

University of South Carolina
FY 2024 GEAR UP State Grant Proposal
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Project Abstract

The University of South Carolina (USC) in Columbia proposes GEAR UP South Carolina (GUSC), a seven-year project that will serve more than 21,868 students in 36 middle schools and 27 high schools in 7 districts located in every region of the state. In more than half of the originating middle grades schools, both the poverty index and the percentage of students eligible

for free or reduced lunch exceeds 75%. The proposed program addresses all four Competitive Preference Priorities (CPPS) – Successful State GEAR UP Grant Prior to August 14, 2008 (CPP 1); Increasing Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion and Post-Enrollment Success (CPP2); Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs (CPP3); and Moderate Evidence (CPP4). GUSC will employ a hybrid model and serve an estimated total of 14,848 cohort students in Grades 6 and 7 who will receive targeted services for seven years along with an estimated 7,020 priority students in Grade 12 who will receive just-in-time services, such as financial aid counseling, college match advising, summer bridge programming, and college transition assistance along with assistance in their first year of college. The project design employs a collective-impact, place-based approach with the full support of the USC system, LEA partners, and organizations including the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, the SC Center of Excellence for College and Career Readiness, OnTRACK Greenville, Beaufort Digital Corridor, and the Center for Educational Partnerships. The overarching purpose for the project is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. To achieve this aim, the project planning committee has identified four goals, each with detailed objectives and quantifiable performance measures. GUSC will (1) increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education for GUSC students; (2) increase the rate of high school graduation and preparation for postsecondary education for GUSC students; (3) increase educational expectations and knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation, and financing among GEAR UP students and their families; and (4) increase the preparation of the project teachers and staff to teach and serve GUSC students. GUSC services will include:

- Early warning and progress monitoring systems to ensure a targeted, data- driven approach to intervention planning.
- Mentoring (including near-peer mentors), mental health supports, and interventions to improve life and career characteristics (e.g., self-direction, persistence, interpersonal skills).
- Career exploration and awareness, entrepreneurship, and workplace skills engagements to support goal setting and planning.
- Rigorous, advanced academic preparation (e.g., dual enrollment, AP, IB, AVID).
- Financial literacy, college/career planning, job readiness, entrepreneurship, and soft skills for the workplace.

- FAFSA information and training for both students and caregivers.
- Tours and postsecondary options seminars for students and parents with technical schools, colleges, HBCUs, and other postsecondary training programs.
- Professional development focused on (a) improving rigor in reading and mathematics; (b) preparing students for college admission; and (c) integrating mental health supports, career exploration and awareness, workplace skills, and entrepreneurship across the curriculum.

Montana GEAR UP Grant Proposal Abstract

Applicant Name: Board of Regents, Montana

Budget: \$4,250,000 per year for seven years for a total of \$29,750,000

Project's Goals and Performance Measures:

Goal 1: *Performance Measure 1.1* Increase the percentage of MTGU students who will complete Algebra I or its equivalent by the end of ninth grade. *Performance Measure 1.2* Increase the percent of MTGU 8th graders who are proficient on the state math and ELA assessment. *Performance Measure 1.3* The percent of MTGU high school students who do not fail any courses

Goal 2: *Performance Measure 2.1* Increase graduation rates of MTGU students from high school. *Performance Measure 2.2.* Increase postsecondary enrollment rates of MTGU students. *Performance Measure 2.3* Increase the number of MTGU students who are retained from year one to year two in IHEs. *Performance Measure 2.4* Increase the number of MTGU students who complete dual enrollment or advance placement coursework.

Goal 3: *Performance Measure 3.1* Increase the number of MTGU seniors who complete the FAFSA *Performance Measure 3.2* Increase the number of students postsecondary knowledge *Performance Measure 3.3* *Performance Measure* Increase the number of families/parents engaging in MTGU activities.

Number of Students Served

Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6 Year 7

4404 4404 4404 4404 4404 4404 4404

Target Schools: Arlee Public Schools, Box Elder Public Schools, Browning Public Schools, Hardin Public Schools, Libby Public Schools, Lodge Grass Public Schools, Pryor Public Schools, Rocky Boy Public Schools, Saint Ignatius Public Schools, Saint Regis Public Schools, Superior Public Schools, and Thompson Falls Public Schools.

First Year Service Partners: Montana University System, Blackfeet Community College, and Salish Kootenai College.

Major Fiscal Partners: MT GEARUP schools Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education,

Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Postsecondary Educational Opportunities Council, Montana University System

Additional Program Partners: School Administrators of Montana, Montana College Attainment Network, Montana State University, and University of Montana, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships/CCREC.

Goal 1 Services: Algebra I by end of 9th grade, dual enrollment & A.P. enrollment, academically enriching summer programs, STEM, and professional development.

Goal 2 Services: Tutoring, mentoring, MUS College Access Arc of Events, First Year Services, and campus exploration opportunities.

Goal 3 Services: FAFSA completion events, career fairs, student/family/educator surveys, and professional development.

State: Illinois

Grantee: Illinois Student Assistance Commission

Contact Information: Kimberly Korando

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Year One Funding: \$5,000,000

Illinois GEAR UP (ILGU), charged by Governor Pritzker, will serve students through a hybrid model that includes an average of 8344 cohort and priority students annually in 10 of Illinois's neediest schools located in rural communities across the state. ILGU is housed within the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, identified as the applicant agency, to provide services to students attending **Centralia, Dongola, Gillespie, Griggsville, Hoopston, LaSalle, Madison, Milford, Rock Falls, Urbana, Vandalia and Wabash school districts.**

Design and Services: ILGU activities and services, delivered over a 7-year project period, are designed to increase the attitudes and aspirations of cohort and priority students that lead to increased postsecondary enrollment. To influence this decision-making process such that students intend to and then follow through with enrolling in, financing, and succeeding in college, the ILGU program will use the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)** as the design approach. Research-based services have been identified to produce multiple pathways to enrollment, persistence, and completion of postsecondary education for students. Services include: Developmental curriculum, academic advising, financial aid information, FAFSA completion workshops, rigorous and challenging curricula, professional development, career exploration, college visits, parental involvement, student workshops, transition programs, and tutoring and test preparation.

Partners: ILGU is informed by emerging research on best educational practices, rigorous evaluation, and productive, strategic collaborations with **National partners:** Vela Institute, **State Partners:** IL Board of Higher Education, IL Community College Board, IL Education and Career Success Network; and **Local Partners:** LEAs and 2 and 4-year colleges and universities.

Outcomes: Through the identified services, ILGU will achieve the objectives of the GEAR UP program: (1) to increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students; (2) to increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education of participating students; and (3) to increase education expectations for participating students and increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

Evaluation: The methods of the ILGU evaluation offer an opportunity for partner school districts, the state of IL, and the U. S. Department of Education to better understand postsecondary enrollment and success, as well as the GEAR UP services associated with these outcomes. Distinct to this project is the opportunity to determine the impact of formative, data-driven services delivered under a model of Theory of Planned Behavior. These data will enable continuous assessment of GEAR UP services and how they influence project outcomes related to academic growth, high school graduation, and postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion.