Mean Score	Met criterion on SAT	Number of Students Who Took the ACT by Grade 12	ACT Composite Mean Score	Met criterion on ACT	Met criterion on SAT and/or ACT*
School H	271	873	1.5%	0	-	-	1.5%
School I	223	855	1.8%	0	-	-	1.8%
School J	121	839	1.6%	59	16	2.5%	2.5%
School K	321	879	3.4%	49	18	0.6%	3.7%
School L	93	1012	14.0%	8	19	2.2%	14.0%
School M	227	929	7.9%	28	21	3.5%	7.9%
Overall	**1256**	**888**	**4.1%**	**144**	**18**	**1.2%**	**4.3%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.

Note: TEA determined the criterion for the SAT (a total score of 1180 or greater on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Mathematics sections) and ACT (a composite score of 24). Scores presented include the highest scores across Years 5 and 6 for SAT and ACT.

* Percentage of SAT/ACT Met Criteria was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 51.7$*, p* < 0.001.

Table E.8. **Students who Graduated College Ready by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)**

School	n	% of Grade 12 Students Who Were College Ready in Math and English*	Graduates	% of Graduates Who Were College Ready in Math and English
School H	325	12.9%	287	14.6%
School I	264	6.8%	239	7.5%
School J	149	10.1%	135	11.1%
School K	417	14.1%	372	15.9%
School L	98	37.8%	93	39.8%
School M	254	18.1%	241	19.1%
Overall	**1507**	**14.4%**	**1367**	**15.9%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through June 9, 2018.
Note: Students were determined to have been on-track to graduating college ready in Mathematics and English if they met criterion on the SAT, ACT, or TSIA (through June 1, 2019). Note the state's college ready criterion are as follows: TSIA: ELA score >=351, Mathematics >=350; ACT: English score >=19, Composite >=23, Math score >=19, Composite >=23, SAT in Grade 12: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 480, Math: 530; SAT in Grade 11: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing: 460, Math: 510.
* Percentage of students on track to graduate and college ready was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(5) = 61.4$, $p < 0.001$.

E.5. Postsecondary Education Enrollment

Table E.9. Percentage of Graduates Enrolled in Postsecondary Education by Four-Year or Two-Year Institution, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	n	% Enrolled in 4-Year Institution	% Enrolled in 2-Year Institution	% Enrolled in 4-Year or 2-Year Institution	% Not Enrolled/Not Located
School H	287	14.3%	32.4%	46.7%	53.3%
School I	239	13.8%	26.4%	40.2%	59.8%
School J	135	22.2%	4.4%	26.7%	73.3%
School K	372	20.7%	22.3%	43.0%	57.0%
School L	93	44.1%	29.0%	73.1%	26.9%
School M	241	22.0%	31.1%	53.1%	46.9%
Overall	**1367**	**20.1%**	**25.4%**	**45.5%**	**54.5%**

Source: National Student Clearinghouse (October 2018).
Note: These data represent the percentages of graduates that the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was able to find and track accordingly; it is possible that there were additional graduates who enrolled in a four-year or two-year school but who were not tracked by NSC.

Table E.10. Percentage of Graduates Enrolled in Postsecondary Education by Public or Private Institution, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	n	% Enrolled in Public Institution	% Enrolled in Private Institution
School H	287	44.9%	1.7%
School I	239	36.0%	4.2%
School J	135	24.4%	2.2%
School K	372	39.8%	3.2%
School L	93	73.1%	0.0%
School M	241	49.4%	3.7%
Overall	**1367**	**42.6%**	**2.9%**

Source: National Student Clearinghouse (October 2018).

E.6. Participation in Student Support Services

Table E.11. Percentage of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in Summer 2018, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	n	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Summer At Least Once	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Summer Only Once	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Summer Twice	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Summer Three Times	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Summer Four Times or More
School H	287	68.6%	27.9%	18.1%	11.1%	11.5%
School I	239	79.9%	7.9%	12.6%	22.2%	37.2%
School J	135	88.9%	6.7%	60.7%	9.6%	11.9%
School K	372	40.9%	37.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
School L	93	58.1%	52.7%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%
School M	241	71.8%	39.8%	24.9%	5.0%	2.1%
Overall	**1367**	**64.9%**	**28.7%**	**17.6%**	**8.0%**	**10.5%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019.
Note: Graduates met with College Preparation Advisors in person and virtually.

Table E.12. Methods Through Which Graduates Received Services in Summer 2018, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	n	% of Graduates Who Received Virtual Summer Services	% of Graduates Who Received In-Person Summer Services	% of Graduates Who Did Not Have A Reported Service Type
School H	287	57.8%	13.9%	18.1%
School I	239	72.0%	13.8%	24.7%
School J	135	77.8%	3.7%	7.4%
School K	372	4.6%	.8%	37.1%
School L	93	8.6%	0.0%	51.6%
School M	241	39.8%	11.2%	24.5%
Overall	**1367**	**41.3%**	**7.9%**	**26.8%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019.

Table E.13. Percentage of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in Fall 2018, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	n	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Fall At Least Once	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Fall Only Once	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Fall Twice	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Fall Three Times	% of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor in the Fall Four Times Or More
School H	287	34.8%	15.3%	12.5%	2.8%	4.2%
School I	239	72.0%	31.0%	21.8%	10.0%	9.2%
School J	135	50.4%	5.2%	45.2%	0.0%	0.0%
School K	372	17.7%	8.9%	8.6%	.3%	0.0%
School L	93	12.9%	9.7%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
School M	241	79.7%	25.3%	31.5%	1.7%	21.2%
Overall	**1367**	**44.6%**	**16.7%**	**19.0%**	**2.7%**	**6.2%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019.
Note: Graduates met with College Preparation Advisors in person and virtually.

Table E.14. Percentage of Graduates Who Met with a College Preparation Advisor and Reported Meeting with a Professor, Attending Tutoring, and/or Going to the Writing Center in Summer 2018, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

School	n	% of Graduates Who Met with a Professor	% of Graduates Who Attended Tutoring	% of Graduates Who Went to the Writing Center
School H	100	0.0%	2.0%	1.0%
School I	172	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%
School J	70	60.0%	5.7%	0.0%
School K	67	17.9%	25.4%	14.9%
School L	14	28.6%	35.7%	14.3%
School M	194	0.5%	1.0%	1.0%
Overall	**617**	**10.2%**	**5.5%**	**3.1%**

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019.
Note: The *n* includes only those graduates who were included in the GUIDES data based on their communications with their College Preparation Advisors.

E.7. Overall Implementation

Table E.15. Overview of Texas GEAR UP SG Implementation Strategies by School, Year 6 (Grade 12)

	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
Implementation Strategies						
Student Support Services: Counseling/Advising	X	X	X	X	X	X
Summer Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X
FAFSA Completion Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Number of Strategies Implemented (Out of 4)						
	4	4	4	4	4	4

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019; Spring 2018 interview data.

Note: An "X" indicates that a school reported implementing the strategy, although it does not capture the level or quality of implementation (such as the number of students served) for each strategy.

Table ES.4 includes indicators regarding whether each school has met or is on track to meet relevant project objectives in Year 7. All schools meet Project Objectives 4.2, 6.1, and 6.2, related to summer programming, retention rates, and college completion respectively. No schools met Project Objectives 5.2 and 5.3 which were related to SAT/ACT criterion and college readiness, respectively.

Table E.16. School Progress Meeting Project Objectives, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

Project Objectives	High School H	High School I	High School J	High School K	High School L	High School M
1.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of cohort students graduating on the Foundation High School Plan plus Endorsement or at the distinguished level of achievement, will meet or exceed the state average.[28]		X		X	X	X
2.3: By the end of the project's sixth year, at least 50% of cohort students will graduate with college credit earned by AP exam or through dual credit.					X	
4.1: By the end of the second year, at least 75% of the 8th grade students will be involved in a comprehensive mentoring, counseling, and/or tutoring program based on results of teacher/counselor input and diagnostic data.						X
4.2: Beginning in the second year, at least 30% of the students will be involved in summer programs and institutes designed to help them work at or above grade level, ease transitions, and increase college awareness.	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of students meeting criterion on the ACT/SAT will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.3: The number of students who graduate college ready in mathematics and English will meet or exceed the state average.						
5.4: The cohort completion rate will meet or exceed the state average.		X	X		X	X
5.5: More than 50% of cohort of students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.					X	X
6.1: The student retention rate for the second semester and the second year of college will meet or exceed the state average.	–	–	–	–	–	–
6.2: At the end of the project's seventh year, the number of students on track to complete college will exceed the average postsecondary completion rate.	–	–	–	–	–	–

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019 and Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: An "X" indicates that a school is making reasonable progress toward an objective, although it does not capture the completion or attainment of an objective. A " – " indicates that achievement of the objective could not be reliably determined. The full report includes additional details about progress—including successes achieved and challenges faced in implementing the grant in the final year.

