

TO COLLEGE AND BEYOND

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN GEAR UP

The University of Texas at Austin GEAR UP To College and Beyond project (UT GEAR UP TCB) at four (4) middle schools, in Southwest Independent School District (ISD) seeks qualified and experienced individuals to serve as School-Based Site Coordinators (“Coordinators”). As Coordinators, these individuals will serve middle school GEAR UP cohort students starting in Grade 7 and subsequently follow them through high school to Grade 12. Coordinators will help GEAR UP cohort students realize their dream of applying for and attending college. Working alongside middle and high school staff, Coordinators will assist students with academic and college knowledge counseling, mentoring, college admissions, financial aid, and scholarship applications. Coordinators will also plan and assist with college awareness activities at the school-level to meet UT GEAR UP TCB project objectives and goals.

The position requires tact, diplomacy, and a strong commitment to service. Successful candidates will demonstrate the ability to collaborate creatively and effectively with others in order to solve problems and reach goals. Successful candidates will also demonstrate excellent organizational and communication skills, including the ability to listen carefully and to write and speak persuasively.

Coordinators will report to the Principal at the middle or high school they serve and the Program Director at The Institute for Public School Initiatives (IPSI). Coordinators will be expected to live within their service areas and to involve themselves in the surrounding communities.

Qualifications:

The candidate should have: **Required** - Bachelor's degree in counseling, social work, child development, education, public administration, or related field and at least 5 years' experience in working with middle school or high school students. And at least 3 years' experience, in-depth knowledge of secondary education requirements in Texas. Knowledge of postsecondary education options, application procedures, and admission requirements. Knowledge of financial aid and scholarship opportunities and FAFSA application processes. Strong ability to communicate with students, parents, and school staff verbally and in writing. Strong preference for bilingual/bicultural (Spanish) fluency/knowledge.

Responsibilities:

Coordinators will be expected to tailor programs and activities to meet the specific needs of their assigned schools and perform the following primary functions:

1. Provide academic enrichment, informational, and motivational opportunities and interventions, including mentoring, tutoring, and advising activities (before school, during school, and after-school) for GEAR UP cohort students including for at-risk, LEP, and special education students.

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- Monitor GEAR UP cohort student grades, attendance, and transcripts to promote on-time promotion and graduation and completion of appropriate rigorous coursework;
- Assesses academic and personal needs of GEAR UP students through transcript evaluations, student interviews, and school counselor recommendations;
- Collaborates with school site team to develop and implement a service plan to meet students' specific needs and monitor progress of high school graduation and college readiness;
- Maintains GEAR UP cohort student information including files on academic and advisement progress and student participation in GEAR UP using a caseload management approach through the grant-sanctioned data system;
- Supplement school's efforts to help GEAR UP cohort students meet passing standards in STAAR and EOC assessment and meet criteria in PSAT, SAT, ACT, or TSI;
- Coordinates access for GEAR UP cohort students to qualified counselors at the school or district level;
- Leverage grant resources to ensure GEAR UP cohort students avail of partner-provided services in academic and non-academic fields.

2. Organize group events such as student assemblies and pep rallies, family night events, and other student and parent support activities (before school, during school, and after-school) that encourage students and their families to consider, plan for, and apply to colleges and universities

- Visit classrooms, assemblies, and club meetings to offer GEAR UP services and emphasize the importance of college;
- Work with local community groups—non-profit organizations, community groups, churches, boys and girls clubs, social service providers—to offer group events outside school setting and hours;
- Recognize and celebrate student success and help motivate GEAR UP cohort students do better in school.

3. Provide one-on-one admissions and financial-aid advice to any GEAR UP cohort student or their family seeking assistance

- Encourage each GEAR UP cohort student to consider a broad range of appropriate college choices;
- Develop for each GEAR UP cohort student a comprehensive college timeline, including application deadlines for admission and financial aid;
- Help each GEAR UP cohort student complete and submit admissions and financial-aid applications;
- Assist each GEAR UP cohort student in interpreting correspondence from colleges, including offers of admission and financial aid.

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4. Submit in-kind match and other supporting documentation upon request to the Fiscal Analyst as per grant requirements and assist district personnel in identifying match opportunities

- Recruits, trains, and serves as a lead to GEAR UP cohort student and hourly employees, tutor/mentors, program assistants, college coaches, volunteers, and parent helpers; assigns work schedules of student and hourly staff and volunteers;
- Performs a variety of administrative duties in support of the GEAR UP grant, including collection of volunteer and donation forms;
- Maintain documentation files of all grant activities, correspondence, reports, procedures, and presentations related to the GEAR UP program;
- Develop outreach materials, including newsletters and social media sites.

5. Establish productive working relationships with principals, counselors, and teachers in the assigned middle and high school

- Assess, in consultation with the UT GEAR UP TCB Project director and school personnel, the particular needs of each school, and adapt programs and activities to meet these needs;
- Actively seek the advice and counsel of the Principal at each partner school;
- Establishes vertical teams with assistance of district and school staff to develop a support system for GEAR UP cohort students and to ease the transition between middle school, high school, and college;

6. Assist in the efforts of other UT GEAR UP TCB Coordinators within the district and the cohort

- Visit other schools within the district and the UT GEAR UP TCB cohort to coordinate events and services;
- Help organize, provide support for, and attend evening and weekend events organized by other Coordinators.

7. Assist in the assessment and long-term sustainability of the program

- Identify, collect, enter, and interpret key progress and outcome data in order to assist the Project Director and Evaluation staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the UT GEAR UP TCB project;
- Submit monthly progress reports to the Project Director documenting progress and outcome data;
- Meet, as appropriate, with evaluators from the external evaluator,
- Represent UT GEAR UP TCB, as requested by the Project Director, to potential supporters and to other interested parties.

8. Maintain expertise in college knowledge and readiness

- Participate fully in two weeks of training each summer on the UT Austin campus;

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- In consultation with the Program Director, seek out and participate in other opportunities for professional development.

Terms of Employment

Full-time, 211 days

Salary: Based on Teacher Pay Scale

This is a six-year grant funded position; contingent upon grant funding.

Evaluation

Performance of this position will be evaluated in accordance with district policies.