

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.



FISCAL YEAR 20XX

APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE
GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS (GEAR UP) PROGRAM

STATE GRANTS
ALN: 84.334S

DATED MATERIAL – OPEN IMMEDIATELY

CLOSING DATE: TBD

OMB Control No. 1840-0821, Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dear Applicant Letter.....	3
Competition Highlights.....	4
Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants.....	9
Application Submission Procedures and Requirements.....	14
Notice Inviting Applications.....	17
GEAR UP Authorizing Legislation.....	57
GEAR UP Program Regulations.....	58
State Grants Program Overview.....	59
Evaluation of Project Performance.....	68
<u>Instructions for Completing the GEAR UP Application Package</u>	
Instructions for Completing the Application Package.....	70
Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs: Executive Order 12372.....	75
Application Package Checklist.....	76
Instructions for Standard and Program Specific Forms.....	77
<u>GEAR UP Program Specific Forms</u>	
Applicant Eligibility Form.....	80
State Project Profile Sheet.....	81
Project Budget Summary Form.....	88
First-Year Budget Narrative Form.....	90
Standard Application Forms Instructions.....	91
Paperwork Burden Statement.....	92

DEAR APPLICANT LETTER



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) program. We are pleased to provide the application package for the fiscal year (FY) 20XX GEAR UP State grant competition (Assistance Listing 84.334S). Included in this application package are links to the program statute and regulations, and the instructions and forms needed for you to submit a State application to the U.S. Department of Education (Department).

Please be sure to thoroughly review the entire application package for information concerning the GEAR UP program. Applicants should pay particular attention to the section entitled "Competition Highlights" that outlines program and competition details.

This year's competition includes XX competitive preference priorities for which applicants may receive up to XX additional points depending on how well the application meets these priorities. Applicants may also reply to XX invitational priority, which does not award any points. For more information on the priorities, selection criteria, and other program and competition details, please refer to the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for the FY 20XX competition published in the *Federal Register*.

Applications for FY 20XX grants under the GEAR UP State grant competition must be submitted electronically using Grants.gov at: <http://www.grants.gov>. Information about Grants.gov submission requirements can be found in the NIA, which is included in this application package.

The NIA contains the application requirements for this FY 20XX grant competition and any subsequent year in which awards are made from the list of unfunded applications from this competition. Applicants should review the NIA in its entirety and not rely upon any information that is inconsistent with the requirements listed in the NIA.

We appreciate your interest in the GEAR UP program. For further information regarding the program, please contact Ben Witthoefft, GEAR UP program lead, at (202) 453-7576 or Ben.Witthoefft@ed.gov.

Sincerely,
/s/

COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Authorization

Title IV, Sections 404A-404H, of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

2. Program Website

GEAR UP statutory and regulatory requirements and additional information, including Frequently Asked Questions, can be found on the Department's website at:
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>.

3. Purpose of the Program

GEAR UP is a discretionary grant program, which encourages applicants to provide support and maintain a commitment to eligible low-income students, including students with disabilities, to assist the students in obtaining a secondary school diploma and preparing for and succeeding in postsecondary education.

4. Eligible State Applicants

At the time of application, the Governor of the State, or equivalent for eligible non-States, must designate the eligible State entity that can apply for a GEAR UP State grant on behalf of the State. State applicants must include in the application an Applicant Eligibility Form.

Note: The Assistance Listing number for the State Program is 84.334^S. Please do not mistakenly submit your application under the Partnership Program Assistance Listing number - 84.334^A.

5. Competitive Preference Priorities and Invitational Priority

For FY 20XX, there are XX Competitive Preference Priorities (CPPs) for the State competition. An applicant may be eligible to receive additional points depending on how well a CPP is addressed. There is also XX Invitational Priority, which does not award additional points. Applicable priorities can be found in the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) that was published in the *Federal Register*, and which is included in this application package.

6. Grant Performance Period

A State applicant can design the GEAR UP project for 72 months (6 years) or 84 months (7 years) of implementation. However, a project that is designed for 84 months must pro-

vide services to students through the students' first year of attending an institution of higher education.

7. **Required Activities**

GEAR UP State projects are required to implement the following activities:

- Provide comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and supportive services to students participating in the programs;
- Provide information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students in the cohort;
- Encourage student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework, in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level;
- Improve the number of participating students who: a) obtain a secondary school diploma and b) complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education; and
- Provide scholarships to eligible students.

8. **Allowable Implementation Model**

Applicants can choose to implement one of two models, or a combination of both: *cohort* and/or *priority students model*. Details regarding the two implementation models are provided later in this application.

9. **Budgetary Information**

- Maximum Amount – As set in the NIA, the maximum amount a State applicant can request each year of funding under the FY 20XX competition is \$5,000,000.
- Required Federal Allocation - State applicants must allocate no less than 25 percent and no more than 50 percent of Federal funds for activities and the remaining Federal funds for scholarships. However, there is an exception in the statute that may allow applicants to request a higher percentage for activities. Additional information on the exception is provided in the NIA and this application.
- Matching/Cost-Share - Applicants must clearly demonstrate in the application how the matching/cost-share requirement will be satisfied throughout the entirety of the proposed project period. GEAR UP projects are required to provide not less than 50 percent of project costs (or, \$1 of non-Federal funds for every \$1 of Federal funds expended), which may be cash or in-kind. Proposed Federal and non-Federal expenditures must be provided on the Budget Summary Form, and the six- or seven-year total proposed matching contributions must be equal to or more than proposed Federal expenditures for the six- or seven-year performance period.
- Out-Year Funding – As specified in the NIA, applicants will not receive more Federal funding in out-years than the amount awarded in the first year of the grant; and therefore, the Budget Summary Form should not reflect budgetary increases in years two through six or seven.

10. Electronic Submission of Applications

GEAR UP applications must be submitted electronically using Grants.gov. See page 9 of this document for more information about how to submit an application.

Note: The Assistance Listing number for the State Program is 84.334S. Please do not mistakenly submit your application under the Partnership Program Assistance Listing number - 84.334A.

You are urged to acquaint yourself with the requirements of Grants.gov early as the registration procedures may require five or more days to complete. A more thorough discussion is included later in this application package. Please note that you must submit your application by 11:59:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on or before the application deadline date of TBD. Late applications will not be accepted. We suggest that you submit your application several days before the deadline. The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.

11. Recommended Format of Application

There are no formatting requirements for this competition. However, we recommend that applicants double space the application narrative and use a font that is either 12-point or larger. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs can be single-spaced. The following fonts are suggested: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

12. GEAR UP Program Required Forms

The following forms and documentation are required. Additional information on these documents is provided in this application package.

- Applicant Eligibility Form
- State Project Profile Sheet
- Project Budget Summary Form
- First-Year Budget Narrative Form

Please note that more detailed instructions for attaching these forms are covered in the “INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION PACKAGE” section of the application.

13. Project Abstract

The project abstract in the application should be presented on one page, single-spaced. The abstract should include:

- Applicant name (branch and/or campus, if applicable)
- City and State

- Contact information (contact person, email address, telephone number)
- Project goals and objectives
- Activities and services
- Number of students to be served
- Target school
- Partners
- Performance period

14. **Selection Criteria**

The selection criteria in 34 CFR part 75 section 75.210 are used to evaluate applications. The selection criteria and maximum possible points are included in the NIA.

15. **Notice to Successful Applicants**

If your application is successful, we notify Congress and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN), or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may also notify you informally.

16. **Notice to Unsuccessful Applicants**

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing following the notice to successful applicants.

17. **Contact Information**

For GEAR UP program-related questions and assistance, please contact:

Program Lead: Ben Witthoefft
 Address: Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for
 Undergraduate Programs
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20202
 Telephone: (202) 453-7576
 E-mail Address: Ben.Witthoefft@ed.gov

For technical support regarding Grants.gov, please contact:

Telephone: (800) 518-4726
 E-mail: support@grants.gov
 The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except Federal holidays.

Also, refer to “Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants” found in this application booklet.

The NIA contains the application requirements for this FY 20XX grant competition and any subsequent year in which awards are made from the list of unfunded applications from this competition. Applicants should review the NIA in its entirety and not rely upon any information that is inconsistent with the requirements listed in the NIA.

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION PROCEDURES AND TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education.

Browser Support

The latest versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari are supported for use with Grants.gov. However, these web browsers undergo frequent changes and updates, so we recommend you have the latest version when using Grants.gov. Legacy versions of these web browsers may be functional, but you may experience issues. Grants.gov no longer provides support for Microsoft Internet Explorer 9 or below.

For additional information or updates, please see the Grants.gov Browser information in the Applicant FAQs: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs#browser>.

ATTENTION – Workspace, Adobe Forms and PDF Files

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

- 1) Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- 2) Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.
 - a. Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms to [upload in Workspace](#). The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

b. **Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. **Complete SF-424 Fields First:** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

3) **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

4) **Track a Workspace Submission:** After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the [Track My Application page](#) under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-training.html>.

Helpful Reminders

1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on SAM.gov (www.sam.gov), which usually takes approximately 7 to 10 business days, but can take longer depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM.gov database by an applicant. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete. Please note that once your SAM.gov registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>. Please note that your organization will need to update its SAM.gov registration annually.

To register in SAM.gov, click on the “Get Started” link under the “Register Your Entity...” heading in SAM.gov. Grantees, and other entities wanting to do business with the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., entities applying for a grant), that are not already registered in SAM.gov must complete the “Register Entity” registration option and NOT the “Get a Unique Entity ID” option. The “Get a Unique Entity ID” option, which is not a full registration, is only available to entities for reporting purposes. Failing to complete the “Register Entity” option may result in loss of funding, loss of applicant eligibility, and/or delays in receiving a grant award. Information about SAM.gov is available at www.SAM.gov. To further assist you with registering in SAM.gov or updating your existing SAM.gov registration, see the [Quick Start Guide for Grant Registrations](#) and the Entity Registration Video at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

2) SUBMIT EARLY – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date.