---

[28] For additional information on the Foundation High School Plan and Texas high school graduation requirements, please see http://tea.texas.gov/graduation-requirements/hb5.aspx.

Table E.17. Summary Comparison of Year 5 (Grade 11), Year 6 (Grade 12), and Year 7 (Postsecondary) Implementation Data

Implementation Area	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Participation in Texas GEAR UP SG Student Support Services	93% of students participated.	94% of students participated.	Since fall 2018, 45% of graduates met with their College Preparation Advisor.
Student Completion of Courses with Potential to Earn College Credit (AP, Dual Credit, or College)	38% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 41% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 36% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.	27% of students were enrolled in advanced ELA/writing; 18% of students were enrolled in advanced science; 23% of students were enrolled in advanced social studies.	By the end of Year 6, 19% of Grade 12 students earned college credit through completing a dual credit course and/or earning a three or higher on an AP exam
Knowledge of and Academic Preparation for College	22% of students were on track to graduate college ready in mathematics and English	17% of students were on track to graduate college ready in mathematics and English	16% of Grade 12 students graduated college ready in mathematics and English.
Graduation on the Foundation High School Program	55% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	47% of surveyed students reported that they plan to graduate with a distinguished level of achievement.	87% of Grade 12 students graduated with a distinguished level of achievement.
Postsecondary Education Enrollment	57% of students expected to obtain a four-year degree or higher	39% of surveyed students had decided where to enroll in postsecondary education in fall 2018.	46% of graduates enrolled in postsecondary education after high school.

Source: Texas Education Agency, GEAR UP Integrated Data Entry System through February 28, 2019; Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018); National Student Clearinghouse (October 2018); Support Center Survey (Spring 2019).

APPENDIX F: Graduate Survey Analyses Technical Detail

F.1. Survey Administration, 2017–18

Table F.1. Skip Logic Questions Responsible for Determining Graduate Survey Pathway

Skip Logic Question
Please indicate your current educational status since completing high school.
Please select the reason(s) why you are not currently enrolled in postsecondary education. *(Select all that apply)*
How well do you think that high school prepared you for your first semester of postsecondary education? High school...
What are your plans for the spring? *(only for students who answered "I am not enrolled in postsecondary education" in question 1)*
What are your plans for the spring? *(only for students who answered "I am enrolled…" in question 1)*

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).

Table F.2. Excluded Student Surveys, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

Reason for Exclusion	Number of Student Surveys Excluded
Dissented to take the survey or did not answer to consent item	9
Completed less than 50% of survey (50% of survey items missing)	11
Total Excluded	20
Total Received	149
Total Remaining for Analysis	129

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).

F.2. Demographics

Table F.3. Student Survey/Graduate Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics: Year 1 (Grade 7)–Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	Year 1 (*n*=1,385)	Year 2 (*n*=1,295)	Year 3 (*n*=1,333)	Year 4 (*n*=1,132)	Year 5 (*n*=922)	Year 6 (n=747)	Year 7 (n=125)
Ethnicity/Race							
Asian	<1%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Black or African American	11%	7%	8%	10%	8%	14%	18%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	79%	81%	67%	70%	82%	75%	72%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	1%	0%
White	4%	3%	8%	6%	4%	6%	6%
Two or more races	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	2%	4%	12%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Gender							
Female	49%	48%	49%	49%	51%	56%	64%
Male	51%	52%	51%	51%	49%	44%	36%
Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch Participation*							
Yes	62%	67%	66%	--	--	--	--
No	17%	18%	20%	--	--	--	--
Not sure	22%	19%	14%	--	--	--	--
Language Spoken at Home							
English	66%	56%	55%	61%	68%	59%	63%
Spanish	27%	13%	13%	12%	2%	14%	10%
Both English and Spanish	7%	30%	31%	26%	28%	25%	25%
Other or Multiple	<1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Language Spoken with Friends							
English	90%	78%	78%	80%	50%	69%	84%
Spanish	3%	3%	3%	1%	9%	4%	0%
Both English and Spanish	6%	19%	18%	19%	39%	26%	14%
Other	<1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Spring 2013, Spring 2014, Spring 2015, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; the total *N* represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of students who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question.

* Free- or Reduced-Price Lunch Participation item not included in the Year 4, Year 5, Year 6, and Year 7 surveys.

Table F.4. Graduate Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	School H (*n*=27)	School I (*n*=14)	School J (*n*=15)	School K (*n*=39)	School L (*n*=11)	School M (*n*=17)	Unknown School (*n*=2)	Year 7 (n=125)
Ethnicity/Race								
Asian	0%	0%	0%	3%	9%	0%	0%	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	2%
Black or African American	0%	0%	60%	26%	27%	0%	0%	18%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	100%	93%	33%	69%	27%	88%	0%	72%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White	0%	0%	7%	0%	27%	12%	50%	6%
Two or more races	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Race unknown/Do not wish to share	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	1%
Gender								
Female	41%	57%	87%	80%	36%	65%	100%	64%
Male	59%	43%	13%	21%	64%	35%	0%	36%
Language Spoken at Home								
English	63%	71%	87%	44%	73%	71%	100%	63%
Spanish	7%	0%	0%	21%	0%	12%	0%	10%
Both English and Spanish	30%	29%	13%	31%	18%	18%	0%	25%
Other	0%	0%	0%	5%	9%	0%	0%	2%
Language Spoken with Friends								
English	82%	93%	100%	75%	73%	94%	100%	84%
Spanish	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Both English and Spanish	19%	7%	0%	23%	18%	6%	0%	14%
Other	0%	0%	0%	3%	9%	0%	0%	2%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; the total *N* represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of students who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question. The total column includes results from each of the six schools plus the results from those respondents who did not indicate from which Texas GEAR UP SG school they graduated (*n*=2).

Table F.5. Percentage of Respondents by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	(*n*=129)	%
School H	27	20.9%
School I	14	10.8%
School J	15	11.6%
School K	39	30.2%
School L	11	8.5%
School M	17	13.2%
Unknown School	6	4.7%
Total	129	100%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

F.3. Enrollment and Financial Aid

Table F.6. Graduate Reasons For Not Attending College, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

Please select the reason(s) why you are not currently enrolled in postsecondary education. (Select all that apply)	(*n*=23)	%
I wanted to wait before enrolling in college	11	48%
I wanted to work	9	39%
I needed to work	6	26%
I did not apply to any schools	6	26%
I have family commitments	2	9%
I decided to join the military	2	9%
My SAT scores and/or grades were not high enough	1	4%
I was not accepted into the school(s) I applied	0	0%
Other	6	26%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; the total N represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of students who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question.

Table F.7. Types of Financial Support Used For College by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	School H (*n*=21)	School I (*n*=12)	School J (*n*=13)	School K (*n*=33)	School L (*n*=9)	School M (*n*=14)	Unknown School (*n*=3)	Overall (*n*=105)*
I received a Pell Grant	62%	92%	39%	61%	56%	57%	33%	60%
I received one or more scholarships	86%	67%	54%	36%	78%	57%	33%	58%
I received federal student loan(s)	29%	58%	39%	49%	33%	43%	33%	42%
My family has helped me	29%	58%	31%	39%	44%	29%	67%	38%
I received other grants	29%	42%	8%	27%	56%	50%	67%	33%
I have a part-time or full-time job	19%	42%	54%	30%	0%	0%	33%	26%
I received a work-study position with the college	5%	8%	0%	12%	11%	29%	0%	11%
Other	5%	8%	8%	6%	0%	21%	0%	8%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; the total N represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of students who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question.
* The Total N includes three cases that did not indicate their Texas GEAR UP SG high school.

