



Policy Objective 1: Increase the number of college-ready Kentuckians entering postsecondary education.

Strategy 1.1: Align K-12, adult education, and postsecondary education standards, curriculum, and assessment processes as directed by Senate Bill 1 (2009).

- Council staff convened a series of work team meetings to create a broad-based understanding of the progression and alignment of the English literacy and mathematics content standards from elementary to high school to postsecondary introductory coursework. **Science faculty began meeting in March to align expectations** for students entering college credit-bearing science courses.
- The Council continues to provide information about **evidence-based college readiness programs**, bridge programming and services supporting high school and adult students entering college underprepared for credit-bearing coursework.
- The Unified Strategy for College and Career Readiness is being implemented collaboratively at the K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions. The state goals are to reduce the need for remediation of recent high school graduates by 50 percent by 2014 and to increase college completion rates of students entering without being prepared for credit-bearing coursework. A Council staff member is the Kentucky higher education lead on **multi-state assessment consortia teams to build formative and summative assessments** around the common core standards and to ensure alignment to postsecondary introductory course placement expectations. Information about assessment development is available at the PARCC and Smarter Balance assessment consortia websites (www.parcc.org and www.smarterbalanced.org).
- The College Admission Regulation, **13 KAR 2:020, has been revised to include the set of college readiness indicators and learning outcomes** used by all public postsecondary institutions. Work teams consisting of K-12 and postsecondary content area experts established the common placement assessments, benchmark scores, and learning outcomes for readiness. These indicators are aligned to the common core standards for college readiness and have been adopted for accountability purposes by both the Kentucky Department of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education. The learning outcomes established are being used for developmental, transitional, and supplemental courses and bridge programming.

Strategy 1.2: Support effective intervention strategies for underprepared students prior to postsecondary admission.

- Beginning fall 2011, all high school seniors not meeting ACT benchmarks have access to **intervention programs or courses**. Middle school transitional programming will be available for all students not meeting EXPLORE benchmarks in fall 2012. The course frameworks for all transitional programming were developed by over 100 K-12 teachers and postsecondary faculty. Attached to the transitional courses are college placement exams recognized by every public postsecondary institution. Students successfully completing the transitional courses or other intervention programs and then scoring at pre-defined college readiness levels are guaranteed placement into college credit-bearing courses. Kentucky is working with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to develop senior year transitional courses and related curricula and assessments that will be used across states in the region.
- **Eight educational leadership networks** have been established to support the full implementation of the Kentucky Academic Content Standards. Each includes two full-time postsecondary faculty who work with KDE leadership and school leaders to provide professional development training on the standards and related assessments for teachers and school leaders.
- In 2011 the Council received federal grant funding for **GEAR UP Kentucky 3.0 (2011-2017)**, which will help students plan for, apply to, and pay for college. The program serves 29 middle schools in 22 Kentucky counties and their corresponding high schools. Gear Up works with schools to support teachers, counselors, and school leaders to give them the tools they need to successfully prepare students for college and careers.
- **Five GEAR UP school districts were selected to receive enhanced services** to build and sustain a college-going culture. GUK 3.0 in conjunction with the National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA-an arm of ACT) and the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is partnering with these districts to create a plan for developing and maintaining a college-going culture in their schools. These providers will create profiles of the educational practices in each of these districts to be used to inform planning and identify leverage points on which to build new practices. GUK 3.0 then provides customized professional development based on the data collected, synthesized, and reported to these districts.
- Over 3,500 GEAR UP Kentucky **seventh grade students recently took the EXPLORE assessment**, which is a part of the ACT College and Career Readiness System. This assessment is a first step in GEAR UP's longitudinal approach to college and career planning. The assessment serves as a part of the benchmarking process used to establish a baseline for a student's overall academic readiness and for making decisions about intervention services.

Strategy 1.3: Strengthen the college-going and completion culture in Kentucky.

- A **College and Career Readiness Advising Toolkit** for all middle and high school teachers was developed and implemented in 2012. The toolkit has been used extensively in the college readiness **Operation Preparation** initiative supported by K-12 and postsecondary education. The focus is on the skills and attitudes needed to enter college or the 21st century workplace prepared.
- In conjunction with KDE, GEAR UP Kentucky 3.0 published a special edition of the **GEAR UP Gazette**, a four-page insert in the Lexington Herald-Leader through a partnership with its Newspapers in Education program. The January 24th issue featured the Operation Preparation (academic advising) and the College Goal Sunday (financial aid) initiatives. The Gazette was provided in every issue of the newspaper statewide and distributed to all GEAR UP schools.
- Students are encouraged to take advantage of AP, IB, dual credit, and early college opportunities. In fall 2011 the Council convened a dual credit work team to create a chart standardizing the awarding of AP and CLEP credit across public postsecondary institutions. A **dual credit policy draft** was created by the work team and is going through the review process for implementation in 2013.
- **Summer bridge programming**, offered on most public postsecondary campuses, builds the needed skills and attitudes for success for students entering college not yet prepared for credit-bearing coursework. Student mentoring, proactive academic advising, and tutoring are essential student success components of these programs that have demonstrated success in closing the gaps for first-generation students and other diverse student populations.
- GEAR UP-2-Success is one of the five primary strategies for supporting program participants. **GEAR UP-2-Success is a comprehensive school advising and assessment model** based on individual student academic and career goals that provides appropriate intervention programs and instructional supports. Student progress is monitored through the Individual Learning Plan, which includes the EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT assessments as measures of college readiness. GEAR UP-2-Success provides a systematic process for schools to adopt and use in helping students develop the knowledge, skills, intellectual habits, and attitudes necessary to be successful in college and career.