

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)

Summary of Public Comments on

Proposed Changes to the 2024 Annual Performance Report (APR)

Following 60 Day Review Period

On August 29, 2023, the Department of Education (Department) published a Notice of Proposed Information Collection Request (Notice) in the Federal Register inviting comments by October 30, 2023, on the proposed annual performance report (APR) for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) program. Two respondents submitted comments and a summary of our responses is below.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we add in the word/character count limit for each of the open-ended questions.

RESPONSE: The character count has been added to all of the open-ended questions.

COMMENT: Commenter asked that we ensure consistency between the on-line and paper versions.

RESPONSE: The intention was always to have consistency between the on-line and paper versions of the report. No changes were made.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we revisit the numbering system.

RESPONSE: The numbering has been changed to go across the entire report.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we eliminate or phase in the new questions about the scholarship component of the program.

RESPONSE: No changes are being made to questions 13b and 13c as these are for all grantees to fill out regardless of waiver status and they provide room for estimates where exact data may not have been tracked.

Question 13c is for any applicant that received a waiver. Given the commenters' feedback, we have phased this question in so only applicants who received the waiver in 2019 or later will need to respond to this question. Beginning in 2019, the application package required waiver applicants to describe how eligible students would receive scholarships through other means and lets them know that they would have to report on the number of students who received scholarships and the average amount disbursed. The question also provides flexibility for estimates to be provided.

Question 13d is for any applicant that received a waiver. Given the commenters' feedback, we have phased this question in so only applicants who received the waiver in 2023 or later will need to respond to this question, which is consistent with what those grantees had to provide in their waiver application.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that in Section IV we change priority students to "priority/public housing students."

RESPONSE: We have not made this requested change, as the statutory definition for priority students does not include public housing students.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that the Race/Ethnicity section be aligned to IPEDS guidance and that the reporting be phased in.

RESPONSE: While we did not change the format of the questions, institutions can collect the data as a two-part question and provide the data in the format in the report. We did not change it to be phased in, but it should be noted that there are no negative impacts to the grantee if they do not have the complete information to respond to this question.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we remove the reporting option for whether a participant is served by more than one other federally funded program.

RESPONSE: We accepted this change and deleted that option. There is still space to report on whether GEAR UP students were also served by other specific federal programs.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we use consistent wording in Section V.

RESPONSE: We changed the reporting terms to "Activities/Services" and "Counseling/Advising" for consistency.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we phase in the questions in Section VI.

RESPONSE: We did not change this to be phased in, but it should be noted that there are no negative impacts to the grantee if they do not have the complete information to respond to this question.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we delete the question on high school graduation rate and postsecondary enrollment data from the APR.

RESPONSE: We have kept these questions in the APR because they are performance measures for GEAR UP.

COMMENT: Commenter requested that we remove questions about postsecondary persistence from the APR.

RESPONSE: This change has been accepted.

COMMENT: A second commenter requested several clarifying changes in instructions.

RESPONSE: These changes were made for clarity.

COMMENT: A second commenter requested we combine cohort and priority models into one table in question 40.

RESPONSE: This change was not made because we believe the current format provides more clarity.