Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad

Annual Implementation Report

Evaluation of Year 3

Submitted to:

Texas Education Agency
William B. Travis Building
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701-1494

Submitted by:
ICF
9300 Lee Highway
Fairfax, VA 22031

and

Agile Analytics
1621 West 6th Street
Austin, TX 78703

Submitted on:
August 2021

ICF

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Contributing Authors

Samantha Spinney, PhD
Brooke Shelley
Matt McKinney
Lauren Kennedy
Denise Rovzar
Jing Sun
Thomas J. Horwood

Prepared for

ICF

Table of Contents

Tables

Figures

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AP	Advanced Placement
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AVID	Advancement Via Individual Determination
CAC	College Advising Corps
CCMP	College, Career, & Military Preparation
CCR	College and Career Readiness
CFES Brilliant Pathways	Formerly referred to as College for Every Student, the organization changed its name to CFES Brilliant Pathways after expanding its mission to support students in both college and career.
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CTE	Career and Technical Education
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FTE	Full time equivalent
GEAR UP	Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
GO Center	Although not technically an acronym, GO Centers are college and career centers located in high schools.
IB	International Baccalaureate
ISD	Independent School District
PD	Professional Development
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PSAT	Preliminary SAT
STAAR	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TAPR	Texas Academic Performance Report
TASFA	Texas Application for State Financial Aid
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
TNTP	Formerly referred to as The New Teacher Project, the organization changed its name to simply TNTP after its mission expanded beyond only serving new teachers.
TSIA	Texas Success Initiative Assessment
TXOC	Texas OnCourse

Executive Summary

Now in its third year of program implementation, the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad program (referred to as "GEAR UP" in this report) made important progress during the 2020–21 school year to support college and career readiness for students from low-income schools in Texas.

Program Overview

GEAR UP provides targeted services to a grade-specific primary cohort of students who were in Grade 7 during the 2018–19 school year (i.e., the **class of 2024**) through their first year of postsecondary education (i.e., through the 2024–25 academic year). GEAR UP also provides basic services to a **priority cohort** of students consisting of all other students in Grade 9–12 attending participating high schools in the grantee districts during each year of the 7-year grant (i.e., from school years 2018–19 to 2024–25). The core strategies conceptualized in GEAR UP to close the college achievement gap include increasing academic rigor, preparing middle school students, expanding college and career advising and resources for high school students, leveraging technology to expand advising capacity, and developing local alliances (the full description of GEAR UP strategies is listed in Appendix A).

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is working with participating districts to make a range of programs and services aligned with these core strategies available to class of 2024 and priority cohort students, such as comprehensive individualized college and career counseling, college visits, and opportunities to participate in an academic enrichment or college exploration summer program. Parents/guardians of class of 2024 and priority cohort students also have access to individualized college and career counseling and a variety of parent workshops/events. In addition, teachers and personnel at GEAR UP campuses have access to professional development (PD) to improve academic rigor and college and career counseling services.

TEA has partnered with three non-profit organizations—CFES Brilliant Pathways, Advise TX, and College Advising Corps (CAC)—to implement college and career counseling/advising services at the high school level.[1] Each organization is serving two districts and providing at least one full-time advisor to serve each GEAR UP high school. TEA has also partnered with TNTP to implement various PD components of the grant.[2] Finally, TEA has partnered with Texas OnCourse (TXOC) to develop curricula, including the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness (TXOC CCR) curriculum for middle school students as well as the new TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program (TXOC Academy).

---

[1] Founded initially as College For Every Student, the organization changed its name in 2018 to CFES Brilliant Pathways to better reflect its expanded mission to support students in both college and career. For more information, please visit https://brilliantpathways.org/faq-items/what-does-cfes-stand-for/.
[2] Founded originally as the New Teacher Project (TNTP) in 1997, TNTP is an organization that helps educators improve effectiveness in classroom teaching: https://tntp.org/. The organization changed its name to simply TNTP after its mission expanded beyond only serving new teachers.

Evaluation of Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad

This report presents findings from the implementation study during the third year—school year 2020–21 (Year 3)—when the class of 2024 students were in Grade 9 and the priority cohort students were in Grade 10–12. Findings were derived from data collected via stakeholder surveys, virtual site visits, and telephone interviews (see Appendix B for full methodological details). The report highlights how GEAR UP is being implemented, promising practices, how the program is being sustained and what activities should be sustained, and how program activities are being scaled across the state (see Appendix B for the list of evaluation questions used to guide the implementation study).

There are some limitations regarding the Annual Implementation Report for Year 3. Given the varied challenges with school operations as a result of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic—along with shifting priorities for students, parents, and personnel—survey response rates and virtual focus group participation levels were lower than expected. Further, the data for this report were collected in March and April 2021, whereas Year 3 implementation continued on through the end of the school year. Therefore, the implementation findings provided in this report only represent part of the school year (summer 2020 through March/April 2021), rather than the full year. Ultimately, because of these factors, the findings shared in this report must be interpreted with caution.

Key Findings

▶ **Academic preparedness among students.** Class of 2024 students who indicated that they were enrolled in Algebra I in Year 3 (as Grade 9 students) generally agreed that they were prepared for the course but were also less likely to agree that the course was challenging. Additionally, principals from Districts 2 and 5 reported that dual credit enrollment has continued to increase due to partnerships with local community colleges and increased Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) testing.[3]

▶ **Tutoring opportunities offered to students.** GEAR UP continued to offer the necessary academic support for students with a failing grade in Year 3, with students reporting that they received tutoring across several subjects and in different formats such as in class and after school. While GEAR UP coordinators cited the use of virtual tutoring as a means to minimize interactions during COVID-19, they also found it difficult to implement. A majority of student survey respondents who participated in tutoring found it to be helpful.

▶ **Test preparation support.** Other academic support in Year 3 included preparation for college entrance examinations, with students reporting that they agreed that they knew where to find Preliminary SAT (PSAT)/SAT, ACT/ACT Aspire, and TSIA preparation resources, which increased significantly from Year 2 to Year 3.[4] Among all priority cohort students who reported in the student survey that they completed any test preparation, nearly

---

[3] To protect the anonymity of school districts and personnel, districts are not referred to by name but according to a randomly generated number that serves as a pseudonym (e.g., District 1, District 2).
[4] Throughout this report, "significance" refers to findings that were determined to be statistically significant through the use of statistical tests.

three-quarters believed that the test preparation they received helped them to prepare for the test.

▶ **Advising services.** In Year 3, non-profit GEAR UP advisors began working with class of 2024 students and continued working with priority cohort students using in-person and virtual advising services and spaces to offer college and career information. Zoom meetings, newsletters, and texting were used to disseminate information and provide advising. Student survey respondents reported that college plans, grades, and career plans or interests were the most frequently discussed topics in individualized advising sessions, with parents indicating that their child's course selection and scheduling, child's grades, and dual credit opportunities were the most discussed topics in the parent individualized advising sessions.

▶ **College and career readiness activities.** College visits, college and career fairs, and work-based learning activities were offered in addition to advising in Year 3. With most of these activities being offered virtually, both cohorts reported in the survey that college visits consisted mostly of virtual campus tours and virtual speaker sessions. According to GEAR UP coordinators, work-based learning activities included meetings with local businesses to understand ideal candidate types, mock interviews with local bank employees, and virtual learning sessions. Students were generally *Satisfied* with college visits, college and career fairs, and work-based learning activities.

▶ **Parent activities.** According to the class of 2024 parent survey respondents, parent events hosted by GEAR UP schools included topics on college and career advising, high school course alignment with certain careers, and different college options. Priority cohort parents noted more event topics on types of colleges, academic requirements for college, and options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers. Nearly half of parents who did not attend a parent or family event reported they did not know about it.

▶ **Student and parent awareness.** Despite the information disseminated via advising sessions and other GEAR UP activities, student and parent site visit participants and survey respondents across the districts mentioned low awareness of postsecondary education financing items.

▶ **PD and vertical teaming initiatives.** GEAR UP offered several PD initiatives in Year 3, including TNTP-led teacher and administrator PD to enhance academic rigor, coaching and mentoring, the TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program, and vertical teaming. A noted challenge with PD in Year 3 was that substitute teachers were not available to provide coverage for personnel participating in PD activities. Personnel agreement levels decreased from Year 2 to Year 3 regarding how PD-provided strategies increased rigor in their courses and how easy those strategies were to implement. Of those that participated in at least one coaching session, the most discussed topics included student engagement, virtual or distance-based learning, and academic supports for students. Counselors and other school staff participated in a 31-module self-paced TXOC Academy in Year 3 to learn about a range of postsecondary advising topics, with most agreeing that they learned new information about postsecondary education and feeling being better prepared to deliver individualized advising. Vertical teaming participants also agreed that the vertical teaming they participated in was helpful in aligning curriculum.

▶ **Sustainability initiatives.** All six GEAR UP districts sustained the TXOC CCR curriculum for Grade 8 students, with one coordinator noting its helpfulness to expose younger students

to college and career topics. Four of the six districts continued to enroll Grade 8 students in Algebra I, with some districts increasing the number of sections of the course. One district added a summer bridge program to remediate rising Grade 9 students who had not been successful in Algebra I in Grade 8.

▶ **GEAR UP feedback and scaling initiatives.** In Year 3, TXOC added nine new districts to the TXOC CCR curriculum scaling initiative for a total of 18 districts piloting the curriculum in Year 3. Teachers who implemented the TXOC CCR in GEAR UP schools felt that the curriculum was ready to be scaled more widely though recommended that more training be developed for teachers. While district scaling survey respondents *Agreed* that the curriculum provided students information on college and financial aid options, they reported lower levels of agreement that the curriculum offered grade-appropriate materials.

▶ **Grant implementation support.** The implementation of GEAR UP was viewed positively in Year 3, with high school principals reporting they felt GEAR UP goals aligned with campus goals and that the integration between the two was mutually beneficial. Many personnel, students, and parents were unfamiliar with GEAR UP services and activities in Year 3, however, as well as how college and career information was disseminated. Progress-monitoring meetings and coordinator professional learning communities (PLCs) in Year 3 were facilitated by TNTP, which offered coordinators and other school and district personnel opportunities to reflect on grant implementation progress and allowed for collaborative brainstorming. TEA staff explained that the change in divisions in which GEAR UP is housed at TEA as well as their strong communication with districts about their local needs also served to strengthen implementation in Year 3.

Promising Practices

Promising practices include innovative practices or strategies described anecdotally by grant stakeholders as successful. While stakeholders perceived these promising practices as facilitators to successful implementation, the evaluation team has not independently assessed whether the promising practices are associated with improved grant outcomes. The promising practices identified in Year 3 are as follows:

▶ **Mentor high school dual credit students with college students who are alumni.** The District 4 coordinator reported that alumni from their high school mentored a group of 15 dual credit students and other Grade 10 students to help inform them of dual credit programs and other college and career information. According to the coordinator, mentors would call and text, and ultimately helped increase the number of students and parents who had access to the information.

▶ **Provide monthly student and parent newsletters dedicated to college and career readiness.** A non-profit advising organization reported that in Year 3 online monthly newsletters were provided to students and parents with information regarding what the recipient should be focusing on that month. According to a non-profit advisor, the main difference between the student and parent newsletters was that the parent newsletter had a section with questions parents were encouraged to ask their child that month.

▶ **Use a virtual college visit program to increase exposure.** The District 1 coordinator noted that an online software program offered students and parents access to virtual college visits. One of the benefits of the online program is that it provides the district with the ability

to highlight the universities they wish to expose students to, while allowing students and parents to access them on their own time anywhere. According to the District 1 coordinator, the online program will be used next year even when the district returns to in-person instruction.

▸ **Establish a dedicated work-based learning coordinator.** The District 4 coordinator described that work-based learning opportunities offered to students in Year 3 were not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the support offered by their work-based learning coordinator and their efforts to maintain a relationship with local businesses.

▸ **Implement innovative parent events to increase engagement.** According to the District 4 coordinator, during one of the district's "progress meetings" the district developed and ultimately implemented an idea for how to boost parent engagement, the "Chat & Chew," saying that students and parents would receive dinner if they came to speak to an advisor about various college and career topics.

▸ **Invite former students to participate in vertical teaming.** The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator mentioned that a panel of former students participated in one of the district's vertical teaming sessions to provide insight on their high school experience and suggest improvements for teachers. The coordinator explained that the former students "were able to talk to [the] teachers about some of the things that they wished were a little bit different, and how the teacher could improve."

▸ **Sustain efforts to increase Algebra I enrollment rates among Grade 8 students.** A high school principal in District 3 cited their middle school's progress in sustaining increased Grade 8 enrollment in Algebra I, as well as broader remediation efforts initiated at the high school to support any students who need additional support. The principal described the use of a summer bridge program and additional support at high school once students arrive for Grade 9. According to the principal, these efforts have supported increased Algebra I enrollment in Grade 8: "It's the largest amount of [students] ever taking Algebra I, ever."

▸ **Invite guest speakers to supplement the TXOC CCR curriculum and increase exposure to postsecondary education and career options.** TXOC CCR teachers from District 3 highlighted that one of the key successes of the course was the use of guest speakers, which sometimes included teachers from the high school who also held other careers. TXOC CCR teachers suggested that district administrators facilitate partnerships with local colleges, whose staff/students could additionally serve as guest speakers.

▸ **Support districts in the use of data to understand progress and drive implementation.** TEA, TNTP, and most district coordinators reported that they were satisfied with the Year 3 progress-monitoring meetings. Grant staff reflected on the data they collected for GEAR UP during these meetings, identified gaps in progress and successful areas of implementation, and developed strategic action plans to address challenges. Districts should consider continuing to monitor their grant data to understand their progress in implementation in a style that fits well for them as a whole, which may help tailor the services to meet the needs of their students and school communities.

▸ **Establish monthly communications to share program-wide updates, upcoming activities, and deadlines.** One of the ways that TEA staff strengthened their communication with districts about GEAR UP was through a monthly communique which highlighted upcoming activities and deadlines. This method helped GEAR UP coordinators

remain informed of important dates and events as their districts remained focused on academics and instruction.

