1. GETTING STARTED WITH GEAR UP: Examples from WSU Tri-Cities

Through the years GEAR UP objectives have been achieved by doing the following: provide tutors, assist school with professional development, college and career awareness with college campus visits, provide student and family events, provide summer programs, enhance school technology and provide curriculum support.

At WSU Tri-Cities GEAR UP goals and objectives are provided in the grant contract. Goals include integrating GEAR UP objectives into day-to-day activities and into the culture of the school and community. Frequently, these goals are as follows:

1. Increase student academic performance.
2. Increase student knowledge of post-secondary options.
3. Increase parents’ knowledge of post-secondary options.
4. Increase high school graduation rate.

When GEAR UP Program Supervisors are hired through WSU Tri-Cities GEAR UP, they are oriented with WSU GEAR UP objectives and protocol. GEAR UP Program Supervisors then:

1. Get acquainted with their assigned school’s administration, their roles, responsibilities and skills.
2. With school administration’s help, program supervisors become acquainted with school staff and teachers.
3. GEAR UP program supervisors provide school staff a program overview, which include GEAR UP program goals and objectives. GEAR UP program supervisors also provided a vision of what the day-to-day and school-year calendar could look like. An effort is also made to:
   a. Identify where teamwork and collaboration is needed
   b. Make clear that it is a work in progress
   c. Priorities come from established best practices
   d. There is a focus on meeting needs by building expertise
   e. Everyone is asked to work together to “look for holes”
   f. School staff members are asked to identify projects that require building partnerships, as well as selecting programs that can become embedded
4. Tutors are recruited and hired

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1 This information was collected by Gretchen Hormel-Tomkins, WSU Tri-Cities, from Walla Walla, WA program supervisors Jerri Doyle, Marika Tomkins, and Mike Gwinn, with the advice of Genoveva Morales-Ledesma, Executive Director, WSU Tri-Cities, Early Outreach Programs. Dr. Daniel M. Amos, Director, Washington State Early Outreach Partnership, edited this section. Gretchen’s complete write-up of starting GEAR UP programs in Walla Walla, WA, can be found in the Promising Practices section of this Web site.
2. GETTING ORGANIZED

GEAR UP Program supervisors should strive to work closely with the school principal and with administrative staff members who are assigned to work with them. School staff members and the GEAR UP program supervisor report to the Principal.

When starting a program such as GEAR UP, it is important that the school is prepared to provide a program office that can accommodate electronic networking and current technology, as well as provide enough space to develop and maintain rapport with the GEAR UP tutor team.

1) Provide tutors at schools.
   a. GEAR UP Tutors have been a large part of each school’s support network through the years.
   b. Tutors are assigned to help in Math, Science, Social Studies and Reading.
      ▪ Prior to the new school-year, the school's administration, counselor and GEAR UP program supervisor identifies which classrooms will receive tutor support. Tutor placement is determined according to student and classroom needs. Tutors are also considered a Professional Development Tool for teachers, assisting in increasing student engagement and success in the classroom.
   c. Math and Science classrooms emphasize small group work/learn sessions.
      ▪ Teachers are asked to structure lesson plans in order that tutors are included as a support to enhance instruction and to change practice.
      ▪ In the near future, it is hoped that the schools are able to utilize the school district's Instructional Coach to provide teachers more ideas for tapping into tutor support.
   d. A Garrison tutor is assigned to that school's Leadership Program, which kicks-off with a 4-day Leadership Camp each July.
      Purpose: Help students become active participants in school life, this includes: completing a school-year project, providing the opportunity for students to learn planning, fund raising and other necessary steps to reach their goal.

2) Provide teachers and tutors professional development opportunities:
   a. Annual Tutor Training provided in August:
      ▪ 2 days AVID Tutorology Training [http://www.avidonline.org/info/?tabid=1&ID=549]
      ▪ 2 days Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) Training [http://www.projectglad.com/glad.html]
      ▪ 1 day Reading Comprehension and Small Group Strategies Training
      ▪ 1 day GEAR UP Policies & Procedures
1 day Math Connect Training and follow-up training is provided throughout the school-year [http://www.mathconnect.com/]

1 day Digital Learning Department (DLD) Training -- providing an opportunity for tutors to become acquainted with the library database research system and career planning with WOIS. [http://digitallearning.k12.wa.us/]
  o WOIS is a college and career exploration tool with a Washington State focus for middle and high schools. Students can explore career paths, college majors, scholarships and more.

b. Teacher training:
   - Literacy First Teacher Development -- now known as Secondary Instruction Practices
   - Differentiated Instruction
   - Classroom Management and Lesson Plan Development
   - AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination) Training
   - GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design)
   - English Language Learners (ELL) endorsements

3) Events

a. Student cohort events, for example:
   - 6th Grade Cohort Event at Walla Walla Community College
   - 6th Grade Campus Experience at WSU Tri-Cities
   - 7th Grade Cohort Event at Whitman College in Walla Walla
   - 8th Grade Cohort Event at Washington State University, Pullman
   - GEAR UP 8th Grade Career Day at Walla Walla Community College
   - All-School *Life After High School* Event at Pioneer Middle School

b. Family events, such as:
   - Fall Open House/Family Fun Fair at Garrison Middle School
   - Winter-time Math & Science Night at Garrison Middle School
   - “College Bound” at Walla Walla High School
   - GEAR UP Southside Schools’ WSU Pullman Parent/Child Campus Visit
   - Cinco de Mayo at Walla Walla High School
   - End-of-the-school-year Celebration of Learning at Garrison
     1) assists with 5th grade transition to middle school
     2) assists with 8th grade transition to high school, introducing families to high school activities and options
     3) shares students’ Best Works and student portfolios are shared with parents
   - Enhancement of school programs during open houses and conferences with school success and college information.
   - College and financial aide events.
c. Event preparation and protocol:
   Before a school event or campus visit is scheduled, the school’s
   GEAR UP program supervisor reviews the school calendar with
   school administration. School administration and the program
   supervisor develop the activity plan and timeline. Event
   preparation is implemented by teachers and/or the program
   supervisor and tutors. A post activity is required, to help ensure
   student skill building and knowledge acquisition.

