

## Introduction

Authorized by Congress in 1998, GEAR UP is a competitive federal grant program designed to increase the high school graduation and college-going rates of students from low-income backgrounds. In 2018, the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) was awarded a seven-year, \$24.5 million grant to serve at least 10,000 middle and high school students in 12 school districts. This is the fourth GEAR UP state grant that has been administered through CPE.

The governance of GEAR UP KY resides with the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, and this compilation of policies and procedures adopted by GEAR UP KY is ancillary to the Council on Postsecondary Education Employee Manual (available in the KyGEARUP Microsoft Teams site)

This playbook is **not** an all-encompassing document and may not cover every situation or circumstance. By design this resource will remain a living and ever-evolving document. Updates and additions should be expected. GEAR UP KY maintains an updated copy of this team playbook on the GEAR UP KY Teams site.

If a conflict exists between information in this playbook and the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education Employee Handbook, Kentucky Revised Statute, Kentucky Administrative Regulation, Program Officer Guidance, OMB Circulars, Education Department General Administrative Regulations, Uniform Guidance, or federal law/regulation, the agency, state, or federal guidance will govern.

If an employee has questions about any provisions, s/he should contact his/her immediate supervisor or the Executive Director.

Approved,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kimberly Drennon", is written over a horizontal line.

Executive Director,  
GEAR UP Kentucky



## Project Overview

In October 2018, the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) was awarded a seven-year, \$24.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to administer the GEAR UP Kentucky (GUK) project. This is the fourth GEAR UP state grant administered through CPE; the first was awarded in 2000. Authorized by Congress in 1998, GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is a competitive federal grant program designed to increase the high school graduation and college-going rates of students from low-income backgrounds.

## Who We Serve

The vision of GEAR UP Kentucky is “Every student prepared for postsecondary success.” During the seven years of the grant, GEAR UP Kentucky (GUK) will serve a minimum of 10,000 students in 12 school districts across Kentucky. In addition to delivering full services to two consecutive cohorts of 7<sup>th</sup> graders through their senior year in high school (GUK Full Service Cohorts), GUK will serve the senior class in participating high schools every year of the grant (GUK Priority Service Cohorts), providing services from the beginning of their senior year through the end of the freshman year in college.

GEAR UP Kentucky is providing services in the following school districts: Bath County, Bourbon County, Bracken County, Covington Independent, Fleming County, Frankfort Independent, Marion County, Mason County, Mercer County, Paris Independent, Pendleton County, and Robertson County. In order to participate in GUK, each of these districts met school selection criteria, including having 51% or more students who are free/reduced lunch eligible (based on 7<sup>th</sup> grade class at time of application).

## What We Do:

During its 2018-2025 grant cycle, GEAR UP Kentucky (GUK) is committed to helping create long-term cultural change in the 12 school districts in which GUK staff will be working. GUK is providing three categories of services in each district: direct services for students and families, school support services, and statewide and community services. These services are designed to improve the **Financial, Academic, Cultural, Emotional, and Social (FACES)** readiness of students for postsecondary success.

## The Four Pillars of Student Success

GUK services are strategically aligned to the Four Pillars of Student Success, a theoretical framework used to engage, develop, and mobilize students and their key influencers in pursuit of student success. The interconnectivity of these four key influencers – SELF (student), FAMILY, INSTITUTION, and COMMUNITY – form the foundation of GEAR UP Kentucky’s theoretical framework. This framework is referred to as the “Four Pillars of Student Success” (Four Pillars). GEAR UP Kentucky services and strategies are strategically aligned to the Four Pillars to ensure all key influencers are mobilized toward a common goal of student success.

## Self Pillar

GUK’s evidence-based strategies for students include:

- **Essential Skills and College Transition Curricula:** At each grade level, GUK offers a college and career readiness curricula focused on social-emotional skills, academic discipline, career exploration, and financial literacy. Full Service Cohort students receive the NCCEP College and Career Club curricula; Priority Service Cohort students receive the GEAR UP-4-Success curricula.
- **Advising:** GUK staff collaborate with schools to provide individualized advising called Advising for Postsecondary Preparation and Success (APPS) for all students throughout the year focused on supporting college knowledge, college match and fit, and academic planning. Seniors and their families participate in FAFSA Frenzy and College Application Campaign events to receive additional hands-on assistance with completing critical college admissions steps, including applications for college and financial aid. GEAR UP Go Day is the culminating senior event to celebrate the transition of students to college and welcome them to the GEAR UP Scholars program (services and support during 1<sup>st</sup> year of postsecondary education).