Recommendations

In addition, the evaluation team identified the following recommendations for TEA to consider in future grant implementation and implementation of similar programming outside of GEAR UP:

▸ **Reprioritize GEAR UP goals in Year 4.** While many schools were focused on transitioning to virtual instruction and maintaining student attendance and engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Year 3, school and GEAR UP personnel have the opportunity to reprioritize GEAR UP goals in Year 4 that were difficult to achieve this year. Feedback from students and staff indicated that they preferred to participate in meetings and class while in person instead of virtually. As it is safe to do so, GEAR UP staff should consider how to engage with stakeholders in person. When it may not yet be safe to meet in person, GEAR UP coordinators may consider collecting feedback on other innovative ways to meet and increase engagement in a virtual setting.

▸ **Ensure recommendations made by external partners, such as TNTP, take state and local context into consideration.** Some school and GEAR UP personnel commented in site visits that TNTP did not always provide relevant or applicable recommendations, noting specifically that vertical alignment recommendations made by TNTP did not align with the needs of the district or that TNTP suggestions were not provided through the lens of a Texas context. As external organizations provide recommendations and support implementation in GEAR UP districts, they may increase buy-in if they frame ideas and suggestions in state and local contexts to demonstrate their understanding of how they are tailored to fit specific student and school needs.

▸ **Provide more opportunities for students to participate in practice PSAT, SAT, ACT, or TSIA exams.** Student site visit participants recommended their school provide them with practice tests to help them become more prepared for college entrance exams. Students commented that they either did not participate in any test preparation activities or did not receive test preparation resources to prepare them for the content of the exams or the types of questions to expect.

▸ **Align college and career communication topics and timing with the interests and values of students and parents.** Understanding that not all parents have interest in college or career information, it may be helpful for coordinators and non-profit advisors to consider strategies for tailoring communications to better resonate with student and family values and address any historical or cultural sentiments towards postsecondary education among community members. Tailoring the communications to specific grade levels of students may be another way to enhance the relevance of messages. Tailoring communication to students and families may help generate interest and better prepare them for postsecondary education, while preventing them from becoming overwhelmed.

▸ **Increase student and parent awareness of financial aid topics through one-on-one advising and enhanced information dissemination.** Student and parent survey responses point to a lack of understanding regarding available financial aid topics as well as limited events in which they received information regarding how to pay for postsecondary education, which may serve as barriers in the pursuit of postsecondary education. Non-profit

advisors and high school counselors may consider incorporating these topics in a grade-appropriate manner in one-on-one advising sessions, other activities and events, and information dissemination efforts to help increase student and parent awareness and understanding of options to fund college.

▸ **Use data to inform how successful GEAR UP services and activities may be sustained.** Progress-monitoring meetings were well received by TEA and most coordinators in Year 3. Looking ahead to Year 4, TNTP, TEA, and GEAR UP coordinators may find it helpful to build time into these meetings to reflect on successful GEAR UP activities and services that should be sustained. As some district and school administrators also attend these progress-monitoring meetings, this may be an ideal time to provide data-driven recommendations regarding services to those who will oversee the implementation and funding after the completion of the grant.

▸ **Address technical issues in the TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program.** Some TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program participants reported that they experienced technical issues in the online module. TXOC may consider addressing these issues as the academy is accessed by other districts across Texas.

▸ **Offer parent events at flexible times in various formats.** Parents continued to suggest for schools to host parent events at multiple times to accommodate varying work schedules, family schedules, and COVID-19 concerns. Feedback from school personnel and GEAR UP coordinators suggest schools may consider offering sessions both in person and virtually (such as Zoom meetings, conference calls, etc.) to increase the opportunities for parents to attend meetings and events. Schools may also consider recording events for parents to view if they were not able to attend the live event.

▸ **Host PD events or trainings at times that cause minimal disruption.** Personnel and TXOC Academy participants reported in the survey and site visits that PD events and trainings (such as the TXOC Academy) were not always conducive to staff schedules and availability. Participants suggested that the summer or before school would be ideal times to complete the TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program modules in a timely manner instead of at the beginning of the school year, which is when participants reported they were required to participate. Those at TXOC and in schools that schedule such PD events may consider times that align with the workflow of school staff to ensure participants have adequate availability and time to participate fully.

▸ **Build awareness of GEAR UP-supported services and activities with a sustainability lens.** Districts are encouraged to think strategically and intentionally about how to name and brand their GEAR UP-supported college and career readiness programming with a sustainability lens in mind. That is, districts should consider how they want students, parents, and school personnel to recognize college and career programming after the grant ends and build out their naming/branding strategy accordingly. It is recommended that districts strategically embed GEAR UP-supported services into structures that exist within their districts. Ultimately, the external evaluation team will also need to adjust site visit and survey instruments to ensure that the team is asking questions about awareness of GEAR UP and/or college and career programming that reflect the intended naming/branding strategy for that programming.

1. Introduction

Now in its third year of program implementation, the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad program (referred to as "GEAR UP" in this report) made important progress during the 2020–21 school year to support college and career readiness for students from low-income schools in Texas. As described in the previous annual implementation report, the GEAR UP program in Texas is funded through a U.S. Department of Education GEAR UP discretionary grant, worth $24.5 million over seven years, which was awarded to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in 2017. With this grant, TEA is aiming to close the state's college achievement gap by providing a variety of services to approximately 10,000 students from six Texas independent school districts (ISDs), including 12 middle schools and high schools, in rural communities in West Texas, Southeast Texas, and the Coastal Bend (Table 1.1). The criteria for selecting these schools included a high economically disadvantaged student population (total average 81.32%) and a campus location in a rural or semi-rural community.

Table 1.1. Texas Districts and Schools Participating in GEAR UP

School District	Region	Middle School(s)	High School
Culberson County-Allamoore ISD	West	Van Horn School	Van Horn School
Education Service Center 19 with San Elizario ISD	West	Ann M. Garcia-Enriquez Middle School	San Elizario High School
Mathis ISD	Coastal Bend	Mathis Middle School	Mathis High School
Sinton ISD	Coastal Bend	E. Merle Smith Middle School	Sinton High School
Sheldon ISD	Southeast	C.E. King Middle School, Michael R. Null Middle School	C.E. King High School
Cleveland ISD	Southeast	Cleveland Middle School	Cleveland High School

Note. ISD – independent school district. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

GEAR UP provides targeted services to a grade-specific primary cohort of students who were in Grade 7 during the 2018–19 school year (i.e., the **class of 2024**) through their first year of postsecondary education (i.e., through the 2024–25 academic year). GEAR UP also provides basic services to a **priority cohort** of students consisting of all other students in Grade 9–12 attending participating high schools in the grantee districts during each year of the 7-year grant (i.e., from school years 2018–19 to 2024–25). The core strategies conceptualized in GEAR UP to close the college achievement gap include increasing academic rigor, preparing middle school students, expanding college and career advising and resources for high school students, leveraging technology to expand advising capacity, and developing local alliances (the full description of GEAR UP strategies is listed in Appendix A).

TEA is working with participating districts to make a range of programs and services aligned with these core strategies available to class of 2024 and priority cohort students, such as comprehensive individualized college and career counseling, college visits, and opportunities to participate in an academic enrichment or college exploration summer program. Parents/guardians of class of 2024 and priority cohort students also have access to individualized college and career counseling and a variety of parent workshops/events. In addition, teachers and personnel at GEAR UP campuses have access

to professional development (PD) to improve academic rigor and college and career counseling services.

To implement the programs and services, TEA has partnered with several organizations. TEA has partnered with three non-profit organizations—CFES Brilliant Pathways, Advise TX, and College Advising Corps (CAC)—to implement college and career counseling/advising services at the high school level.[5] Each organization is serving two districts and providing at least one full-time advisor to serve each GEAR UP high school. TEA has also partnered with TNTP to implement various PD components of the grant.[6] Finally, TEA has partnered with Texas OnCourse (TXOC) to develop curricula, including the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness (TXOC CCR) curriculum for middle school students as well as the new TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program (TXOC Academy).

Through implementation of the core strategies and activities of the grant, GEAR UP seeks to meet several project goals and objectives related to rigorous coursework; promotion, graduation, and postsecondary outcomes; educator training; college entrance examinations; activities and services that provide information to students and families; Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and college application completion; community partnerships; and statewide college and career readiness activities.

TEA envisioned using GEAR UP to not only improve college access and success at the six grantee districts but also to identify the most successful college access and success strategies at those districts that can be scaled statewide. GEAR UP program staff anticipate testing a range of innovations at the grantee districts, including efficient advising models, strategic partnerships, and different technology solutions—including the solutions offered through TXOC.

1.1. Evaluating GEAR UP

In November 2019, TEA contracted with ICF and Agile Analytics to conduct an external, mixed-method evaluation of GEAR UP to measure program impact, implementation, and sustainability, with a focus on identifying best and promising practices and examining statewide reach (see Appendix B for a program logic model that depicts the evaluation design). The ICF team published the first GEAR UP implementation report in April 2021, which shared findings from the first two program years—school years 2018–19 (Year 1) and 2019–20 (Year 2), when the class of 2024 students were in Grade 7 and 8, respectively, and the priority cohort students were in Grade 9–12 (Spinney et al., 2021). Future implementation reports will be published on an annual basis describing implementation for each year of the grant through Year 7 (2024–25). Findings from other components of the evaluation are being published in separate reports. For findings related to progress in meeting project objectives and those regarding the impact of the GEAR UP program on student outcomes during the first two years of program implementation, please see the forthcoming outcomes and impact reports (expected

---

[5] Founded initially as College For Every Student, the organization changed its name in 2018 to CFES Brilliant Pathways to better reflect its expanded mission to support students in both college and career. For more information, please visit https://brilliantpathways.org/faq-items/what-does-cfes-stand-for/.

[6] Founded originally as the New Teacher Project (TNTP) in 1997, TNTP is an organization that helps educators improve effectiveness in classroom teaching: https://tntp.org/. The organization changed its name to simply TNTP after its mission expanded beyond only serving new teachers.

summer 2021).[7] Of note, the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic spread across the U.S. during that reporting period and led to school closures across Texas in March 2020, which substantially disrupted all aspects of schooling, including GEAR UP implementation and the ICF team's evaluation. The effect of the pandemic is reflected in the report's findings. A summary of the report's major findings is presented in Table 1.2; detailed findings may be found in the published report.[8]

---

[7] Forthcoming reports are expected to be published at https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/program-evaluations.

[8] To access the Years 1–2 Annual Implementation Report, please visit https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/program-evaluations/program-evaluations-middle-school-high-school-and-college-preparation/program-evaluation-middle-school-high-school-and-college-preparation-initiatives.

Table 1.2. Summary of Findings from the Years 1–2 Annual Implementation Report

Topic	Years 1–2 Summary of Findings
General Implementation in Year 1	• Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad districts were selected through a competitive grant process. • Implementation focused on planning for the integration of the grant into existing college and career readiness programs. • TNTP conducted a needs assessment to help inform the professional development (PD) to be delivered in Year 2; most districts reported that their needs assessment findings revealed the need to increase academic rigor.
Academic Initiatives	• School principals credited an increase in Algebra I enrollment among Grade 8 students in Year 2 compared to previous years with their district's focus on GEAR UP goals and objectives. • Districts aligned middle school and high school academic language and curriculum and focusing on increasing Advanced Placement (AP) test scores to help increase preparedness and success in advanced courses among students. • Districts provided individualized college entrance examination preparation using different online platforms; despite positive feedback on the platforms, students and parents reported needing additional test preparation resources.
College and Career Advising and Career Exploration Initiatives	• Class of 2024 students met one-on-one with middle school counselors, GEAR UP coordinators, and district advisors in Year 2 to discuss topics such as the transition to high school, endorsements, career interests, and postsecondary education plans. • Priority cohort students met one-on-one with non-profit advisors and high school counselors to discuss postsecondary education options, financial aid, career plans, and other related topics. • Most teachers of the new Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness (TXOC CCR) curriculum in GEAR UP schools reported that the curriculum was a good fit for their school and provided opportunities for class of 2024 students to learn more about postsecondary education and explore their career interests. • Students who reported that they participated in college visits, work-based learning activities, and summer programming were satisfied with their experiences. • The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) school closures ultimately led to the cancellation of some college visits and individualized advising sessions with students.
PD Initiatives	• All districts offered PD activities related to academic rigor in core content classes and individualized educator coaching and/or mentoring. • Counselors were offered training in college and career advising. • Teachers and school personnel reported that vertical alignment activities helped them to align their curriculum across grades and support student preparedness and achievement. • Through the delivery of PD, TNTP worked with districts to strengthen their professional learning communities (PLCs).
Sustainability Initiatives	• The implementation of GEAR UP in Year 2 provided important opportunities for some personnel to reflect on how their district could improve college and career readiness across the district, including in elementary grades. • Middle school personnel shared plans to sustain the following middle school initiatives: increased Algebra I enrollment, continued high school Spanish I courses for Grade 8 students, one-on-one middle school advising, and the TXOC CCR.
Scaling Initiatives Across Texas	• The TXOC CCR curriculum was piloted by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in the six GEAR UP districts in Year 2 as well as three additional school districts in Texas with the intention that such services may be able to be scaled statewide. • Feedback from districts that participated in the TXOC CCR pilot program indicated that they agreed that the curriculum provided opportunities to learn about careers and endorsements; however, they reported lower levels of agreement that the materials were grade-appropriate. They were also generally satisfied with the instructor resources, student resources, and the trainings they received.

1.2. Purpose of this Report

This report presents findings from the implementation study during the third year—school year 2020–21 (Year 3)—when the class of 2024 students were in Grade 9 and the priority cohort students were in Grade 10–12. At this stage in the grant, all cohorts served by the grant were in high school; middle school GEAR UP initiatives that continued were all efforts sustained by the schools that participated in Years 1–2. Findings presented in the Year 3 report were derived from data collected via stakeholder surveys, virtual site visits, and telephone interviews (see Appendix B for full methodological details). The report highlights how GEAR UP is being implemented, how the program is being sustained and what activities should be sustained, how program activities are being scaled across the state, and an overview of promising practices (see Appendix B for the list of evaluation questions used to guide the implementation study). In general, findings are presented at the program level in the report narrative in subsequent chapters and broken out at the district level in the appendices. Notable findings that stem from individual districts, however, are highlighted in the main narrative. Program-level findings broken out by cohort or grade level are presented in figures throughout the narrative.[9] Findings are broken out by cohort for items that apply to all grade levels (e.g., items concerning academics or grades). Findings are broken out by grade level for other items that are grade-level specific (e.g., items concerning postsecondary education applications, which most typically apply to Grade 12 students). Longitudinal findings (i.e., findings from Year 1 to Year 2) are presented at the program level in figures in the narrative and at the district level in tables in appendices. To protect the anonymity of school districts and personnel, districts are not referred to by name but according to a randomly generated number that serves as a pseudonym (e.g., District 1, District 2).

The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic in Year 3 affected many aspects of GEAR UP implementation, which is a dominant theme in this report. GEAR UP school districts pivoted between in-person and virtual instruction to prevent and contain exposure to the virus. Many GEAR UP activities were delivered virtually in Year 3, with mixed results, as detailed in the report.

There are some limitations regarding the Annual Implementation Report for Year 3. Given the varied challenges with school operations as a result of the pandemic—along with shifting priorities for students, parents, and personnel—survey response rates and virtual focus group participation levels were lower than expected. Further, the data for this report were collected in March and April 2021, whereas Year 3 implementation continued on through the end of the school year. Therefore, the implementation findings provided in this report only represent part of the school year (summer 2020 through March/April 2021), rather than the full year. Ultimately, because of these factors, the findings shared in this report must be interpreted with caution. This report is limited to findings describing how the program was implemented in Year 3 and the associated evaluation methodology.

The following chapters present implementation findings regarding academic initiatives (Chapter 2), college and career advising and exploration initiatives (Chapter 3), professional development initiatives (Chapter 4), sustainability initiatives (Chapter 5), scaling initiatives across Texas (Chapter 6), and grant implementation support (Chapter 7). The report concludes with a summary of findings, promising practices, and recommendations (Chapter 8). Additional details are presented as

---

[9] Many of these figures do not have corresponding tables in an appendix since tables present results for all respondents who answered the question by district.

appendices, including GEAR UP strategies, goals, and objectives (Appendix A); the evaluation design, methods, and analytics (Appendix B); evaluation instruments (Appendix C); and the survey analysis technical details (Appendices D–G). One important note is that several survey questions used Likert scales to assess respondents' level of agreement (on a scale of 1–4 with 1 representing *Strongly Disagree* and 4 representing *Strongly Agree*) and satisfaction (also on a scale of 1–4 with 1 representing *Strongly Dissatisfied* and 4 representing *Strongly Satisfied*) regarding a variety of topics. In the forthcoming pages of this report narrative, those results are presented as mean scores for ease of interpretation; the corresponding appendices include results presented as both mean scores and the percentages for each response option in the Likert scale.

2. Academic Initiatives

GEAR UP academic initiatives implemented in Year 3 included increasing Algebra I enrollment, providing opportunities for students to earn college credit, offering targeted tutoring to students, and preparing students for college entrance exams. This chapter provides an overview of how each of these initiatives were implemented. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Year 3, schools were encouraged by TEA to prioritize academic instruction and student engagement while classes were conducted in a virtual setting. The unique circumstances created by virtual schooling made it difficult for schools and GEAR UP staff to implement innovative strategies or promising practices in many cases that may be replicated for in-person schooling.

2.1. Timely Participation in Algebra I

A priority of the GEAR UP program is increasing the number of students from the class of 2024 who participate in and successfully complete Algebra I in Grade 8 and 9.[10] With class of 2024 students in Grade 9 in Year 3, this section provides findings regarding Grade 9 class of 2024 students' perceptions about Algebra I, with some comparisons made to the class of 2024 students who took the course in Grade 8 in Year 2.

Class of 2024 student survey respondents reported their level of agreement with statements regarding their participation in Algebra I. Of the 65% of class of 2024 student survey respondents who reported that they took Algebra I as Grade 9 students in Year 3, they generally *Agreed* that they felt prepared to take Algebra I (a mean score of 3.03) and that they received enough support to succeed in Algebra I (a mean score of 3.30) (Tables D.41 and D.43, Appendix D). These respondents expressed a lower level of agreement that their Algebra I class was difficult (2.64) (Table D.43, Appendix D). Comparing the perceptions of Grade 9 students who took Algebra I in Year 3 to Grade 8 students who took the course in Year 2, the mean scores in Year 3 for *I felt prepared to take Algebra I* and *My Algebra I class was challenging* were significantly lower than those in Year 2 (Figure 2.1; Table D.44, Appendix D).[11]

---

[10] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 1.1: By the end of the class of 2024's second year (Grade 8), 30% of class of 2024 students will complete Algebra I. By the end of the class of 2024's third year (Grade 9), 85% of class of 2024 students will complete Algebra I.

[11] Throughout this report, "significance" refers to findings that were determined to be statistically significant through the use of statistical tests.

Figure 2.1. Class of 2024 Student Agreement Regarding Algebra I Statements Year 2 (Grade 8)–Year 3 (Grade 9)
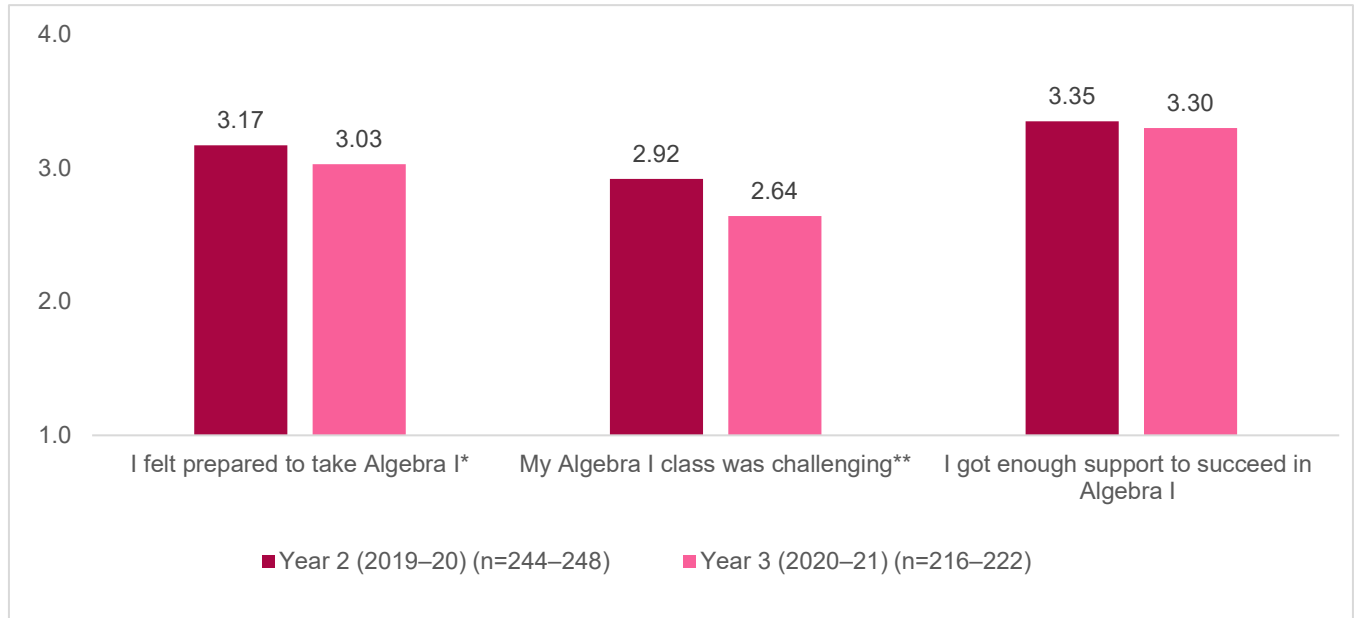
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis.
*Algebra I agreement levels among students differed significantly across years: I felt prepared to take Algebra I: $F(1, 458) = 4.0$, $p<.05$.
**Algebra I agreement levels among students differed significantly across years: My Algebra I class was challenging: $F(1, 468) = 12.7$, $p<.001$.

2.2. Dual Credit Courses

Dual credit courses offer students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. GEAR UP established college credit attainment through dual credit courses as a project objective for the class of 2024 students. [12] Year 3 was the first year that class of 2024 students were enrolled in high school and able to take dual credit courses. Districts 2, 4, and 5 shared their experiences with and perceptions of the dual credit programs in Year 3.

---

[12] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 2.1: By the end of the project's sixth year, 60% of class of 2024 students will be eligible to earn college credit through achievement of a passing score on the AP exam, IB exam, or completion of a rigorous dual credit course.

The District 5 principal noted that dual credit enrollment has increased in recent years and attributed the success of the dual credit courses to a strong partnership with a local community college that was in place prior to GEAR UP. A counselor from the same district expressed similar feelings and said,

> So I think my greatest resource has probably been our dual credit partner, [local community college]. They're awesome at helping develop our pathways and guiding conversations with students and providing resources that I need, like degree audits and things like that. So I think the combination of an awesome dual credit partner, as well as the training that we were able to utilize, is beneficial.

The District 2 principal also noted an increase in dual credit course interest and enrollment. The increased enrollment was credited by the principal to the school's ability to increase Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) testing from once per month to "almost every day," through GEAR UP. The principal added that the increased interest in dual credit courses also led to more awareness among students of how to prepare for college and career.

Promising Practice: Mentor high school dual credit students with college students who are alumni.

The District 4 coordinator reported that alumni from their high school mentored a group of priority cohort students including 15 dual credit students and other Grade 10 students to help provide information regarding the dual credit program and other college and career information. The mentoring was delivered through phone calls and texts. The coordinator remarked, "We have tutors, and those tutors are recent college graduates, and most of them are from our school….Right now we actually have them working as mentors for some dual credit students and 10th graders to sign up for dual credit….They're calling them, texting them…every little step that they need to do." The mentors, according to the coordinator, helped to increase the number of students and parents who had access to the information.

2.3. Targeted Tutoring

Targeted tutoring provides students who are failing one or more of their courses with extra opportunities to increase their academic standing and ultimately their ability to succeed in secondary and postsecondary education. Targeted tutoring was established by GEAR UP as a project objective for the class of 2024 students and aims to meet that goal by offering different types of tutoring.[13]

Of the approximately one-third (39%) of class of 2024 student survey respondents who reported that they participated in tutoring for any class in the 2020–21 school year, respondents shared the types of tutoring they participated in for different courses (Table D.45, Appendix D). The most common type of tutoring that class of 2024 students received for all courses was after-school tutoring, with 20% to 50% of students reporting that option across subject areas (Figure 2.2, Tables D.48–D.55, Appendix D). In-class tutoring was the second most prevalent type of tutoring (with 17% to 34% across subject areas).

---

[13] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 1.3: Each year, 90% of class of 2024 students who receive a failing grade on a progress report will receive targeted academic tutoring.

Figure 2.2. Class of 2024 Tutoring Participation Across Course Subjects by Tutoring Type, Year 3 (2020–21)
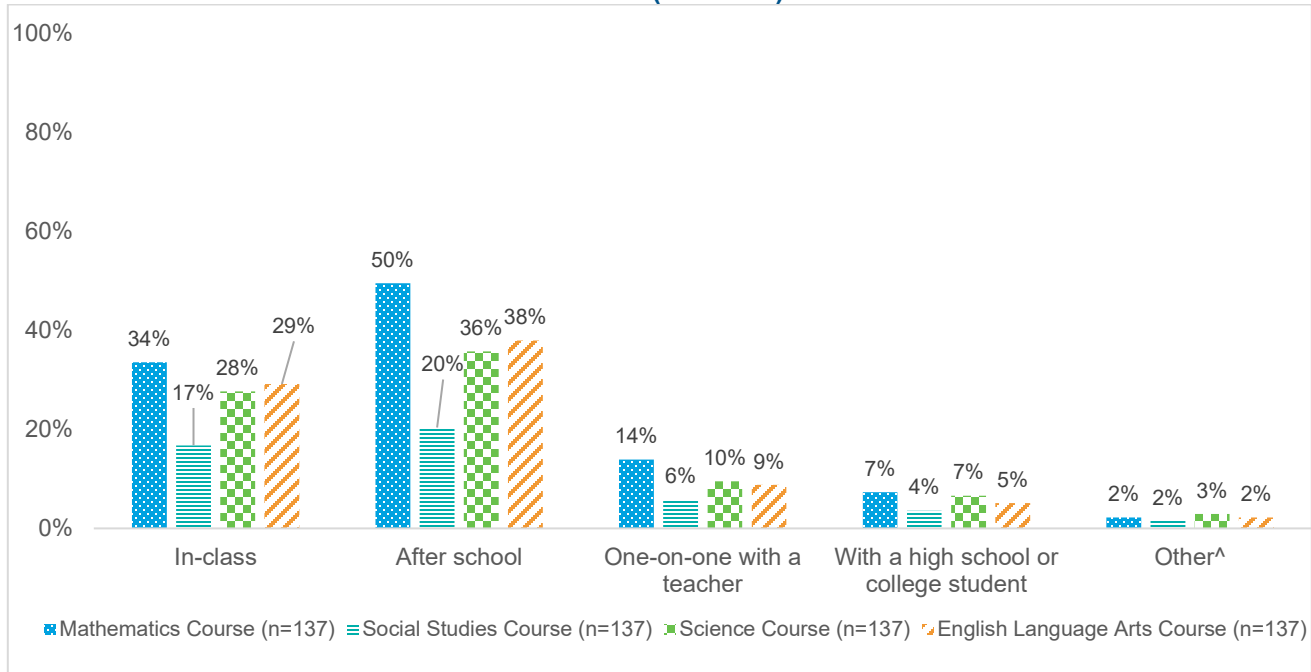
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

As seen in Figure 2.3, 40% of class of 2024 student survey respondents who participated in tutoring services in Year 3 did so only in person; 35% participated only virtually, and 25% received both virtual and in-person tutoring (Table D.47, Appendix D). Coordinators from Districts 1 and 3 explained that it was difficult to notify students of the availability of virtual tutoring and ensure that students showed up to the virtual sessions. The District 3 principal said their school recently implemented a policy to assign after-school tutorials instead of detention. In these instances, another administrator identified areas in which students needed academic support and assigned a teacher to work with the student based on that need.

Figure 2.3. Format in Which Class of 2024 Students Participated in Tutoring, Year 3 (2020–21)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Students also provided feedback on the helpfulness of and their satisfaction with tutoring in Year 3. The majority (90%) of students from the class of 2024 who participated in tutoring in Year 3 reported that it helped them to succeed in their classes (Table D.56, Appendix D). Class of 2024 students reported a mean satisfaction score of 3.18 with the tutoring they received in Year 3, which was similar to the level of satisfaction reported in Year 2 (Table D.59, Appendix D).

2.4. Preparation for College Entrance Examinations

College entrance examination preparation activities may include teaching students test-taking strategies, offering practice tests for students to complete, and providing students with other resources to help improve student success on college entrance examinations. GEAR UP includes project objectives regarding participation in and successful performance on college entrance examinations—including the Preliminary SAT (PSAT), ACT Aspire, SAT, ACT, and TSIA—emphasizing the importance of preparation activities for these examinations. [14]

Given the social distancing policies in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the College Board and ACT canceled their test administrations that were scheduled for after March 2020 during the 2019–20 school year. As a result, several colleges and universities in Texas waived their testing requirements for 2020–21 admission (Justin, 2020). While it is unknown whether these waivers may have impacted attitudes toward or participation in college entrance examinations in Year 2, this context may be helpful for understanding student participation in and perceptions of college entrance examination preparation in Year 3. As seen in Figure 2.4, class of 2024 students had significantly lower levels of agreement regarding their knowledge of where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources, ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources, and TSIA test preparation resources compared to priority cohort students. While agreement regarding knowledge of where to find test preparation resources increased significantly for all students across cohorts from Year 2 to Year 3, agreement among class of 2024 students remained similar (Table D.3, Appendix D). Year 3 mean scores for all students ranged from 2.50 to 2.67 (Table D.2, Appendix D). Year 3 mean scores for class of 2024 students ranged from 2.27 to 2.38 (Figure 2.4).

---

[14] The relevant objectives are as follows: Project Objective: 5.1: Each year, 85% of tenth graders will take the PSAT or ACT Aspire exam. Each year, 85% of eleventh graders will take the SAT or ACT exam; Project Objective 5.2: By the end of the class of 2024's sixth year (Grade 12), 50% of class of 2024 students will meet the college readiness criterion on the SAT, ACT, or the TSIA.

Figure 2.4. Student Agreement Regarding Knowledge of Test Preparation Resources

By Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

- I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources.** — Class of 2024: 2.38; Priority cohort: 2.77
- I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources.** — Class of 2024: 2.27; Priority cohort: 2.64
- I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources.** — Class of 2024: 2.32; Priority cohort: 2.57

■ Class of 2024 (n=291–299)   ■ Priority cohort (n=790–804)

All Grades, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)[a]

- I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources.* — Year 2: 2.58; Year 3: 2.67
- I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources.** — Year 2: 2.44; Year 3: 2.54
- I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources.** — Year 2: 2.40; Year 3: 2.50

■ Year 2 (n=1,868–1,944)   ■ Year 3 (n=1,081–1,103)

Class of 2024 Students, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

- I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources. — Year 2: 2.36; Year 3: 2.38
- I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources. — Year 2: 2.28; Year 3: 2.27
- I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources. — Year 2: 2.25; Year 3: 2.32

■ Class of 2024 in Year 2 (n=413–428)   ■ Class of 2024 in Year 3 (n=291–299)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing. PSAT – Preliminary SAT. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment.
[a]Given that in Year 2, Grade 8–12 were surveyed for this item while in Year 3, Grade 9–12 were surveyed, caution should be used in comparing results from these years.
*Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources: $F(1, 3049) = 6.0$, $p<.05$.
**Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across cohorts: I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources: $F(1, 1104) = 44.0$, $p<.01$; I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources: $F(1, 1086) = 37.8$, $p<.01$; I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources: $F(1, 1079) = 17.0$, $p<.01$. Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources: $F(1, 2955) = 8.7$, $p<.01$; I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources: $F(1, 2951) = 9.1$, $p<.01$.

More than half (52%) of Grade 10 student survey respondents reported that they completed any type of test preparation for the PSAT, ACT Aspire, or TSIA in Year 3; 47% of Grade 11 and 12 students

reported the same regarding the SAT, ACT, or TSIA (Tables D.60 and D.62, Appendix D). Among all priority cohort students who reported on the student survey that they completed any test preparation, 70% believed that the test preparation helped them to prepare for the test, which was significantly lower than 79% who believed the same in Year 2 (Figure 2.5; Table D.66, Appendix D).

Figure 2.5. Students' Perceived Test Prep Helpfulness in Preparing for College Entrance Examination, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)
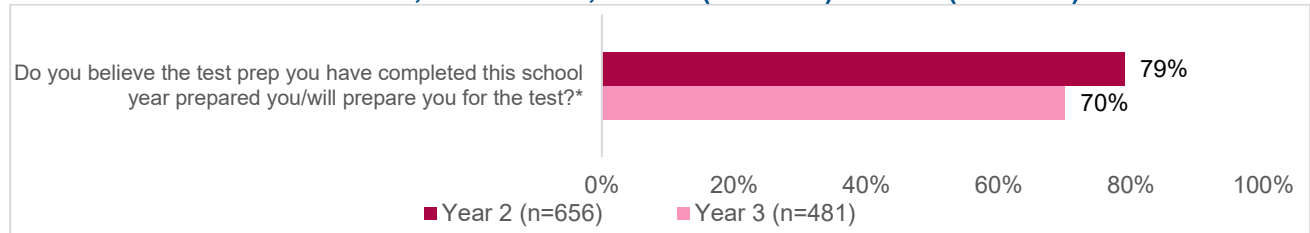
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021). *Students who believed that the test preparation they completed in the current school year would prepare them for the test differed significantly across years: $\chi^2(1) = 10.05$, $p<.01$.

Priority students from Districts 1 and 4 described the test preparation that they received as a test preparation booklet from their counselor and practice tests they completed while in class. These students went on to say that they did not feel that they received enough or the right kind of test preparation. Priority students from District 5 reported they did not receive test preparation and recommended that future test preparation include a review of the subject areas to be tested on, as some said they were not familiar with the material covered by some questions. Students also recommended having practice tests so they would be more familiar with the types of questions to expect.