4. School Technology
   a. Computers
   b. Document cameras
   c. Scientific calculators
   d. Texas Instrument (TI )Navigator System
   e. Classroom Performance System (CPS) -- “clickers” that gather student
      assessment information, as well as provide an avenue for digital
      communication between students and teacher.

5. Intermittent After School Programs
   a. At Pioneer Middle School: Math WASL prep and Preliminary SAT
      Scoring Service (PSSS). Upcoming: academic accountability and case
      managed academic interventions.
   b. At Walla Walla High School: Teachers refer students for tutor support.

6. Summer Programs:
   a. Garrison Middle School provides a 5-week academic oriented summer
      program:
         1) Emphasis on math and reading
         2) Emphasis on hands-on, student centered activities
         3) In Summer '09, students were provided scholarships to
            participate in Walla Walla Community College’s week-long
            “Kids College”.
         4) In Summer '09, Garrison GEAR UP also provided:
            1. a two-week Art Camp
            2. a week-long Computer Animation & Film Camp
            3. a week-long Leadership Camp, which included a day of
               personal challenge at the Walla Walla Area Ropes Course
   b. In Summer 2009, Pioneer Middle School ran three 2-week themed camps:
      1) Space & Technology Boot Camp,
      2) Digital Animation,
      3) and Think Outside of the Box Art Camp.
   c. Walla Walla High School provides students the opportunity for credit
      retrieval using Plato.

7. Provide curricular support for:
   a. Career interest exploration and career speeches
   b. Year-long Navigation 101 advisory curriculum
   c. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
   d. Computer-Aided Design (CAD) Exploratory Class
   e. Computer Animation
3. TEAMWORK

Successful program start-up and implementation is not possible without teamwork.

There are a number of teams that a GEAR UP Program Supervisor works with, for example: Middle School and School District Administration, GEAR UP Peers, Middle School Teachers and Support Staff, Contractors for Services, along with Community Partners.

GEAR UP peers maintain rapport with:
- monthly regional meetings
- quarterly Program Supervisor meetings
- shared projects
- conferences and trainings

GEAR UP Program Supervisors maintain rapport with school administration with:
- regular meetings
- travel to conferences
- co-presentations
- share resources

A team that most GEAR UP Program Supervisors put together, or build from the ground up, is the school’s GEAR UP Tutor Team.

1) Tutor Recruitment:
   a) meet with local colleges and district staff to establish relationships
   b) advertise through “all district” e-mail
   c) hire qualified applicants based on references

2) Tutor skills:
   a) demonstrated skills in writing and/or math
   b) work experience or currently attending college to obtain training dedicated to developing a positive, working rapport with middle school or high school students
   c) work experience or currently attending college to obtain training dedicated to developing a positive, working rapport with middle school or high school teachers and staff

3) Maintain the team in the following ways:
   a) When tutor is first hired, orientation/training includes expectations, policies and procedures.
   b) Hire people with long-term commitment, usually in college and studying to be a teacher.
   c) Professional development sessions are provided throughout the year. Workshops may include: Tutor Training, Building Time Management Skills, and Student Behavior Management.
- Professional development sessions are oftentimes led by school district staff, who specialize in the area of focus for that session.

d) Also coordinate regularly scheduled team meetings.
e) Work around the tutors’ school schedules.
f) Assign tutors special projects.
g) Appreciation events.
4. MAINTAIN RAPPORT WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In order to establish successful programs, it is essential for the GEAR UP Program Supervisor to build and maintain rapport with community organizations.

The GEAR UP Program Supervisor and school staff members establish and maintain rapport with community organizations through:

- GEAR UP advocacy – distribute GEAR UP publications, present to community partners, communicate research behind GEAR UP objectives to stakeholders.
- Remaining alert to school district and community interests and concerns by:
  - Reading school district news releases and publications.
  - Paying attention to local and regional news.
  - Listening to representatives in education, Higher Education, organizations with similar missions, organizations that support youth, for example: YMCA, YWCA, Walla Walla Public Library, City Parks and Recreation.
- Sending “Thank you” letters to supporters after events and other activities
- Collaboration – building community service projects by asking organizations to provide services to students. Asking colleges to provide early outreach
5. EVALUATE

Program accountability requires tracking, reporting and evaluating data. This also helps increase the potential for program improvement.

GEAR UP provides the forms for program planning, as well as the forms necessary to record activities and track progress in meeting program objectives:

1) GEAR UP Work Plan/Action Plan Outline – this is a living document, which should be reviewed at least two times each year. Mid-year reviews provides for program flexibility, adapting to new needs and/or new ideas. GEAR UP Program Supervisors work with school administration to complete this document.

2) WSU Early Outreach Google Calendar – tracks day-to-day activities

3) Monthly Calendar -- tracks progress in meeting objectives

4) Various GEAR UP resources and contractors are used to track data for: student progress (grades and attendance), program participation rates

5) Working with the Walla Walla School District, it is currently being evaluated as to how a case management data entry format might improve monitoring student services and student progress.

6) Also track progress with:
   a) Administrative Feedback
   b) Teacher Feedback
   c) Tutor Feedback
   d) Student and parent feedback
   e) Self-evaluation by Program Supervisor
   f) Feedback from partnerships

WSU Tri-Cities GEAR UP Program and Partner Information:
http://www.earlyoutreach.wsu.edu/flame/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=69