You must provide the UEI on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This UEI is assigned to your organization in SAM.gov at the time your organization registers in SAM.gov. If you do not enter the UEI assigned by SAM.gov on your application, Grants.gov will reject your application.

3) VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK – You will want to verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned. Once the Department of Education receives your application from Grants.gov, an Agency Tracking Number (PR/award number) will be assigned to your application and will be available for viewing on Grants.gov's Track My Application link.

If the date/time received is later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of "Received" it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors." If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html>. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet at: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or email at: support@grants.gov or access the Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal at: <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>.

We discourage paper applications, but if electronic submission is not possible (e.g., you do not have access to the internet), (1) you must provide a prior written notification that you intend to submit a paper application and (2) your paper application must be postmarked by the application deadline date. If you submit your prior written notification by email, it must be received by the Department no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date. If you mail your

notification to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date (See the [2022 Common Instructions](#) for detailed instructions regarding this procedure).

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please go to <https://www.grants.gov/support> for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Applicant FAQs found at this Grants.gov link: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs.html> as well as additional information on Workspace at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs#workspace>.

Slow Internet Connections

When using a slow internet connection, such as a dial-up connection, to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g., cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. Failure to fully upload an application by the deadline date and time will result in your application being marked late in the G5 system. **If you do not have access to a high-speed internet connection, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date.**

(See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions and the [2022 Common Instructions](#).)

Attaching Files– Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application:

- When you submit your application electronically, you must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in either Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word. Although applicants have the option of uploading any narrative sections and all other attachments to their application in either PDF or Microsoft Word, we **recommend** applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened PDFs, meaning any fillable PDF files must be saved and submitted as non-fillable PDF files and not as interactive or fillable PDF files, to better ensure applications are processed in a more timely, accurate, and efficient manner.
- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
- When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded filenames must be fewer than 50 characters, and, in general, applicants should not use any special characters. However, Grants.gov does allow for the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semicolon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.
- Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can

result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package with all attachments is less than 5 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

ATTENTION ELECTRONIC APPLICANTS: Please note that you must follow the Application Procedures as described in the *Federal Register* Notice announcing the grant competition.

Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the *Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs* (Common Instructions), published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045) and available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2022-26554. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on December 27, 2021.

(1) **This program requires the electronic submission of applications; specific requirements and waiver instructions can be found in the *Federal Register* Notice.**

According to the instructions found in the *Federal Register* Notice, those requesting and qualifying for an exception to the electronic submission requirement may submit an application by mail, commercial carrier or by hand delivery.

If you want to apply for a grant and be considered for funding, you must meet the following deadline requirements:

(2) **Applications Submitted Electronically**

You must submit your grant application through the Internet using the software provided on the Grants.gov Web site (<http://www.grants.gov>) by 11:59:59 p.m. (Eastern Time) on or before the deadline date.

If you submit your application through the Internet via the Grants.gov Web site, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement when we receive your application.

For more information on using Grants.gov, please refer to the “Notice Inviting Applications” that was published in the *Federal Register* or visit <http://www.grants.gov>.

(3) **Submission of Paper Applications by Mail**

The Department discourages paper applications, but if electronic submission is not possible (e.g. you do not have access to the internet), (1) you must provide a prior written notification that you intend to submit a paper application and (2) your paper application must be postmarked by the application deadline date.

The prior written notification may be submitted by email or by mail to the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of the competition NIA. If you submit

your notification by email, it must be received by the Department no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date. If you mail your notification to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date.

If you submit a paper application, you must have, and include on your application, a UEI number and mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

**U.S. Department of Education
OFO/G5 Functional Application Team
Mail Stop 5C231
Attention: Assistance Listing Number: #84.334S
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4260**

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do **not** accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

An applicant should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office.

Special Note: Due to potential disruption to normal mail delivery, the Department encourages you to consider using an alternative delivery method (for example, a commercial carrier, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service; U.S. Postal Service Express Mail; or a courier service) to transmit your application for this competition to the Department. If you use an alternative delivery method, please obtain the appropriate proof of mailing under “Applications Delivered by Mail,” and then follow the instructions for “Applications Delivered by Hand.”

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department—

1. You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the ALN number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and
2. The G5 Functional Application Team will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant

application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should contact the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of the competition NIA.

(4) **Late Applications**

If your application is late, we will notify you that we will not consider the application.

NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS

Note: The U.S. Department of Education has already announced the FY 2025 GEAR UP State competition, as outlined below. This Notice will be updated prior to the next competition.

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (State Grants)

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2025 for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grants.

DATES:

Applications Available: November 20, 2024.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: February 3, 2025.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: April 4, 2025.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045), and available at

www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ben Witthoefft, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, 5th floor, Washington, DC 20202-6450. Telephone: 202-453-7576. Email: Ben.Witthoefft@ed.gov.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The GEAR UP program is a discretionary grant program that encourages eligible entities to provide support, and maintain a commitment, to eligible students from low-income backgrounds, including students with disabilities, to assist the students in obtaining a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) and to prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education. Under the GEAR UP program, the Department awards grants to two types of entities: (1) States and (2) Partnerships consisting of at least one degree-granting institution of higher education (IHE) and at least one local educational agency (LEA).

Assistance Listing Number: 84.334S.

OMB Control Number: 1840-0821.

Background: In this notice, the Department invites applications for State grants only. We will invite applications for Partnership grants in another notice published in the *Federal Register*. Required services under the GEAR UP program are specified in section 404D(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1070a-24(a)), and permissible services under the GEAR UP program are specified in section 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-24(b) and (c)). Grantee activities must include providing financial aid information for postsecondary education, encouraging enrollment in rigorous and challenging coursework in order to reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary education level, implementing activities to improve the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and who complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education, and providing scholarships as specified in section 404E of the HEA. Activities may also include mentoring; tutoring; supporting dual or concurrent enrollment programs; providing special programs or tutoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM); academic and career counseling; financial and economic literacy education; and exposure to college campuses. Additional permissible activities

for State grantees are specified in sections 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA.

Priorities: This notice contains four competitive preference priorities and one invitational priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii) and (iv), Competitive Preference Priority 1 is from section 404A(b)(3) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-21(b)(3)) and the GEAR UP program regulations (34 CFR 694.19). Competitive Preference Priorities 2 and 3 are from the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 10, 2021 (86 FR 70612) (Supplemental Priorities). Competitive Preference Priority 4 is from 34 CFR 75.226(b).

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2025 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award up to an additional 15 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the competitive preference priorities.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Successful State GEAR UP grant prior to August 14, 2008 (0 or 2 points).

We give priority to an eligible applicant for a State GEAR UP grant that has both—

(a) Carried out a successful State GEAR UP grant prior to August 14, 2008, determined on the basis of data (including outcome data) submitted by the applicant as part of its annual and final performance reports, and the applicant's history of compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements; and

(b) A prior demonstrated commitment to early intervention leading to college access through collaboration and replication of successful strategies.

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Increasing Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion, and Post-Enrollment Success (up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to increase postsecondary access, affordability, completion, and success for underserved students by establishing a system of high-quality data collection and analysis, such as data on persistence, retention, completion, and post-college outcomes, for transparency, accountability, and institutional improvement.

Competitive Preference Priority 3—Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs (up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to improve students' social, emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students, through fostering partnerships, including across government agencies (e.g., housing, human services, employment

agencies), local educational agencies, community-based organizations, adult learning providers, and postsecondary education institutions, to provide comprehensive services to students and families that support students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs, and that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status.

Competitive Preference Priority 4—Moderate Evidence (0 or 3 points).

Applications supported by evidence that meets the conditions in the definition of “moderate evidence” (as defined in this notice).

Note: To address this priority, an applicant may submit up to two study citations that it believes support the implementation of a GEAR UP authorized activity proposed in the application and that meet the moderate evidence standard. For State grantees, required GEAR UP services are specified in section 404D(a) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-24(a)), and permissible services are specified in section 404D(b) and (c) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-24(b) and (c)).

Applicants can cite What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) intervention reports, WWC practice guides, or individual studies, including those already listed in the Department’s WWC Database of In-

dividual Studies¹ and those that have not yet been reviewed by the WWC.

The proposed studies must be cited in the application section for Competitive Preference Priority 4 as well as on the Evidence Form. Applicants must also describe: (1) the project component(s) from the cited research they intend to implement in their GEAR UP project, (2) the relevant outcome(s) that are included in both the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report) and in the proposed project, (3) the research findings suggesting a favorable relationship between the project component and the relevant outcome, and (4) how the population and/or settings in the cited research overlap with that of the proposed project. The Department will review the research cited by the applicant to determine whether it meets the requirements for moderate evidence and whether it is sufficiently aligned with the proposed project.

Invitational Priority—Supporting Highly Mobile Youth.

Background: Compared to their peers, highly mobile youth, including youth who experience homelessness, foster care, and/or are disconnected from school and work, including students who are or have been involved in the criminal justice system, are less likely to graduate high school, enroll in college, or earn a de-

¹ <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ReviewedStudies#>.

gree.² Multiple school changes compounded by other life circumstances outside of their control result in many highly mobile youth being unable to access the financial resources, mentorship, support, stability, and guidance needed to complete postsecondary education or training programs.³

The Department believes that the GEAR UP State grant program, which allows States to identify and serve priority students as defined in section 404D(d), including students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness and other disconnected students, can play a key role in addressing gaps in high school graduation, college enrollment and college completion between highly mobile students and their peers. Through this invitational priority, we invite State applicants to propose projects that are designed to prioritize this student population.