- **Assessments:** To inform advising and instruction, GUK Full Service Cohort students receive the College Readiness Equipped Tool (CERT) assessment at least twice a year in participating schools to track their academic readiness for college. Participating high schools may administer CERT to 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> graders and any 12<sup>th</sup> graders who were near benchmark on the 11<sup>th</sup> grade ACT. The CERT platform also includes student remediation tools and teacher instructional tools to help students improve in specific academic areas.
- **Campus Experiences:** GUK provides multiple opportunities for students to experience a college campus, including college tours during the school year and summer programs on campus. Summer programs include:
  - *GUK Summer STEM Jr. Academies:* In partnership with Texas Instruments and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, GUK hosts free, 4-day Summer STEM Jr. Academies on a local community and technical college campus for GUK middle school students. Utilizing Texas Instrument’s TI-Nspire technology, the Jr. Academy will help students learn STEM principles through game-based individual and team activities and coding projects, and introduce them and their families to STEM career pathways, the Kentucky Work Ready Scholarship, and academic programs available at their local KCTCS campus.
  - *GUK Summer Academies:* For GUK high school students, GUK hosts free, three-week residential Summer Academies in partnership with Kentucky public universities. College campuses across the state will provide an intensive exploration of academic disciplines and college life. Students will attend classes with college faculty and live in college dorms, and the opportunity to earn college credit will be offered on some campuses.
- **Leadership Development:** GUK engages peers as motivators and catalysts for positive change through the following strategies:
  - *Peer teaching* – GUK engages students to routinely lead classroom instruction and provide content support for their peers throughout the seven-year curricula.
  - *Peer mentoring* – GUK offers participating students a series of structured mentoring activities between targeted cohort students and trained GUK high school seniors and/or college students to engage near-peer relationships in a customized curricula focused on building resilience.
  - *Peer tutoring* – GUK provides regular tutoring sessions provided to targeted cohort students based on specific academic needs and using trained peers as tutors with classroom supervision.
  - *GUK Student Ambassadors* – GUK provides leadership training and support for student-led, school-based teams to design and execute \$100 Solution community-service projects.

## Family Pillar

Each student (self) strategy includes *parallel family activities and resources* to empower parents and guardians to fully support the aspirations and academic progress of their children. Family activities and resources include:

- **Communications and Outreach:** GUK provides resources and information for Full Service Cohort families aligned with student curricula via text and social media.
- **Advising and Support:** GUK provides college planning resources and social emotional support text outreach for Priority Service Cohort families and family engagement in school-based senior events that provide hands-on assistance to complete financial aid and college applications.

- **Campus Experiences:** GUK offers families various opportunities to visit college campuses with their students, including school-based campus visits and orientations and Family Days at GUK Summer Academies.
- **Leadership Development:** GUK cultivates and supports local and statewide networks of family members who partner with school and program staff to mobilize and engage other families in supporting students' success in their school and the larger community through the Family Ambassadors Program. GUK also offers parallel family resources for participants in GUK peer mentoring programs.

### Institution Pillar

GUK is focused on increasing the effectiveness of school and district professionals to develop and sustain a college-going culture through the following strategies:

- **Professional Development:** GUK offers a range of professional development and networking opportunities for participating schools including:
  - *Teacher/Leader Academy:* Biannually in the summer, GUK hosts a series of multi-day, regional professional development workshops for core content teachers and school leaders to explore and develop rigorous instructional approaches in English, math, science, and computer science courses.
  - *Needs-based professional development:* GUK provides schools annual funds for local professional development based on demonstrated need and aligned to GUK's mission and objectives.
- **Leadership Development:** Each GUK school superintendent will have an opportunity to participate in the National Council for Community and Education Partnership's District Leadership Institute, a national innovative 10-month program focused on creating and sustaining the college-going culture in GUK districts.
- **Peer Learning Communities:** GUK provides multiple opportunities for school leaders and teachers to learn from each other including an annual convening of GUK superintendents and principals at the annual Institute.
- **Assessments and Technology Training:** To support technology use in the classroom and expand exposure to STEM academic content, GUK equips two classrooms in each participating high school with classroom technology from Texas Instruments and provides training and in-classroom coaching for teachers to ensure successful implementation. Additionally, all GUK schools will receive technical assistance and professional development in effective use of the CERT to improve rigor in the classroom, highlight professional development needs, structure relevant interventions, and monitor student progress.

### Community Pillar

GUK employs the following strategies in statewide and community services:

- **Statewide Communications Campaign:** GUK raises awareness of the value, options, and steps to college readiness through a statewide outreach campaign. Statewide delivery of student-centered messages (broadcast, online, and social media) occurs through partnerships with the Kentucky Broadcasters' Association (television and radio), and KnowHow2GOKy (online).
- **Partnership Development:** Through various initiatives, GUK will take a leadership role in improving communication, collaboration, and professional development among college and career professionals, programs, and proponents across the state through the convening and facilitation of the Kentucky College and Career Connection Coalition (KY3C).

## GUK TEAM PLAYBOOK

# Overview of GEAR UP Kentucky

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- **Statewide Institute:** GUK hosts an annual Institute for a College-Going Culture statewide conference which brings together the diverse voices and perspectives of all GUK stakeholders (students, families, and school personnel) to explore what it truly takes to ensure students are prepared for success in postsecondary education and/or the workforce – academically, financially, culturally, socially, and emotionally. GUK districts are asked to send teams of ten school and district staff/leaders to participate.
- **Leadership Development:** In addition to locally-driven GUK Student and Parent Ambassador Teams, GUK will elevate the voices and experiences of GUK students and families through the FACES of GEAR UP storytelling campaign.



## **Mission and Vision**

### **Vision Statement**

The vision of GEAR UP Kentucky is “Every Student Prepared for Postsecondary Success.”

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of GEAR UP Kentucky is to create a sustainable college-going culture in Kentucky schools with a high percentage of students from low-income backgrounds.

## Goals and Objectives

GUK will implement a multi-faceted evaluation of project objectives using widely recognized and accepted benchmarks. Data are collected from direct-service providers: the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority, Kentucky Center for Statistics, and through local, state, and national data-sharing agreements. The core of the GUK evaluation program consists of 15 general objectives derived directly from the three national GUK goals as follows:

### **NATIONAL GEAR UP GOAL 1: Increase academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education.**

*Corresponding GUK Objectives:*

- Improve individual student performance on college readiness assessments.
- Improve in overall student performance on annual college readiness assessments.
- Reduce the need for remediation in postsecondary education.
- Increase participation in individualized student advising in high school.
- Increase participation in individualized student advising in college.

### **NATIONAL GEAR UP GOAL 2: Increase high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment rates.**

*Corresponding GUK Objectives:*

- Improve 9<sup>th</sup> grade completion rate.
- Improve mathematics completion rate.
- Improve high school completion rate.
- Improve college enrollment rate.

