GEAR UP College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium

Additional Common Definitions:
GEAR UP Student Definition

A GEAR UP student, for the purposes of the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (CCREC) including both ACT-led and CCREC-led research and evaluation, is a student that is eligible by definition to receive direct GEAR UP services through a cohort\(^1\) or priority\(^2\) model of program implementation. Direct GEAR UP services are defined as any service that is documented and coded for evaluation and/or reporting purposes by a CCREC-participating state GEAR UP program. Students who are enrolled in schools that are implementing GEAR UP services, regardless of model type (cohort, priority, or hybrid), participate at different levels of service that are documented through various data collection systems. Additionally, over the six- or seven-year life of a GEAR UP project, students enroll, withdraw, and/or re-enroll in schools where GEAR UP services are and/or are not provided. Therefore, to effectively analyze student outcomes for research, evaluation, and reporting purposes, participating CCREC states agree to collect and track the following information:

- How long a student has been in the GEAR UP program, i.e., a time stamp of entry, exit, and possible re-entry into the program;
- The type of GEAR UP student, i.e., cohort or priority student;
- The amount of GEAR UP services a student has received, i.e., the hours of services that will subsequently be coded as low, medium, high, or not applicable for none;
- The number of service incidences;
- The grade-level at each time the student is (re)enrolled/(re)enters program, as applicable; and
- The grade-level at time of each GEAR UP service.

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1: **Cohort Model**: The cohort or whole-grade model involves providing services to all students in the participating grade levels, rather than a selected group of students. By law, a cohort must start no later than the 7th grade, and services must be provided to the students in the cohort through the 12th grade. Each cohort must include either: (1) all of the students in a particular grade level at a participating school that has a 7th grade and in which at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act; or (2) all of the students in a particular grade level, who reside in public housing, as defined in section 3(b)(1) of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

2: **Priority Student Model**: Priority students are defined in the law as any student in secondary school who is eligible to be counted under section 1124(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; eligible for assistance under a State program funded under part A or E of Title IV of the Social Security Act; eligible for assistance under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; or otherwise considered by the applicant to be a disconnected student.
Additional Common Definitions:

- **High School Graduation**: High school graduation status should be applied to students who received a high school diploma. People who completed the 12th grade but did not receive a high school diploma are not included; students who complete summer courses to receive a high school diploma are included.

- **Postsecondary Enrollment**\(^1\): Postsecondary enrollment is defined as at least part-time enrollment in a postsecondary, degree-granting institution by the fall semester after high school graduation, or earlier. Postsecondary enrollment also includes students if they attained a degree concurrent with their high school diploma.

- **Postsecondary Persistence**\(^2\): Student persistence is defined as enrollment at any higher education institution into the second year.

- **Postsecondary Graduation**: Postsecondary graduation is defined as graduation from a 2- or 4-year postsecondary institution up to six years after high school graduation.

- **FAFSA Completion**: FAFSA completion will be documented and entered on each GEAR UP student as verified by a Student Aid Report (SAR) that shows the student’s FAFSA is complete indicating no additional follow-up needed. Schools can use the FAFSA Completion by High School to determine the number of applications submitted and number of complete applications by high school to make data-driven decisions and to conduct a secondary verification on student-level data.


NOTE: The Consortium will calculate a percentage of FAFSA completers by high school but would need to agree on the denominator, which is being proposed as the number of seniors at the end of the academic year as defined by the date range each state provided for their project.

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\(^1\): This includes students who were enrolled in postsecondary courses during high school or the summer preceding the fall semester if they continued enrollment after high school graduation.

\(^2\): This definition assumes that a student enrolled in a college in the fall after high school graduation and remained enrolled the following fall. This definition accounts for the fact that students may not attend college for a part of a year, (e.g., stop-out for one semester) but when he or she re-enrolls the following fall, s/he is still pursuing postsecondary education (i.e., persisting).