For FY 2025 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an invitational priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets this invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

This priority is:

² Student Homelessness in America - School Years 2019-20 to 2021-22_
https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/SY-21-22-EHCY-Data-Summary_FINAL.pdf

³ Missed Opportunities: Education Among Youth Experiencing Homelessness in America
https://schoolhouseconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/imported-files/ChapinHall_VoYC_Education-Brief.pdf

Projects that propose to prioritize services to highly mobile students, including students experiencing (or who have experienced) foster care and homelessness, homeless students, and students disconnected from school and work, including students who are or have been involved in the criminal justice system. An applicant should describe in its application how it will use grant funding to reduce barriers to college enrollment and completion for these students both by (1) proactively identifying students who are GEAR UP-eligible by virtue of their status as homeless, foster care, and/or disconnected students, and (2) providing GEAR UP scholarships and support services that are targeted to the needs of these students.

Definitions: The definitions of “experimental study,” “logic model,” “moderate evidence,” “project component,” “quasi-experimental design study,” “relevant outcome,” and “What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Handbooks (WWC Handbooks)” are from 34 CFR 77.1(c). The definitions of “children or students with disabilities,” “disconnected youth,” “English learner,” and “underserved student” are from the Supplemental Priorities.

Experimental study means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials,

regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbooks:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed

project (*i.e.*, the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Note: In developing logic models, applicants may want to use resources such as the Regional Educational Laboratory Program’s (REL Pacific) Education Logic Model Application, available at

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/elm.asp>, to help design their logic models. Other sources include:

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014025.pdf,

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf, and

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015057.pdf.

Moderate evidence means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a “strong evidence base” or “moderate evidence base” for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a “positive effect” or “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome based on a “medium to large” extent of evidence, with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (*i.e.*, favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (*e.g.*, State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this

definition may together satisfy the requirement in this paragraph (iii)(D).

Note: The WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 4.1), as well as the more recent WWC Handbook released in August 2022 (Version 5.0), are available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbooks.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

Underserved student means a student in postsecondary education in one or more of the following subgroups:

(a) A student who is living in poverty or is served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.

(b) A student of color.

(c) A student who is a member of a federally recognized Indian Tribe.

(d) An English learner.

(e) A child or student with a disability.

(f) A disconnected youth.

(g) A migrant student.

(h) A student experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

(i) A lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, or intersex (LGBTQI+) student.

(j) A student who is in foster care.

(k) A pregnant, parenting, or caregiving student.

(l) A student who is the first in their family to attend postsecondary education.

(m) A student who is enrolled in or is seeking to enroll in postsecondary education who is eligible for a Pell Grant.

For purposes of the definition of *underserved student* only—

Children or students with disabilities means children with disabilities as defined in section 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1401(3)) and 34 CFR 300.8, or students with disabilities, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705(37), 705(20)(B));

Disconnected youth means an individual, between the ages 14 and 24, who may be from a low-income background, experiences homelessness, is in foster care, is involved in the justice system, or is not working or not enrolled in (or at risk of dropping out of) an educational institution; and

English learner means an individual who is an English learner as defined in section 8101(20) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, or an individual who is an English language learner as defined in section 203(7) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Handbooks (WWC Handbooks) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 5.0, or in the WWC Standards Handbook, Version 4.0 or 4.1, or in the WWC Procedures Handbook, Version 4.0 or 4.1, the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (all incorporated by reference, see § 77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC

practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the WWC Handbooks documentation.

Note: The WWC Procedures Handbook (Version 4.0 or 4.1), the WWC Standards Handbook (Version 4.0 or 4.1), and the more recent WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook released in August 2022 (Version 5.0), are available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-21–1070a-28.

Note: Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 694. (e) The Supplemental Priorities.

Note: As of October 1, 2024, grant applicants must follow the provisions stated in the OMB Guidance for Federal Financial

Assistance (89 FR 30046, April 22, 2024) when preparing an application. For more information about these regulations please visit: <https://www.cfo.gov/resources-coffa/uniform-guidance/>.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$398,000,000 for GEAR UP for FY 2025, of which we intend to use an estimated \$35,000,000 for the State competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$3,000,000-\$5,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$4,000,000.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award for a State grant exceeding \$5,000,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. Additionally, no funding will be awarded for increases in years 2 through 7.

Estimated Number of Awards: 8.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Either 72 months or 84 months.

Note: An applicant that wishes to seek funding for a seventh project year (i.e., for a project period greater than 72 months) in order to provide project services to GEAR UP students through their first year of attendance at an IHE must propose to do so in its application.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* States (as defined in section 103(20) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1003(20)), which includes the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Freely Associated States. Per congressional direction in Senate Report 118-84 (Pub. L. 118-47), only States without an active State GEAR UP grant, or States that have an active State GEAR UP grant that is scheduled to end prior to October 1, 2025, are eligible to receive a new State GEAR UP award in this competition. States with grants remaining open beyond October 1, 2025, for a no-cost extension period or for the sole purpose of data collection and analysis activities, are not considered active for purposes of implementing this directive.

2.a. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* Section 404C(b)(1) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-23(b)(1)) requires grantees under this program to provide from State, local, institutional, or private funds, not less than 50 percent of the cost of the program (or one dollar of non-Federal funds for every one dollar of Federal funds awarded), which may be provided in cash or in-kind. The provision also specifies that the match may be accrued over the full duration of the grant award period, except that the grantee must make substantial progress toward meeting the matching requirement in each year of the grant award period.

Section 404C(c) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-23(c)) provides that in-kind contributions may include (1) the amount of the financial assistance obligated under GEAR UP to students from State, local, institutional, or private funds, (2) the amount of tuition, fees, room or board waived or reduced for recipients of financial assistance under GEAR UP, (3) the amount expended on documented, targeted, long-term mentoring and counseling provided by volunteers or paid staff of non-school organizations, including businesses, religious organizations, community groups, postsecondary educational institutions, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and other organizations, and (4) equipment and supplies, cash contributions from non-Federal sources, transportation expenses, in-kind or discounted program services, indirect costs, and facility usage.

Grantees must include a budget detailing the source of the matching funds and must provide an outline of the types of matching contributions for at least the first year of the grant in their grant applications. Consistent with 2 CFR 200.306(b), any matching funds must be an allowable use of funds consistent with the GEAR UP program requirements and the cost principles described in subpart E of 2 CFR part 200, and not included as a contribution for any other Federal award.

b. *Supplement-Not-Supplant:* This competition involves supplement, not supplant funding requirements. Under section 404B(e) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-22(e)), grant funds awarded under this program must be used to supplement, and not supplant, other Federal, State, and local funds that would otherwise be expended to carry out activities assisted under this program.

c. *Indirect Cost Rate Information:* For entities eligible to apply to this competition, the program regulations at 34 CFR 694.11 limit indirect cost reimbursement to the rate determined in the entity's negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

d. *Administrative Cost Limitation:* This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative

expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance.

3. *Subgrantees:* Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants to the following types of entities: LEAs, State educational agencies, IHEs, and nonprofit organizations. The grantee may only award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application. Under 34 CFR 75.708(d), grantees must ensure that (1) subgrants are awarded on the basis of an approved budget that is consistent with the grantee's approved application and all applicable Federal statutory, regulatory, and other requirements; (2) every subgrant includes any conditions required by Federal statute and executive orders and their implementing regulations; and (3) subgrantees are aware of requirements imposed upon them by Federal statute and regulation, including the Federal anti-discrimination laws enforced by the Department.

4. *Other—General Application Requirements:* All applicants must meet the following application requirements in order to be considered for funding. The application requirements are from sections 404C(a) and 404E of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1070a-23(a); 20 U.S.C. 1070a-25) and from 34 CFR 75.112.

In order for an eligible entity to qualify for a grant under the GEAR UP program, the eligible entity must submit to the Secretary an application for carrying out a GEAR UP program that—

(a) Describes the activities for which assistance under this program is sought, including how the eligible entity will carry out the required activities described in section 404D(a) of the HEA;

(b) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA, how the eligible entity will meet the requirements of section 404E of the HEA;

(c) Provides assurances that adequate administrative and support staff will be responsible for coordinating the activities described in section 404D of the HEA;

(d) Provides assurances that activities assisted under this program will not displace an employee or eliminate a position at a school assisted under this program, including a partial displacement such as a reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits;

(e) Describes, in the case of an eligible entity described in section 404A(c)(1) of the HEA that chooses to use a cohort approach, how the eligible entity will define the cohorts of the students served by the eligible entity pursuant to section 404B(d) of the HEA, and how the eligible entity will serve the cohorts through grade 12, including—

- (1) How vacancies in the program will be filled; and
- (2) How the eligible entity will serve students attending different secondary schools;
- (f) Describes how the eligible entity will coordinate programs under this program with other existing Federal, State, or local programs to avoid duplication and maximize the number of students served;
- (g) Provides such additional assurances as the Secretary determines necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this program;
- (h) Provides information about the activities that will be carried out by the eligible entity to support systemic changes from which future cohorts of students will benefit;
- (i) Describes the sources of matching funds that will enable the eligible entity to meet the matching requirement described in section 404C(b); and
- (j) Demonstrates, in the case of an eligible entity that is requesting to use more than 50 percent of grant funds on GEAR UP early intervention activities and less than 50 percent of grant funds on scholarships, that the eligible entity has another means or multiple means of providing scholarships that meet the minimum Pell Grant requirements under 20 U.S.C. 1070a-25(d) to students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship under 20 U.S.C. 1070a-25(g). A State requesting an exception from the requirement that it

spend at least 50 percent of its grant dollars on scholarships must provide, in its application, documentation of the other means of providing scholarships to students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship under 20 U.S.C. 1070a-25(g), such as a comprehensive list of other sources of aid that reduce or eliminate the need for the grantee to provide GEAR UP scholarships to eligible students out of its Federal funding; the projected number of students that the grantee expects to receive aid through those sources (e.g. based on past cohorts, if applicable); and, if any, an estimated number of students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship that are not expected to receive aid through those other sources.