### **NATIONAL GOAL 3: Increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.**

*Corresponding GUK Objectives:*

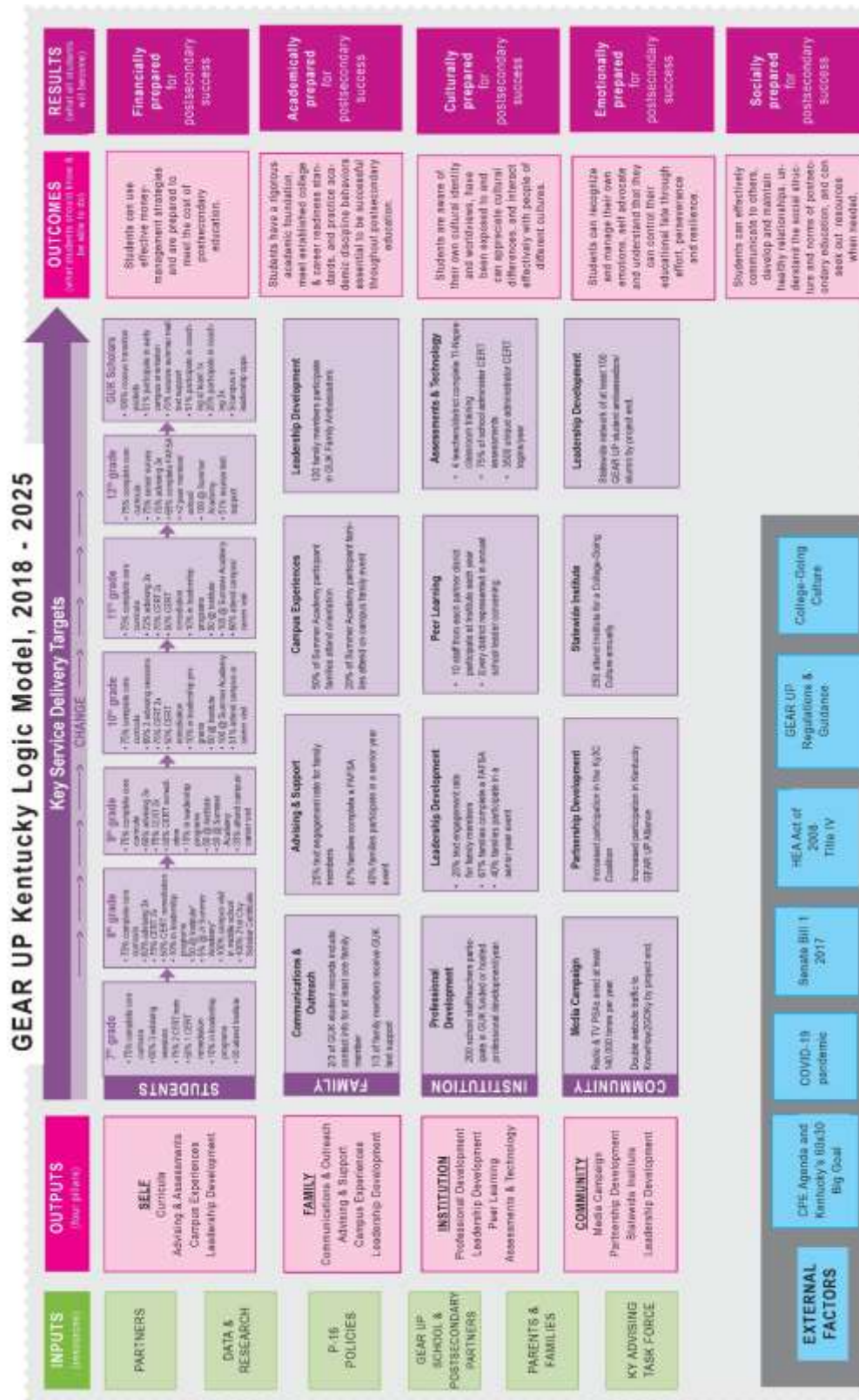
- Improve FAFSA completion rate.
- Increase college application rate.
- Increase competency in financial literacy in middle school.
- Increase competency in financial literacy in high school.
- Improve educational expectations.
- Improve knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing.