F.4. College Preparation Advisor Communication and Satisfaction

Table F.8. Frequency of Communication with College Preparation Advisors by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	School H (*n*=27)	School I (*n*=14)	School J (*n*=15)	School K (*n*=39)	School L (*n*=11)	School M (*n*=17)	Unknown School (*n*=4)	Overall (*n*=127)
N/A, I have not communicated with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor	19%	7%	0%	41%	46%	12%	50%	24%
1–3 times overall since June 2018	37%	43%	47%	41%	27%	41%	50%	40%
Once a month, more or less	15%	14%	20%	10%	18%	12%	0%	14%
2–3 times per month	19%	29%	20%	8%	0%	12%	0%	14%
Once a week or more	11%	7%	13%	0%	9%	24%	0%	9%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. The total column includes results from each of the six schools plus the results from those respondents who did not indicate from which Texas GEAR UP SG school they graduated (*n*=4).

Table F.9. Topics Discussed with College Preparation Advisors, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

What topics have you discussed with the College Preparation Advisor? (Select all that apply)		
Respondents Attending College	**(*n*=88)**	**%**
FAFSA	67	76%
College Life (e.g.: work/life balance, living in a dorm, making new friends, etc.)	52	59%
Course Schedule	45	51%
College Academics	44	50%
Financial Aid	43	49%
Tutoring/Mentoring	25	28%
Transferring	11	13%
Other	6	7%
Respondents Not Attending College	**(*n*=7)**	**%**
How to apply/enroll in a postsecondary education	4	57%
FAFSA and/or financial aid	3	43%
Personal Life (e.g.: work/life balance, living situation, making new friends, etc.)	3	43%
Job/Employment	1	14%
Military	1	14%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding; the total N represents the total number of survey respondents, not the number of students who answered each individual survey item in this table. The percentages in the table reflect the percentage of respondents who answered each question.

Table F.10. Levels of Satisfaction with College Preparation Advisors and Texas GEAR UP SG by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

What is your level of satisfaction with…	School H (*n*=27)	School I (*n*=14)	School J (*n*=15)	School K (*n*=39)	School L (*n*=11)	School M (*n*=17)	Unknown School (*n*=2)	Overall (*n*=125)
The interaction/communication with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor?*								
Very Satisfied	67%	57%	47%	18%	9%	41%	0%	38%
Satisfied	26%	29%	47%	56%	55%	59%	0%	45%
Dissatisfied	7%	14%	7%	13%	18%	0%	0%	10%
Very Dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%	13%	18%	0%	100%	7%
Mean Level of Satisfaction**	3.59	3.43	3.40	2.79	2.55	3.41	1.00	3.14
What is your level of satisfaction with…	School H (*n*=27)	School I (*n*=14)	School J (*n*=15)	School K (*n*=39)	School L (*n*=11)	School M (*n*=17)	Unknown School (*n*=2)	Overall (*n*=125)
Texas GEAR UP SG overall?*								
Very Satisfied	85%	64%	53%	44%	18%	47%	0%	54%
Satisfied	7%	36%	40%	46%	36%	53%	0%	35%
Dissatisfied	7%	0%	7%	5%	36%	0%	0%	7%
Very Dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%	5%	9%	0%	100%	4%
Mean Level of Satisfaction****	3.78	3.64	3.47	3.28	2.64	3.47	1.00	3.38

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. The total column includes results from each of the six schools plus the results from those respondents who did not indicate from which Texas GEAR UP SG school they graduated (n=2). The scale used in determining mean levels of satisfaction include: *1 – Very Dissatisfied, 2 – Dissatisfied, 3 – Satisfied, and 4 – Very Satisfied.*

* Student levels of satisfaction with their interaction with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor differed significantly across schools r: $\chi^2(18)57.1=$, *p*<.01;

** Students' mean level of satisfaction with the interaction/communication with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor differed significantly across schools: $F(6, 118) = 7.9$, $p < 0.001$;

*** Student levels of satisfaction with Texas GEAR UP SG overall differed significantly across schools: $\chi^2(18)=84.9$, *p*<.001.

**** Students' mean level of satisfaction with Texas GEAR UP SG overall differed significantly across schools: $F(6, 118) = 8.4$, $p < 0.001$.

F.5. Texas GEAR UP SG Cohort Postsecondary Progress

Table F.11. Graduate Perceptions of Their Preparedness for Postsecondary Education by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)*

How well do you think high school prepared you for your first semester of postsecondary education?	School H (*n*=21)	School I (*n*=12)	School J (*n*=13)	School K (*n*=33)	School L (*n*=9)	School M (n=14)	Unknown School (*n*=4)	Overall (*n*=106)
Prepared me well	24%	0%	31%	6%	0%	7%	0%	11%
Mostly prepared me	33%	42%	54%	18%	67%	43%	0%	37%
Somewhat prepared me	33%	42%	8%	52%	22%	29%	50%	36%
Did not prepare me at all	10%	17%	8%	24%	11%	21%	50%	16%
Mean Level of Student Preparedness	2.71	2.25	3.08	2.06	2.56	2.36	1.50	2.43

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018).
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. The total column includes results from each of the six schools plus the results from those respondents who did not indicate from which Texas GEAR UP SG school they graduated (*n*=4). The scale used in determining mean levels of satisfaction include: *1 – Did not prepare me at all, 2 – Somewhat prepared me, 3 –mostly prepared me, and 4 – Prepared me well.*

* Student preparedness was significantly different across schools: $\chi^2(15)=25.7$, *p*<.05. Students' self-reported mean level of student preparedness differed significantly across the schools with a GEAR UP College Preparation Advisor: $F(5, 96) = 3.3$, $p < 0.01$.

Table F.12. Graduates' Plans for the Spring Semester by School, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

What are your plans for the spring?	School H	School I	School J	School K	School L	School M	Unknown School	Overall
Respondents Attending College	**(*n*=21)**	**(*n*=12)**	**(*n*=13)**	**(*n*=33)**	**(*n*=9)**	**(*n*=14)**	**(*n*=4)**	**(*n*=106)**
I plan to continue to be enrolled at my current school	100%	92%	100%	94%	89%	86%	75%	94%
I plan to enroll in a different school	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	7%	0%	2%
I do not plan to enroll in any college in spring 2019	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
I am unsure of my plans for the spring	0%	8%	0%	3%	11%	7%	25%	4%
Respondents Not Attending College	**(*n*=6)**	**(*n*=2)**	**(*n*=2)**	**(*n*=6)**	**(*n*=2)**	**(*n*=3)**	**(*n*=2)**	**(*n*=23)**
I plan to enroll in college for the first time	33%	50%	50%	50%	50%	67%	0%	48%
I do not plan to enroll in any postsecondary education in spring 2019	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%
I am unsure of my plans for the spring	33%	50%	50%	50%	50%	33%	100%	43%

Source: Texas GEAR UP SG Graduate Survey (Fall 2018). The total column includes results from each of the six schools plus the results from those respondents who did not indicate from which Texas GEAR UP SG school they graduated. For respondents currently attending college and for respondents not attending college, this is *n*=4 and *n*=2, respectively.
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Table F.13. Graduate Enrollment in Postsecondary Education, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	n	Did you enroll in a college, university, career or technical program the summer or fall after high school	Are you currently enrolled in a college, university, career or technical program?
School H	68	83.8%	79.4%
School I	60	88.3%	78.3%
School J	18	77.8%	66.7%
School K	59	93.2%	84.7%
School L	24	87.5%	87.5%
School M	74	93.2%	93.2%
Overall	**303**	**88.8%**	**83.5%**

Source: Support Center Survey (Spring 2019).

Table F.14. Percentage of Graduates On Track to Complete College, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	n	Strongly Directed	Moderately Directed	Not Directed
School H	68	64.7%	13.2%	22.1%
School I	60	53.3%	23.3%	23.3%
School J	18	50.0%	27.8%	22.2%
School K	59	71.2%	15.3%	13.6%
School L	24	62.5%	20.8%	16.7%
School M	74	74.3%	18.9%	6.8%
Overall	**303**	**65.0%**	**18.5%**	**16.5%**

Source: Support Center Survey (Spring 2019).

Table F.15. Percentage of Graduates Who Intend to Complete College, Year 7 (Postsecondary)

	n	Are you on track to get a 2.0 and above GPA?	Are you on track to take more than 15 credits?	Do you intend to achieve a college, university, or career and technical degree, certificate, or certification?
School H	68	79.4%	72.1%	89.7%
School I	60	78.3%	60.0%	83.3%
School J	18	72.2%	61.1%	94.4%
School K	59	89.8%	78.0%	93.2%
School L	24	83.3%	66.7%	95.8%
School M	74	91.9%	78.4%	100.0%
Overall	**303**	**84.2%**	**71.3%**	**92.4%**

Source: Support Center Survey (Spring 2019).