(k) Applicants must include a logic model (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c)) or other conceptual framework.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Application Submission Instructions:* Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045), and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs>, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

3. *Funding Restrictions:* We specify unallowable costs in subpart E of 2 CFR part 200. We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

Under HEA section 404E(b)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1070a-25(b)(1)), a State must use not less than 25 percent and not more than 50 percent of the grant funds for GEAR UP project activities described in HEA section 404D,⁴ with the remainder of grant funds spent on scholarships to eligible GEAR UP students described in HEA section 404E. However, HEA section 404E(b)(2) (20 U.S.C. 1070a-25(b)(2)) permits the Secretary to allow a State to use more than 50 percent of grant funds received under this program for GEAR UP project activities described in HEA section 404D if the State demonstrates that it has another means of providing the students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship as defined under 20 U.S.C. 1070a-25(g) with the financial assistance described in HEA section 404E and describes such means in the State's application.

⁴ Excluding the provision of funds for postsecondary scholarships required by HEA section 404D(a)(4).

4. *Recommended Page Limit:* The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 65 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, excluding titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, captions as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12-point font or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; a scholarship waiver justification; or the one-page abstract. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative.

We recommend that any application addressing the competitive preference priorities and/or invitational priority include no more than three additional pages for each priority addressed.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) *Need for project.* (up to 10 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the the need for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(i) The data presented (including a comparison to local, State, regional, national, or international data) that demonstrates the issue, challenge, or opportunity to be addressed by the proposed project (up to 4 points);

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of underserved populations; (up to 3 points) and

(iii) The extent to which the specific nature and magnitude of gaps or challenges are identified and the extent to which these gaps or challenges will be addressed by the services, supports, infrastructure, or opportunities described in the proposed project (up to 3 points).

(b) *Quality of the project design.* (up to 30 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program (up to 8 points);

(ii) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes (up to 8 points);

(iii) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives, including those from underserved populations, are brought to bear in the design, implementation, operation, evaluation, and improvement of the proposed project, including those of parents, educators, community-based organizations, civil rights organizations, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate (up to 7 points); and

(iv) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in systemic change that supports continuous, sustainable, and measurable improvement (up to 7 points).

(c) *Adequacy of resources.* (up to 15 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(i) The adequacy of support for the project, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant or the lead applicant organization (up to 5 points);

(ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project (up to 5 points); and

(iii) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project and the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project (up to 5 points).

(d) *Quality of project personnel.* (up to 20 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has project personnel or a plan for hiring of personnel who are members of groups that have historically encountered barriers, or who have professional or personal experiences with barriers, based on one or more of the following: economic disadvantage; disability; living in a rural location; experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity (up to 5 points).

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers:

(i) The extent to which the project director or principal investigator, when hired, has the qualifications required for the project, including formal training or work experience in fields related to the objectives of the project and experience in designing, managing, or implementing similar projects for the target population to be served by the project (up to 5 points);

(ii) The extent to which the key personnel in the project, when hired, have the qualifications required for the proposed project, including formal training or work experience in fields related to the objectives of the project, and represent or have lived experiences of the target population (up to 5 points); and

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (up to 5 points).

(e) *Quality of the project evaluation.* (up to 25 points)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the project evaluation, the Secretary considers:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the

project and will produce quality data that are quantitative and qualitative (up to 10 points);

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building will provide performance feedback and provide formative, diagnostic, or interim data that is a periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes (up to 10 points);and

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (such as regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group) to assess the effectiveness of the project on relevant outcomes (up to 5 points).

Note: For the selection criterion “Quality of personnel” in paragraph (d), applicants are encouraged to include in their application that they are committed to paying their staff a living wage for the local area and providing benefits.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant’s use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant

conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

As required by 20 U.S.C. 1070a-23(d), a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application for this competition in accordance with the procedures described in 34 CFR 75.217. The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will select among tied applications according to the following procedures. The first tiebreaker criterion will be to select for funding the tied applicant(s) representing the State(s) that has gone longest since being funded under the GEAR UP State program. The second tiebreaker will be to fund, from the States tied after implementing the first tiebreaker, the States with the highest percentage of individuals living in poverty based on Small Area

Income and Poverty Estimates Program (SAIPE) data (age range 5-17) or decennial census data, as appropriate.

3. *Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may

review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN), or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We also may notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the

competition. See the standards in 2 CFR 170.105 to determine whether you are covered by 2 CFR part 170.

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case, the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. *Performance Measures:* The performance measures for the GEAR UP Program are established for purposes of Department reporting under 34 CFR 75.110. The objectives of the GEAR UP program are (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.

The effectiveness of this program depends on the rate at which program participants complete high school and enroll in and complete a postsecondary education. We developed the following performance measures to track progress toward achieving the program's goals:

1. The percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Algebra 1 or its equivalent by the end of ninth grade.
2. The percentage of GEAR UP students who graduate from high school.
3. The percentage of GEAR UP students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
4. The percentage of GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are enrolled at an IHE.
5. The percentage of current GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who enrolled at an IHE and persisted to the second year of postsecondary education at the initial or a subsequent IHE.

In addition, to assess the efficiency of the program, we track the average cost, in Federal funds, of achieving a successful outcome, where success is defined as enrollment in a program of undergraduate instruction at an IHE of GEAR UP students immediately after high school graduation. These

performance measures constitute GEAR UP's indicators of the success of the program. Accordingly, we require that applicants include these performance measures in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of their proposed projects.

6. *Continuation Awards:* In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, whether the grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the

application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other Department documents published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access Department documents published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated:

Nasser H. Paydar,
*Assistant Secretary for
Postsecondary Education.*

GEAR UP AUTHORIZING STATUTE

Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2, Chapter 2 of The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. This is codified in the U.S. Code at 20 U.S.C. 1070a-21 – 1070a-28.

The relevant portion of the U.S. Code is available at the following link:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2021-title20/html/USCODE-2021-title20-chap28-subchapIV-partA-subpart2-divsn2.htm>.

GEAR UP PROGRAM REGULATIONS

The regulations specific to this program are in the Code of Federal Regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 694.

The relevant portion of the C.F.R. is available at the following link:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-694>.

GEAR UP STATE GRANTS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Purpose

The GEAR UP program is a discretionary grant program, which encourages applicants to provide support and maintain a commitment to eligible low-income students, including students with disabilities, to assist the students in obtaining a secondary school diploma and preparing for and succeeding in postsecondary education.

GEAR UP provides six- or seven-year grants to States to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools and through the first year of college. The services include: providing information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students in the cohort, encouraging student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework, and improving the number of participating students who obtain a secondary school diploma and complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education. GEAR UP funding must also be used to provide scholarships to eligible students, unless an exception has been granted.

Eligibility

The governor of each State, or equivalent for eligible non-States, must designate one agency to apply for and administer a GEAR UP State grant. Applicants must submit the Applicant Eligibility Form.

Size of Awards

The maximum Federal award for State grants awarded under the FY 20XX competition will be \$5,000,000. There is no minimum award.

Out-Year Costs

State grants will receive level funding in the out-years based on approved funding for the first-year award. For example, if a grantee requests \$100,000 of funding in year one of the grant and that amount is approved, the grantee will receive no more than \$100,000 of Federal funding for years two through six or seven of the grant.

Match Requirements

State applicants are required to provide from State, local, institutional, or private funds, not less than 50 percent of the cost of the program. **The requirement is dollar for dollar what the requested amount is of Federal funding. For example, if the total cost (including both Federal and non-Federal funding) to run the project for the six- or seven-year performance period is \$300, the requested amount of Federal funding would be \$150 and the required non-Federal contribution is \$150.** Matching funds may be provided in cash or in-kind and may be accrued over the full duration of the grant award period. Projects are required to make

substantial progress towards meeting the matching requirement in each year of the grant award period. Applicants must also specify the methods by which matching funds will be paid and include provisions designed to ensure that funds provided shall supplement and not supplant funds expended for existing programs.

Note: Applicants will be held to the matching commitment proposed in the application for funding, even if the proposed match is higher than the percent required by statute. No points will be awarded for match exceeding the 50 percent level required by statute.

Required Activities

The following are required activities that eligible entities receiving a grant must implement:

- Providing comprehensive mentoring, outreach, and supportive services to students participating in the programs;
- Providing information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students in the cohort;
- Encouraging student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework, in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level;
- Improving the number of participating students who: a) obtain a secondary school diploma and b) complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education; and
- Providing scholarships to eligible students, either directly with GEAR UP grant funds or through other means with an approved exception.

Permissible Activities for States

The following activities are permissible uses of Federal and matching funds:

1. Providing tutors and mentors, who may include adults or former participants of the GEAR UP program, for eligible students.
2. Conducting outreach activities to recruit priority students to participate in program activities.
3. Providing supportive services to eligible students.
4. Supporting the development or implementation of rigorous academic curricula, which may include college preparatory, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate programs, and providing participating students access to rigorous core academic courses that reflect challenging State academic standards.
5. Supporting dual or concurrent enrollment programs between the secondary school and institution of higher education partners and other activities that support participating students in:
 - a. meeting challenging State academic standards;
 - b. successfully applying for postsecondary education;
 - c. successfully applying for student financial aid; and

- d. developing graduation and career plans, including career awareness and planning assistance as they relate to a rigorous academic curriculum.
- 6. Providing special programs or tutoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.
- 7. Introducing eligible students to institutions of higher education, through trips and school-based sessions.
- 8. Providing an intensive extended school day, school year, or summer program that offers:
 - a. additional academic classes; or
 - b. assistance with college admission applications.
- 9. Providing other activities designed to ensure secondary school completion and postsecondary education enrollment of at-risk children such as:
 - a. the identification of at-risk children;
 - b. after-school and summer tutoring;
 - c. assistance to at-risk children in obtaining summer jobs;
 - d. academic counseling;
 - e. financial literacy and economic literacy education or counseling;
 - f. volunteer and parent involvement;
 - g. encouraging former or current participants to serve as peer counselors;
 - h. skills assessments;
 - i. personal and family counseling, and home visits;
 - j. staff development; and
 - k. programs and activities that are specially designed for students who are limited English proficient.
- 10. Enabling eligible students to enroll in Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses, or college entrance examination preparation courses.
- 11. Providing services to eligible students in the participating cohort through the first year of attendance at an institution of higher education.
- 12. Fostering and improving parent and family involvement in elementary and secondary education by promoting the advantages of a college education, and emphasizing academic admission requirements and the need to take college preparation courses, through parent engagement and leadership activities.
- 13. Disseminating information that promotes the importance of higher education, explains college preparation and admission requirements, and raises awareness of the resources and services provided to eligible students, their families, and communities.

Additional Permissible Activities for States

1. Providing technical assistance to:
 - a. secondary schools that are located within the State; or
 - b. partnerships that are located within the State.
2. Providing professional development opportunities to individuals working with eligible cohorts of students.
3. Providing administrative support to help build the capacity of eligible partnerships to compete for and manage GEAR UP grants.
4. Providing strategies and activities that align efforts in the State to prepare eligible students to attend and succeed in postsecondary education, which may include the development of graduation and career plans.
5. Disseminating information on the use of scientifically-valid research and best practices to improve services for eligible students.
6. Identifying and disseminating information on best practices with respect to increasing parental involvement and preparing students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient, to succeed academically in, and prepare financially for, postsecondary education.
7. Working to align State academic standards and curricula with the expectations of postsecondary institutions and employers.
8. Developing alternatives to traditional secondary school that give students a head start on attaining a recognized postsecondary credential including school designs that give students early exposure to college-level courses and experiences and allow students to earn transferable college credits or an associate's degree at the same time as a secondary school diploma.
9. Creating community college programs for drop-outs that are personalized drop-out recovery programs that allow drop-outs to complete a regular secondary school diploma and begin college-level work.

Implementation Models

States may choose to:

1. Serve priority students ("priority students model"), or
2. Serve a cohort of students ("cohort model"), or
3. Serve both priority students and a cohort of students ("priority students model" and "cohort model").

Priority Students Model (§404D(d) of HEA)

States must serve students in secondary school who are eligible, as follows:

- To be counted under section 1124(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;
- For assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program or under Federal Payments for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance (FPFCAA), authorized by Title IV of the Social Security Act;
- For assistance under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; or
- Any student the applicant considers to be disconnected.

Cohort Model (§404B(d) of HEA)

States implementing a cohort model must provide services to an entire grade level of students. Applicants can elect to provide services to an entire grade level of students who reside in public housing. Public Housing is defined according to section 33(b)(1) of the United States Housing Act of 1937).

Cohort Model Services. Below are the parameters regarding services under the cohort model:

- Provide services to at least one grade level of students (e.g., all 7th graders);
- Begin services no later than 7th grade;
- Ensure services are provided through the 12th grade to students in the participating grade level;
- Ensure services are provided through the student's first year of attendance at an institution of higher education (with a 7-year grant award);
- After the students complete the last grade level at the originating school, the project must continue to provide services to the school that the substantial majority of students attend; and
- Provide services to students who have received services under a previous GEAR UP grant award but have not yet completed the 12th grade.

Eligible Schools under Cohort Model. An applicant implementing a cohort model must comply with the following requirements regarding the originating target school. Please note there are no originating school requirements if your focus is on students who reside in public housing. The originating target school is where the project will begin serving students. The following are requirements for the originating school:

- Must have a 7th grade class; and
- At least fifty percent of the students enrolled in the school must be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Important note: All originating target schools should be presented in your application. School eligibility is determined based on the information provided in the application. If an application is approved for funding, school changes will only be approved based on special or extenuating circumstances.

Coordination

State projects must ensure that the activities proposed are, to the extent practicable, coordinated with, and complement and enhance services provided by, other eligible entities serving the same school district or State and related services under other Federal or non-Federal programs. GEAR UP grant funds shall be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal, State, and local funds.

Indirect Costs

For entities eligible to apply to this competition, the program regulations at 34 CFR 694.11 limit indirect cost reimbursement to the rate determined in the entity's negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or eight percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

Administrative Cost Limitation

This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

Subgrants

Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants to the following types of entities: Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), State Educational Agencies (SEAs), IHEs, and nonprofit organizations. The grantee may only award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application. Under 34 CFR 75.708(d), grantees must ensure that (1) subgrants are awarded on the basis of an approved budget that is consistent with the grantee's approved application and all applicable Federal statutory, regulatory, and other requirements; (2) every subgrant includes any conditions required by Federal statute and executive orders and their implementing regulations; and (3) subgrantees are aware of requirements imposed upon them by Federal statute and regulation, including the Federal anti-discrimination laws enforced by the Department.

Scholarships

State grantees are required to provide scholarships to eligible GEAR UP students. State grantees are required to use at least 50 percent of the GEAR UP grant funds to provide scholarships unless granted an exception. A State must offer a GEAR UP scholarship to eligible students to attend an institution of higher education that is located within the State's boundaries, except that, at the State grantee's option, a State grantee may offer scholarships to students who attend institutions of higher education outside the State.

a. Required Funding Allocation

State applicants are required to spend not less than 25 percent and not more than 50 percent of the grant funds for required early intervention activities. The remainder of grant funds must be used to fund the scholarship program unless an exception is granted.

If an applicant seeks an exception to using not more than 50 percent of the grant funds for early intervention activities, they must demonstrate that it has another means or multiple means of providing scholarships to the students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship. To demonstrate this, the applicant must provide documentation with their application of those other means of providing scholarships that meet the minimum Pell requirements to the students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship. Examples of documentation include:

- a comprehensive list of the other sources of aid that reduce or eliminate the need for the grantee to provide GEAR UP scholarships to eligible students from the grantee's federal funding,
- the projected number of students that the grantee expects will receive aid through those sources,
- an estimate of the number of students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship that are not expected to receive aid through those other sources, if any.

If you are requesting an exception, you have to fill out Question 8(d)(ii) of the *Project Profile Sheet*, which is located at the end of the application package under Program-Specific Forms. If your application is successful in this competition, we will assess whether you are eligible for an exception based on the information provided in your application. You will receive a determination notification after the grant is awarded. Please note that State projects will be required to report on scholarships that are provided to students through another or other means.

b. Scholarship Student Eligibility

A student is eligible for a scholarship if the student:

1. is less than 22 years old at time of first scholarship award;
2. receives a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent on or after January 1, 1993;
3. is enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a program of undergraduate instruction at an institution of higher education that is located within the State's boundaries, except that, at the State's option, an eligible entity may offer scholarship program portability for recipients who attend institutions of higher education outside such State; and
4. participated in the required GEAR UP activities.

c. Notification of Scholarship Eligibility

Grantees must provide information on the eligibility requirements for the scholarships to all participating students upon the students' entry into the program.

d. Priority Students Model and Scholarships

States using a priority students model may award scholarships to eligible students identified by priority at any time during the grant award period rather than reserving scholarship funds for use only in the seventh year of, or after, the grant award period. GEAR UP scholarships awarded with grant funds are designed to supplement, not supplant, other scholarship funding.

e. Scholarship Portability

States must provide scholarship funds to all eligible students who attend an institution of higher education in the State and may also provide scholarship funds to eligible students who attend institutions of higher education outside of the State.

f. Scholarship Amount

Individual States may determine the maximum amount of a scholarship that an eligible student shall receive. The *minimum* amount of the scholarship for each fiscal year *shall not* be less than the minimum Federal Pell Grant award for that year.

g. Reserve Scholarship Funds

State grantees must hold in reserve scholarship funds of at least the minimum required scholarship amount multiplied by the estimated number of eligible students. However, this does not apply to grantees to the extent they were given a percentage exception to the required funding allocation.

States using a priority model may award scholarships directly rather than holding funds in reserve.

h. Return of Scholarship Funds

States must return to the Secretary any Federal scholarship funds that are not used by an eligible student within six years of the student's scheduled completion of secondary school or have not been redistributed to the other eligible students.

i. Reporting Scholarship Funds

States must report, annually to the Secretary, information on Federal and non-Federal reserved funds held for GEAR UP scholarships and the disbursement of these funds to eligible students until these funds are fully expended or returned to the Secretary. Scholarship funds are subject to audit or monitoring by authorized representatives throughout the life of the fund.

j. Educational Expenses Relative to Scholarships

The scholarship funds available to an eligible student may be used for:

1. Tuition, fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for the enrollment or attendance of the eligible student at an institution of higher education; and
2. in the case of an eligible student with special needs, expenses for special needs services that are incurred in connection with such enrollment or attendance.