# GUK TEAM PLAYBOOK

## Overview of GEAR UP Kentucky

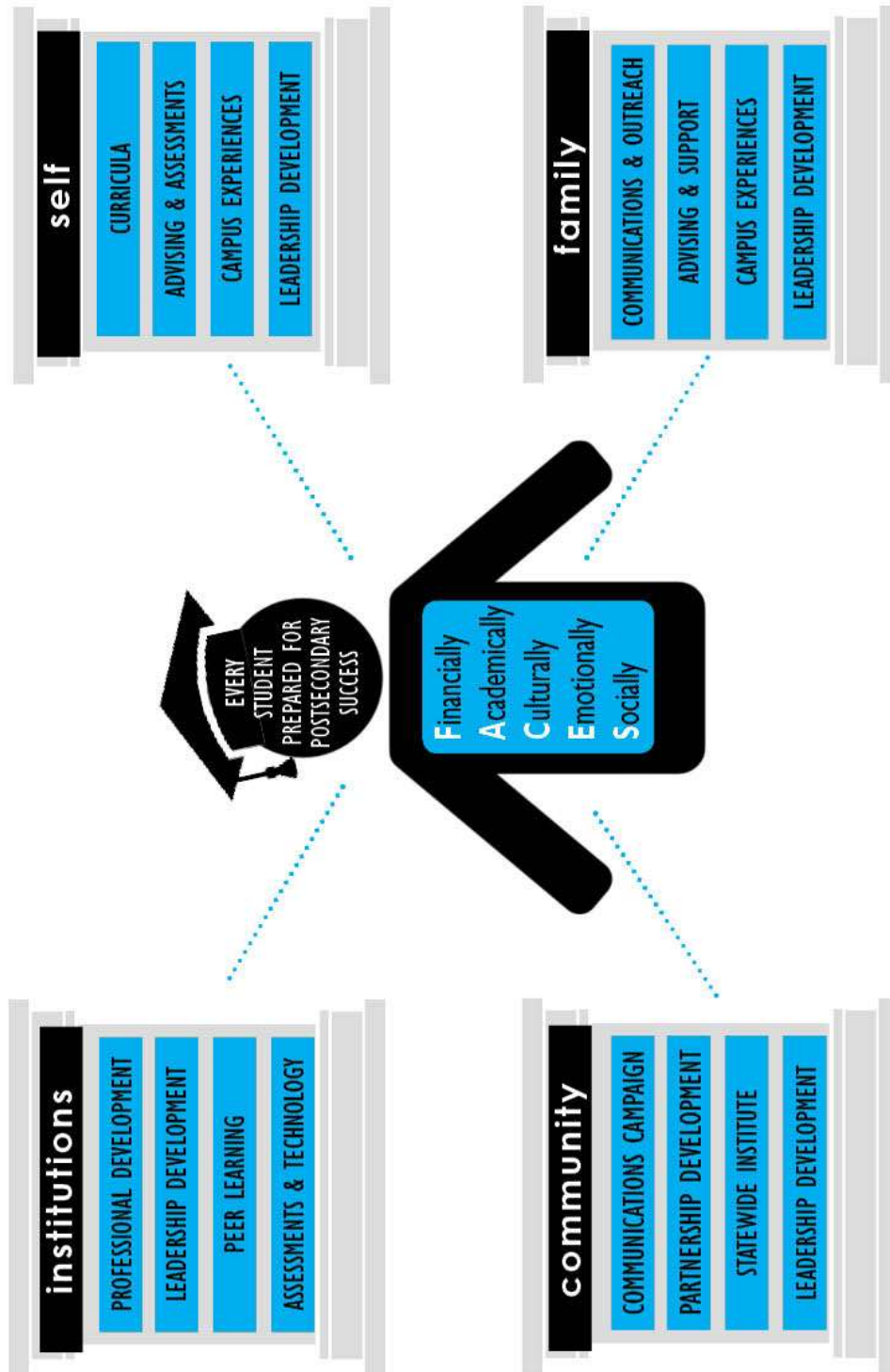


### Logic Model





Four Pillars and FACES of GEAR UP





## Who We Serve

### School Selection Criteria

The selection of a school was first based on the primary GEAR UP criterion that at least 50 percent of the students enrolled are eligible for free or reduced price lunch. The interest and need for the program in Kentucky is extensive, and therefore several other criteria were considered during the decision-making process:

- The middle and high school feeder pattern—including the number of high schools into which a single middle school transitions students
- The college-going rate and ACT composite score of the feeder high schools
- The graduation rates of the feeder high schools
- Proximity of the middle school to other schools served by the GEAR UP KY program
- Prior participation/performance by eligible middle school in GEAR UP KY
- Percent of students meeting benchmark on college readiness assessments

### Participating Schools

GUK serves 24 middle and high schools in 12 districts organized into four regions as follows:

GUK Region	District	Middle Schools	High Schools
<b>Buffalo Trace</b>	Fleming County Public Schools Mason County Public Schools Robertson County School	Simons Middle School Mason County Middle School Robertson County School (MS & HS)	Fleming County High School Mason County High School
<b>Northern KY</b>	Pendleton County Public Schools Covington Independent Schools Bracken County Public School	Sharp Middle School Holmes Middle School Bracken County Middle School	Pendleton County High School Holmes High School Bracken County High School
<b>Bluegrass</b>	Frankfort Independent Schools Mercer County Public Schools Marion County Public Schools	Second Street School King Middle School Marion County Middle School (6 – 7) Marion Knight Academy (8 – 9)	Frankfort High School Mercer County High School Marion County High School
<b>Licking River</b>	Bath County Public Schools Bourbon County Public Schools Paris Independent Schools	Bath County Middle School Bourbon County Middle School Paris Middle School	Bath County High School Bourbon County High School Paris High School



**Hybrid Cohort Model**

GUK serves two types of student cohorts.

**(1) The Full Service Cohort (FSC) model** will serve all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students (fall 2018 and 2019) and continuing services through high school.

**(2) The Priority Student Cohort (PSC) model** will serve five cohorts of high school seniors (spring 2018 - fall 2022) and follow them through their first year in college.

**Full Service Cohort:** A specific progressing grade of students in schools who receive services throughout the middle and high school years.

**Full Service Cohort # 1:** 2019-2020 (7<sup>th</sup> grade)....2024-2025 (12<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Full Service Cohort # 2:** 2020-2021 (7<sup>th</sup> grade)....2024-2025 (11<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Priority Service Cohort:** The senior year students in a school who receive services throughout the school year as well as the first year of postsecondary.

	<u>12<sup>th</sup> Grade</u>	<u>Freshman</u>
<b>Priority Service Cohort #0:</b>	2018-2019	2019-2020
<b>Priority Service Cohort #1:</b>	2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>Priority Service Cohort #2:</b>	2020-2021	2021-2022
<b>Priority Service Cohort #3:</b>	2021-2022	2022-2023
<b>Priority Service Cohort #4:</b>	2022-2023	2023-2024
<b>Priority Service Cohort #5:</b>	2023-2024	2024-2025
<b>Priority Service Cohort #6:</b>	2024-2025	

	Full-Service Cohort	Priority Service Cohort	Approximate Head Count
<b>2018-2019</b>		12 <sup>th</sup>	1,250
<b>2019-2020</b>	7 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	2,500
<b>2020-2021</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	5,000
<b>2021-2022</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	5,000
<b>2022-2023</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	5,000
<b>2023-2024</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	5,000
<b>2024-2025</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>	3,750
			<b>27,500</b>

### Guidelines for School Partnership

To achieve the outcomes of the GEAR UP program, partnership with GUK schools requires the full commitment of the school leaders and all school personnel. GUK program staff will endeavor to provide ongoing communication, consistent information, and technical assistance as needed to ensure partnership schools are able to fulfill their commitment. Per signed Memorandum of Agreement between GUK/CPE and participating school districts, GUK schools are expected to do the following while GUK cohorts are actively enrolled:

- Work in good faith with local, regional, and GUK staff to identify and support the best implementation model.
- Maintain open, two-way channel communication.
- Provide secure, regular in-school workspace for GUK staff.
- Serve as the purchasing agent for appropriate in-school staff technology to be reimbursed by GUK.
- Work with local, state, and regional staff to secure transportation to grant-funded enrichment opportunities.
- Identify a Single Point of Contact at each level (school and district).
- Commit to sending staff to GUK's Teacher Leader Academy (x3 teachers for each academy).
- Commit to participation in GUK's District Leadership Academy (1 representative from each district office will successfully complete the academy ONCE during the grant cycle).
- Commit to participation at the annual *GUK Institute for College Going Culture* (x10 district and school representatives per Institute).
- Provide opportunity/access for all students to complete GUK's annual survey (x2).
- Provide opportunity for GUK to administer CERT assessment twice annually to all participating cohorts.