EVALUATION OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Your application must explain your GEAR UP project's overall objectives. These objectives must be clear and measurable, and be outcome-oriented (i.e., related to achieving specific, desirable results of your GEAR UP services for participants) rather than process-oriented. The activities that you propose to implement for students, parents, and teachers must be linked to the objectives approved for your project.

Each year, successful applicants will be required to submit to the Department an annual performance report that includes evidence of their progress in meeting the project's objectives and overall program goals which are:

- Goal:** To significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.
- Objective 1:** Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education for GEAR UP students.
- Objective 2:** Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students.
- Objective 3:** Increase GEAR UP students' and their families' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

In addition, the GEAR UP statute requires grant project recipients to report biennially on the progress in implementing the proposed services and other provisions, achieving the objectives/expected outcomes (and overall impact on the affected project participants), as well as any warranted adjustments to components (e.g., type, frequency, duration) of the services not achieving their expected results or enhancing student learning.

Overall, GEAR UP projects, similar to other Federal projects, are required to provide documented evidence of their accountability for the expenditures of the obligated funds and the utilization of the accompanying matching contributions. Therefore, if you are chosen as a GEAR UP grantee, you will be required to consistently collect, analyze, and report on the participation and outcome data that enables the Department to verify that your GEAR UP project is accomplishing the proposed (measurable) objectives during each year.

In this application, you need to report on each of your project objectives and associated **performance measures** for each of those objectives. (Note: there can be multiple performance measures tied to each (measurable) project objective.)

Your performance measures should include the following:

1. Program measures, which are performance measures the GEAR UP program office has established that are aligned with the GEAR UP statute and program goals. These specific measures are: (a) the percentage of GEAR UP students who pass Algebra I or its

equivalent by the end of ninth grade, (b) the percentage of GEAR UP students who graduate from high school, (c) the percentage of GEAR UP students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), (d) the percentage of GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who are enrolled at an IHE, and (e) the percentage of current GEAR UP students and former GEAR UP students who enrolled at an IHE and persisted to the second year of postsecondary education at the initial or a subsequent IHE. An example of a program performance measure could be, “At least 95 percent of GEAR UP students will complete the FAFSA.”

2. Project-specific measures, which are performance measures in addition to those mentioned above that you establish and include in your GEAR UP application. These measures can relate to, for instance, academic factors such as grade point averages or standardized test scores. An example of a project-specific performance measure could be to “Increase the average percentile rank of GEAR UP students’ math scores by 5 points each year.”

In addition to reporting the specific performance measures for each of your objectives, your application must show the **targets** you have set for each of those measures. Targets must be set for each of the six or seven years of your GEAR UP project. Please note that these targets are set **after** you have collected baseline data on the performance measures. If you have already collected baseline data on any of the performance measures (e.g., baseline data such as the average daily attendance of seventh graders in the middle school you propose to serve in your GEAR UP project) and included these data in this application, please set targets for each year of your GEAR UP project on those specific performance measures and include them in your application as well. If you have **not** included baseline data for each performance measure in your application, then baseline data should be collected during the first year of the project (on those specific measures). Once the baseline data are obtained for a particular measure, targets for that measure can then be set for the second and subsequent years of the project.

GEAR UP grantees must consistently collect and analyze student achievement, educational attainment (e.g., course completions), and other outcome data on an ongoing basis, especially data linked to the five GEAR UP performance measures required for program reporting under 34 CFR 75.110, as published in the Notice Inviting Applications. The data also provide evidence that your grant project is meeting the GEAR UP mission of preparing students to graduate from high school and enter, persist, and succeed in postsecondary education. In order to show that your grant is in compliance, merits continuation of Federal funds in subsequent award years, and will eventually close in good standing, you must report the data requested in each Annual Performance Report (APR). Each year, when you submit your APR, Department of Education GEAR UP staff will compare the target you have established for each performance measure to the actual performance data. In your Final Performance Report (FPR), you must report on the numbers of cohort students who have graduated from high school with an official diploma and who have enrolled in postsecondary education.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

The GEAR UP application consists of **three parts**. These parts are organized in the same manner that the submitted application should be organized. The parts are as follows:

Important Note: The Assistance Listing number for the State Program is 84.334S. Please do not mistakenly submit your application under the Partnership Program Assistance Listing number - 84.334A.

Part I: 424 Forms

Application for Federal Assistance – (SF 424)

Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424

***Notes:**

- Applicants must complete the Standard Form (SF 424) first because some of the information you provide here is automatically inserted into other sections of the Grants.gov application package.
- Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the Standard Form (SF 424). Although the form accepts attachments, the Department of Education will review only the materials/files attached to the forms listed below.

Part II: Application Narrative

- ED Abstract Form

Note: please include the applicant name, state, contact information (*contact person, email address, telephone number*), project goals and objectives, activities and services, number of students to be served, target schools, partners, and performance period.

- Project Narrative Attachment Form– includes the application narrative sections addressing the program selection criteria and Competitive Preference Priority(s)
- Budget Narrative Attachment Form
(Project Budget Summary Form - Federal and Non-Federal Sections)
- Other Attachments Form (GEAR UP Program Specific Forms)
- U.S. Department of Education Evidence Form (if applicable)

The **ED Abstract Form** is where you attach your one-page project abstract. The one-page abstract may be single-spaced.

The abstract should include: applicant name, state and city (campus and or branch, if applicable), information about the project's goals and objectives, number of students to be served, the target school(s), a list of partners, and the activities and services that will be implemented during the six- or seven-year performance period.

The **Project Narrative Attachment Form** includes the narrative sections addressing the program selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications submitted for this competition. We suggest applicants label each section in the narrative by its associated criterion. There are no formatting requirements; however, we suggest the application have 8.5 inches by 11 inch pages, on one side only, with 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. We also recommend that applicants double space the application narrative and use a font that is either 12-point or larger. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs may be, but are not required to be, double spaced; and footnotes, quotations, references, and captions may be single spaced. Applicants may use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The **Budget Narrative Attachment Form** includes the Project Budget Summary Form, which outlines Federal and Non-Federal expenditures.

Note: Applicants must submit Part 1 (Federal) and Part 2 (Non-Federal) of Project Budget Summary Form.

The **Other Attachments Form** includes program-specific forms. Applicants must complete and submit program-specific forms from this document (the application package). Once the forms have been completed and saved, the applicant must upload the documents (separate files) to the “**Other Attachments Form**” in the Grants.gov system. We recommend that documents be in a PDF (Portable Document) format. Please note: Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.

Below are **GEAR UP program-specific forms** (found at the end of the application package):

- State Project Profile Sheet
- Applicant Eligibility Form
- First-Year Budget Narrative Form

Note: Please do not modify or change the contents of these forms in any way.

Part III: Assurances and Certifications

- GEPA Section 427 Requirement
- Lobbying Form (formerly ED form 80-0013)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

Optional Scoring Rubric:

As required by 20 U.S.C. 1070-a23(d), a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the procedures described in 34 CFR 75.217. The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process.

A scoring rubric is provided below as a suggested guideline to assist peer reviewers during the application review process. Reviewers are not required to use the scoring rubric; that is, it is an advisory tool that is intended to promote consistency and reliability and to minimize the

subjectivity of scoring judgments made during the application review process. The GEAR UP competition scoring rubric is provided in this application package to assist applicants and the general public in understanding more fully how applications may be evaluated.

Optional Scoring Rubric

Indicators	Not Addressed (0 points)	Needs Improvement (less than half points)	Adequate (half points)	Strong (more than half points)	Exemplary (full points)
Understanding	The criterion/priority was not addressed in the application.	Demonstrates minimal understanding of the criterion/priority requirements.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the criterion requirements. However, a few weaknesses hold it back.	Demonstrates a strong understanding of the criterion/priority. However, one or two weaknesses hold it back from exemplary.	Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the criterion/priority.
Responsiveness	The criterion/priority was not addressed in the application.	Provides minimal detail (e.g., examples, data, supporting documents, citations, etc.) and lacks specificity about “how” each component of the criterion/priority will be fully addressed.	Provides basic details (e.g., examples, data, supporting documents, citations, etc.) and specificity about “how” each component of the criterion/priority will be fully addressed. However, a few weaknesses hold it back.	Provides convincing details (e.g., examples, data, supporting documents, citations, etc.) and specificity about “how” each component of the criterion/priority will be fully addressed. However, one or two shortcomings hold it back from exemplary.	Provides extensive details (e.g., examples, data, supporting documents, citations, etc.) and is highly specific about “how” each component of the criterion/priority will be fully addressed.
Alignment	The criterion/priority was not addressed in the application.	Demonstrates minimal alignment between what is proposed in response to the criterion/priority, how it will be carried out, and the subsequent impact.	Demonstrates basic alignment between what is proposed in response to the criterion/priority, how it will be carried out, and the subsequent impact. However, a few weaknesses hold it back.	Demonstrates a strong alignment between what is proposed in response to the criterion/priority, how it will be carried out, and the subsequent impact. However, one or two weaknesses hold it back from exemplary.	Demonstrates exceptional alignment between what is proposed in response to the criterion/priority, how it will be carried out, and the subsequent impact.
Effectiveness	The criterion/priority was not addressed in the application.	Presents an unlikely argument that leads the reviewer to believe in the quality of the project and the likelihood of the project achieving its goals and	Presents a basic argument that leads the reviewers to believe in the quality of the project and the likelihood of the project achieving its goals and	Presents a strong argument that leads the reviewers to believe in the quality of the project and the likelihood of the project achieving its goals	Presents an exceptional argument that leads the reviewer to believe in the quality of the project and the likelihood of the project

		objectives.	objectives. However, a few weaknesses hold it back.	and objectives. However, one or two weaknesses hold it back from exemplary.	achieving its goals and objectives.
Feasibility	The criterion/priority was not addressed in the application.	Reviewer has almost no understanding of the project or confidence that the project, as described in the application (e.g., resources, staffing, collaborations, etc.), can be implemented successfully and with minimal chance of failure.	Reviewer has a basic understanding of the project and has some confidence that the project, as described in the application (e.g., resources, staffing, collaborations, etc.), can be implemented successfully and with minimal chance for failure. However, a few weaknesses hold it back.	Reviewer has a strong understanding of the project and is confident that the project, as described in the application, can be implemented successfully and with minimal chance of failure. However, one or two weaknesses hold it back from exemplary.	Reviewer has a clear and comprehensive understanding of the project and has no doubts that the project, as described in the application can be implemented successfully and with minimal chance of failure.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372

This program falls under the rubric of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of Executive Order 12372 is to strengthen federalism--or the distribution of responsibility between localities, states, and the Federal government--by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that state or local governments have devised for coordinating and reviewing proposed Federal financial grant applications.

The process for doing this requires grant applicants to contact State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for information on how this works. Multi-state applicants should follow procedures specific to each state.

Further information about the SPOC and the official list of entities can be found at:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/SPOC-list-as-of-2023.pdf>.

The SPOC recommendations and comments must be submitted by email or mailed to the person listed in the section FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT of the competition's notice inviting applications (NIA) by the date indicated. The submission by mail and proof of mailing are in accordance with the competition's NIA and determined on the same basis as applications.

U.S. Department of Education,
OFO/G5 Functional Application Team, Mail Stop 5C231,
Attention: EO 12372 (Assistance Listing Number + Suffix Letter),
400 Maryland Avenue SW,
Washington, DC 20202-4260

If a grant applicant is located within a state that has chosen not to participate, no further action is required under the EO 12372 for the U.S. Department of Education's Federal grant programs.

APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECKLIST

Before you submit the application package on <https://www.Grants.gov>, please review the following list to ensure that you have attached all required materials/files.

Important Note: The Assistance Listing number for the State Program is 84.334S. Please do not mistakenly submit your application under the Partnership Program Assistance Listing number - 84.334A.

Departmental Standard Attachments (Forms, Assurances, and Certifications)

- ☐ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- ☐ Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF-424
- ☐ GEPA Section 427 Requirement
- ☐ Grants.gov Lobbying form (formerly ED form 80-0013)
- ☐ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

Attachments

- ☐ ED Abstract Form (one-page maximum)

Note: please include the applicant name, state, contact information (*contact person, email address, telephone number*), project goals and objectives, activities and services, number of students to be served, target schools, partners, and performance period.

- ☐ Project Narrative Attachment Form (Selection Criteria and CPPs)
 - ☐ Other Attachments Form (Multiple forms in this section)
 - ☐ State Project Profile Sheet
 - ☐ Applicant Eligibility Form
 - ☐ Project Budget Summary Form
- Note: Applicants must submit Part 1 (Federal) and Part 2 (Non-Federal) of Project Budget Summary Form.**
- ☐ First-Year Budget Narrative Form
 - ☐ U.S. Department of Education Evidence Form (if writing to CPP #4)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROGRAM-SPECIFIC AND STANDARD FORMS

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC FORMS INSTRUCTIONS:

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY FORM: This form must be submitted to verify if the entity has been designated by the Governor of the State, or equivalent for eligible non-States, to apply for and administer a GEAR UP grant.

STATE PROJECT PROFILE SHEET: This form represents an outline of the project's overall design and implementation strategy.

BUDGET SUMMARY FORM: This form presents a complete budget summary for each year of grant funding. Applicants are required to fill out and submit both sections (Federal and non-Federal) of this form.

The GEAR UP matching requirement is that \$1 of non-federal funds must be matched for every \$1 of federal funds. Proposed Federal (Part I) and non-Federal (Part II) expenditures must be provided on the Budget Summary Form, and the six- or seven-year total for non-Federal expenditures should be equal to or more than proposed six- or seven-year Federal expenditures.

FIRST-YEAR BUDGET NARRATIVE FORM: The budget narrative form for *the first year of implementation* should include a narrative for each budget line item, which explains: (1) the basis for estimating the costs of professional personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs, and any projected expenditures; (2) how the major cost items relate to the proposed activities; and (3) the costs of evaluation.

Please include travel funds to attend annual conferences and workshops. At these meetings, each grant recipient will have an opportunity to strengthen its efforts by collaborating with other grantees funded in this program and receive technical assistance from U.S. Department of Education personnel. Applicants are reminded that GEAR UP funds must be used to supplement, not supplant, funds for existing programs.

STANDARD APPLICATION FORMS INSTRUCTIONS:

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (SF 424 FORM)

INSTRUCTIONS: Applicants should read the accompanying directions before filling out this form.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR

SF 424 INSTRUCTIONS: Applicants should read the accompanying directions before filling out this form.

GEPA SECTION 427 REQUIREMENT: Applicants should read the accompanying directions before filling out this form.

GRANTS.GOV LOBBYING FORM (Formerly ED 80-0013): Applicants should refer to the regulations cited in each section of the form to determine the certification to which they are required to attest.

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES (SF-LLL): Applicants should read the accompanying directions before filling out this form.

GEAR UP PROGRAM-SPECIFIC FORMS

STATE APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY FORM

Assistance Listing No. 84.334S

This form is required to verify if the agency applying for funding under the GEAR UP State grant competition is authorized by the Governor of the State. The Governor of a State, or equivalent for eligible non-States, must designate the State agency that can apply for, and administer, a State GEAR UP grant.

a. State:	
b. Legal Name of Authorized Applicant/Agency:	
c. Address of Agency:	d. Contact Person at the Agency: Name: Title: Telephone: E-Mail:
e. I authorize the agency above to submit an application for the GEAR UP State grant competition on behalf of the State. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data provided by the applicant is true and correct.	
Printed Name of Governor:	Telephone: E-Mail:
Signature of Governor:	Date:

STATE PROJECT PROFILE SHEET

Institution/Organization (Legal Name): _____

1. **Applicant Eligibility** – The Governor of each State, or equivalent for eligible non-States, must designate one agency that can apply for and administer the GEAR UP State grant.

a. Did you fill out and include the Applicant Eligibility Form in the application?
Yes No

b. Did you submit your application in the Grants.gov system under the State Assistance Listing #84.334S? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Note: Please be careful not to submit your State application under the wrong Assistance Listing #84.334A, which is only applicable to Partnership applicants.

2. Competitive Preference Priorities (CPPs) and Invitational Priority (IP) – TO BE UPDATED PRIOR TO NEXT COMPETITION

a. **CPP 1** – Under CPP 1, an applicant may be eligible to receive up to 2 additional points. For more details, please refer to the *Federal Register* Notice Inviting Applications. If you are applying for CPP 1, please provide the requested information below.

i. Provide the PR/Award Number below for any successful GEAR UP State grant that your organization implemented prior to August 14, 2008.

P334S

P334S

ii. Provide a brief description below of prior, demonstrated commitment to early intervention leading to college access through collaboration and replication of successful strategies.

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This table can be expanded, if necessary.

Note: Applicants addressing CPP 2, CPP 3, and CPP 4 must provide details in a separately uploaded CPP file in the Project Narrative Section of the application.

b. **CPP 2** – Under CPP 2, an applicant may be eligible to receive up to 5 additional points related to increasing postsecondary education access, affordability, completion, and post-enrollment success for underserved students by establishing a system of high-quality data collection and analysis. For more details, please refer to the *Federal Register* Notice Inviting Applications.

Did you address CPP 2 in your application? ____ Yes ____ No

c. **CPP 3** – Under CPP 3, an applicant may be eligible to receive up to 5 additional points related to meeting student social, emotional, and academic needs. For more details, please refer to the *Federal Register* Notice Inviting Applications.

Did you address CPP 3 in your application? ____ Yes ____ No

d. **CPP 4** – Under CPP 4, an applicant may be eligible to receive 3 additional points if their application is supported by evidence that meets the definition of ‘moderate evidence’. For more details, please refer to the *Federal Register* Notice Inviting Applications.

- i. Did you address CPP 4 in your application? ____ Yes ____ No
- ii. Did you fill out the Evidence Form (OMB 1894-0001) located in the forms section of the application package? ____ Yes ____ No

e. **Invitational Priority** – Supporting Highly Mobile Youth

Did you address the Invitational Priority in your application? ____ Yes ____ No

3. In the table below, please list the name of the organization for each partner (**including the applicant organization**), the organizational code using the key below, the total amount each partner will contribute over the six or seven year performance period, and a brief description of the contribution.

	Name of Organization	Org Cod e	Contribution	Briefly describe the type of contribution (e.g., salary, fringe benefits, supplies, equipment, scholarships, travel, and con- tracts)
1			\$	
2			\$	
3			\$	
4			\$	

This table can be expanded, if needed.

Organizational Code

CBO=Community-Based Organization; **NPO**=Not-For-Profit Organization, non-CBO; **FBO**=Faith-based Organization; **HBCU**=Historically Black College or University; **TCCU**=American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities; **HSI**=Hispanic Serving Institution; **IHE**=Institution of Higher Education; **SCH**=School; **LEA**=School District; **ACY**=State Agency; **BUS**=Business; **PO**=Professional Organization; **O**=Other Type of Organization

Note: You can use more than one organizational code, if necessary (e.g., IHE/HSI).

4. **Implementation Model** – Please check below which model you are proposing to implement.

- ☐ a. Cohort Model
☐ b. Priority Students Model

- ☐ c. Models a and b

5. **Priority Students Model** –

- a. If you are implementing the priority students model, please indicate below the number of students you propose to serve each year.

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

- b. List the grade level(s) you are planning to serve (e.g., 7th - 12th grades). _____

- c. List the type(s) of priority/disconnected students the project will serve (e.g., 12th graders, free and reduced-priced lunch, foster, homeless, and disabled). _____

6. **Cohort Model** –

If you are implementing the cohort model, please answer the following questions:

- a. One Grade Level. Are you planning to serve at least one grade level of students in the target school(s) as your cohort? ____ Yes ____ No
- b. Continued Services. Are you planning to provide services to participating GEAR UP students **beginning no later than 7th grade** through the 12th grade? ____ Yes ____ No
- c. First Year of College. Are you planning to provide services to GEAR UP students through their first year of attendance at an institution of higher education?
 ____ Yes ____ No

Note: When selecting the starting grade level, please keep in mind that you must continue to provide services to students until they graduate from secondary school or until their first year of college, depending on the six- or seven-year performance period. Such services must be rendered to students who are left in the pipeline after Federal funds have been discontinued.

- d. Target School Eligibility. Please provide information on the originating target schools in the table below. The originating school is the school or schools in which your GEAR UP project will start implementing services. Applicants with more than one school district must fill out a chart for each district. **Important note: All originating target schools must be presented in your application.**

School District:				
	Name of Originating	Grade Levels	% of Students	NCES School ID#

	Target School	(e.g., 6,7,8)	Eligible for Free & Reduced-Price Lunch	
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

This table can be expanded, if needed.

Notes: 1) You can find the NCES ID for your school(s) by going to <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch>. 2) All originating target schools should be presented in your application. School eligibility is determined based on the information provided in the application. If an application is approved for funding, school changes may be approved based on special or extenuating circumstances.

If your State/school district does not collect free and reduced-price lunch data for the originating target school(s), please **describe** below what method is used (e.g., percentage for Community Eligibility Provision) to determine high-poverty schools.

This table can be expanded, if needed.

e. Students to be Served. In the table below, please indicate the number of students your project intends to serve in each grade level per year of the six- or seven-year grant performance period.

Applicants should not include any proposed students in the shaded area of the table, unless your project is serving students from a previous GEAR UP grant. Please provide the project number for the previous grant: P334S_____.

GRADE LEVEL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7
First Year IHE							
12 th							
11 th							
10 th							
9 th							
8 th							
7 th							
6 th							
5 th							

4 th							
3 rd							
2 nd							
1 st							
Kindergarten							
Total Students Served							

Note: Projects can only serve students in the 7th year who are in high school or in their first year of postsecondary education. In addition, projects implementing a priority students model should not fill out the table above.

f. Public Housing Focus. Please list below the name and address of the public-housing complex(es) or area(s) that you are planning to serve.

No.	Name of Public Housing Project	Address
1		
2		

This table can be expanded, if necessary.

7. Required Services – Please provide a brief outline in the table below of proposed outreach and supportive services that will be implemented to accomplish the activities that are required by statute. **Note: All objectives and services should be presented in the Project Narrative section of your application, under the Quality of Project Design selection criterion.**

Required Activities	List proposed <u>outreach and supportive services</u> that will be implemented to accomplish required activities.
Example: Increase the number of students who enroll in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework	Example: Counseling, mentoring, curriculum enrichment
1. Increase student participation in comprehensive mentoring.	
2. Increase students' knowledge of financial aid for postsecondary education.	
3. Increase the number of students who enroll in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework.	
4. Increase the number of students who graduate from high school.	
5. Increase the number of students who apply for college.	
6. Increase the number of students who enroll in postsecondary education.	
7. Increase the number of students who receive scholarships.	

This table can be expanded, if necessary.

8. Project Budget –

a. Federal Funds Requested. The total amount of Federal funds a State project can receive each year is \$5 million. Did you request more than \$5 million each year in your Budget Summary Form? ____ Yes ____ No

b. Required Match. The non-Federal cost provided by a project must be no less than 50 percent of the total cost of the project at the end of the six- or seven-year project performance period. Are the total six- or seven-year matching contributions presented on the Budget Summary Form equal to or greater than the total six- or seven-year Federal funds requested? ____ Yes ____ No

Note: The matching requirement is 50 percent of the entire project, combining federal and non-federal funds, not 50 percent of what is requested in Federal funds. For instance, if an applicant requests a six- or seven-year total of \$3 million in Federal funds, the matching contribution required is not \$1.5 million. The required matching contribution is \$3 million.

c. Please provide below the amount of Federal funds you are requesting and matching contributions for each year of the project period.

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	*Total
Federal								
Match								
Total								

Note: 1) A project cannot request more Federal funds in subsequent project years than the total amount requested in the first year. 2) *The total matching contributions should be at least equal to the total Federal funds requested for the six or seven years of the grant.

d. State Funding Allocation. State funds must be allocated as follows: no less than 25 percent and no more than 50 percent of Federal funds must be allocated for activities and all remaining funds must be allocated for scholarships to eligible GEAR UP students. Applicants can allocate more than 50 percent for activities if they receive an exception. Applicants for an exception must demonstrate in the application that they have another means or multiple means of providing scholarships that meet the minimum Pell Grant requirements to students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship.

i. Did you allocate at least 25 percent and no more than 50 percent of Federal funds, as outlined on the Budget Summary Form, for activities? ____ Yes ____ No

ii. If you are planning to use more than 50 percent of the Federal funds for activities, please briefly describe below how eligible students will receive scholarships through another means or multiple means, such as by providing a list of other sources of aid that reduce or eliminate the need for the grantee to provide scholarships from their federal funding; the projected number of students that the grantee expects to receive aid through those sources; and an estimate of the number of students eligible for a GEAR UP scholarship that are not expected to receive aid through those other sources, if any.

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This table can be expanded, if necessary.

Note: If you propose to provide scholarships through another means, you will have to report the number of GEAR UP students who received scholarships and the average amount disbursed.

iii. Please indicate below the dollar amount and percentage of the Federal funds requested that will be allocated for scholarships and activities.

Category	Federal Funds Requested	% of Funds Re- quested
Scholarships	\$	
Activities	\$	
Total	\$	

e. Indirect Cost Rate. GEAR UP projects a) can only charge indirect costs to the grant if the organization/agency has an approved indirect cost rate agreement; and b) the maximum amount of indirect costs must be no more than 8 percent of modified direct costs (direct costs excluding scholarships and equipment).

Note: this requirement applies to Federal and matching funds.

i. Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?
 ____ Yes ____ No

ii. If yes, please provide below the period covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement:

From: ____/____/____ To: ____/____/____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ____ ED ____ Other (please specify): _____

iii. For Restricted Rate Programs, are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that: ____ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or ____ Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY FORM

This form presents the amount of Federal funding requested and non-Federal contributions for the entire 6- or 7-year project performance period. **Applicants must fill out and submit both sections (Federal and non-Federal) of the form.**

<u>PART I – FEDERAL FUNDS REQUESTED</u>								
Category	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	Total
1. Salaries and Wages								
2. Employee Benefits								
3. Travel								
4. Materials and Supplies								
5. Consultants and Contracts								
6. Other								
A. Total Direct Costs <i>(Sum of lines 1-6)</i>								
B. Total Indirect Costs <i>(Cannot be greater than 8% of Total Direct Costs)</i>								
C. Equipment								
D. Scholarships/ Tuition Assistance								
TOTAL COMMITMENT (Lines A+B+C+D)								*

Important Note: Please do not include a requested amount of Federal funds in years two through six or seven that is more than the amount that is requested in Year 1.

PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY FORM (CONTINUED)

PART II – NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS								
Category	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	Total
1. Salaries and Wages								
2. Employee Benefits								
3. Travel								
4. Materials and Supplies								
5. Consultants and Contracts								
6. Other								
A. Total Direct Costs <i>(Sum of lines 1-6)</i>								
B. Total Indirect Costs <i>(Cannot be greater than 8% of Total Direct Costs)</i>								
C. Equipment								
D. Scholarships/ Tuition Assistance								
TOTAL COMMITMENT (Lines A+B+C+D)								*

* The total proposed matching contributions in Part II of the Budget Summary Form for the six- or seven-year performance period should be at least equal to the proposed total for Federal expenditures in Part I of the Budget Summary Form. For example, if the total cost to run the project for the six- or seven-year performance period is \$300, the Federal contribution would be \$150 and the required matching contribution must be at least \$150.

FIRST-YEAR BUDGET NARRATIVE FORM

Please provide a written narrative for each budget line item, which explains: (1) the basis for estimating the costs of professional personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs, and any projected expenditures; (2) how the major cost items relate to the proposed activities; and (3) the costs of evaluation.

Direct Cost	Federal Funds Requested for Year 1	Non-Federal Contributions for Year 1
1. Salaries and Wages		
2. Employee Benefits		
3. Travel		
4. Materials and Supplies		
5. Consultants and Contracts		
6. Other		
A. Total Direct Costs: <i>(Sum of lines 1-6)</i>		
B. Total Indirect Costs: <i>(cannot be greater than 8% of Total Direct Costs)</i>		
C. Equipment		
D. Scholarships/ Tuition Assistance		
TOTAL REQUESTED <i>(A+B+C+D)</i>		

This table can be expanded, if necessary.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STANDARD FORMS

- **Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)**
- **Department of Education Supplemental Form for the SF 424**
- **Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524)**
- **General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements- Section 427**
- **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (optional)**
- **Evidence Form (1894-0001)**

To obtain instructions for standard forms included in this application package, please visit <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

PAPERWORK BURDEN STATEMENT

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1840-0821. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended). If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this application, please contact GEAR UP, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202 directly. [Note: Please do not return the completed application to this address.]