2.5. Summary

GEAR UP academic initiatives reported in the 2020–21 school year focused on supporting Algebra I enrollment among class of 2024 students in Grade 9, providing opportunities for students to earn college credit through dual credit courses, assisting students receiving failing grades through targeted tutoring, and preparing all students for college entrance examinations through test preparation activities.

Students generally felt prepared to take Algebra I and reported that they received enough support to succeed in Algebra I. GEAR UP coordinators and principals reported that dual credit interest and enrollment among students in their districts continued to increase. Tutoring services were adapted in Year 3 to be available both in person and virtually. Students who participated in tutoring reported that they felt the tutoring helped them to succeed in their class. Overall, students reported that they were more knowledgeable about where to find test preparation resources in Year 3 than in Year 2, but the percentage of those who believed the test preparation would help them to succeed on the test decreased from Year 2 to Year 3. Because of the virtual setting of classes and other services, such as tutoring, and focus on academic instruction and student engagement during the pandemic, schools and GEAR UP staff were less likely to implement promising practices and promote the sustainability of some GEAR UP services that would be replicated in future years with in-person classes and services.

3. College and Career Advising and Exploration Initiatives

The six participating districts reported implementing various college and career advising and exploration initiatives in Year 3, including advising, college tours, college and career fairs, work-based learning activities, and parent events. College and career advising and exploration initiatives were provided to students and parents of both the class of 2024 and the priority cohort. These initiatives supported multiple goals of GEAR UP, including providing postsecondary and career information to students and families and increasing educational expectations for and awareness about postsecondary and career options. [15] In Year 3, due to social distancing restrictions with COVID-19, some college and career advising and exploration initiatives were adapted for virtual learning through virtual events and sessions. This chapter provides an overview of the advising and exploration initiatives delivered in Year 3. In addition, this chapter also covers planning efforts for summer 2021 programs, which are technically part of Year 4.

3.1. College and Career Advising

College and career advising activities ranged from virtual dissemination of information to individual advising sessions for students, focused on providing information on college and career planning and preparation (e.g., course selection, postsecondary education and career plans or interests, and financial aid opportunities available to students). Across districts, advising services were offered either virtually or in person. Students, parents, and/or personnel from all six districts reported in site visits and surveys that students and parents participated in a least one college and career advising activity in Year 3.

3.1.1. Non-Profit Advisers at GEAR UP High Schools

Districts participating in GEAR UP in Year 3 continued their partnership with one of three non-profit advising organizations—Advise TX, CFES Brilliant Pathways, or CAC—to provide advising services to students and parents within the district. Each organization served two districts and provided at least one full-time advisor to serve each GEAR UP high school.

In Year 3, personnel across districts reported on their perceptions of the non-profit advisors within their district. Personnel survey respondents *Agreed* that the non-profit GEAR UP advisors supported students in preparing for postsecondary education (a mean score of 3.36; Figure 3.1) and informed students of their postsecondary education options (a mean score of 3.33; Figure 3.1, Table F.9, Appendix F). Personnel survey respondents also *Agreed* that the advisors were able to provide students with grade-appropriate information regarding college education and career readiness (a mean score of 3.29) and helped parents/guardians prepare for their child's postsecondary education (a mean score of 3.28; Figure 3.1, Table F.9, Appendix F). Personnel perceptions of the advisors in Year 3 were similar to reported personnel perceptions in Year 2 (Table F.10, Appendix F).

---

[15] The relevant goals are as follows: Project Goal 6: Provide postsecondary and career preparation information to students and families; Project Goal 7: Increase educational expectations for and awareness about postsecondary and career options.

Figure 3.1. Personnel Perceptions of Non-Profit GEAR UP Advisors, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

The GEAR UP advisors…

Statement	Rating
...support students in preparing for postsecondary education. (n=129)	3.36
...inform students of their postsecondary education options. (n=126)	3.33
...help our school increase the number of opportunities students of all grades have to receive postsecondary education and career advising. (n=128)	3.32
...inform student awareness and understanding of career opportunities. (n=125)	3.30
...provide students at my school with grade-appropriate information regarding postsecondary education and career readiness. (n=125)	3.29
...help parents/guardians prepare for their child's postsecondary education. (n=118)	3.28
...inform parent awareness of postsecondary education options for their child. (n=120)	3.23

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis.

Personnel survey respondents provided feedback on what they liked about their advising partners in Year 3. Overall, personnel survey respondents had positive perceptions of the advisors, sharing that they were "very understanding and always available when needed." Survey respondents also described the knowledge of advisors regarding college education and career readiness, noting that they effectively supported students' and parents' needs. Additionally, personnel described that the advisors had developed relationships with both students and parents within the school. Representative comments regarding personnel perceptions of the advisors are as follows:

> "[The advisors] help to fill in the needed gaps."

> "[The advisor] is knowledgeable of all requirements. If they don't [know] an answer, [they] will find it."

Some personnel survey respondents reported that they were not sure who the non-profit GEAR UP advisors were, or they did not know enough about them to share their perceptions.

School personnel survey respondents from across the districts also provided recommendations and suggestions for areas of improvement with their advising partner(s). One recommendation was that the advisors increase their visibility within the school by visiting students' classes to provide relevant material and information. Some of the suggestions from personnel survey respondents were related to individualized advising for parents, focused on increasing parent involvement in advising services. Examples of related comments follow:

> "Perhaps more information regarding career and postsecondary options for students can be relayed directly to the parent. Perhaps parents can participate in scheduled meetings with the student and advisor."

> "I think they need to work more with junior high students and parents."

Suggestions reported by personnel survey respondents also included providing more preparation for SAT, ACT, and other college entrance examinations to help students qualify for academic and scholarship recognitions.

3.1.2. College and Career Information Dissemination

In Year 3, school personnel and non-profit advisors across the six districts provided relevant information related to educational expectations for, and awareness about, postsecondary and career options in several formats. GEAR UP established an objective regarding disseminating information on postsecondary education and careers to students and parents.[16]

As shown in Figure 3.2, school personnel survey respondents *Agreed* that their school provided students with information on all topics listed in the survey related to college and career. The topics with the highest level of agreement included information about opportunities to earn dual credit and high school graduation requirements (mean scores of 3.54 and 3.54; Figure 3.2; Table F.7, Appendix F). The topics with the lowest level of agreement were providing parents with information related to their child's career options and providing students with information about internships, job shadowing, and other work-based learning opportunities (mean scores of 3.19 and 3.13, respectively; Figure 3.2; Table F.7, Appendix F). The information that personnel survey respondents reported providing to students and parents in Year 3 was similar to that of Year 2 (Table F.8, Appendix F). During site visits, class of 2024 parents from District 1 described that the school provided them with links/resources to find financial aid information and to determine if they needed a scholarship for postsecondary education.

---

[16] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 6.2: Each year, students and parents will receive information about postsecondary and career options, preparation, and financing.

Figure 3.2. Personnel Agreement Regarding Information Provided to Students and Parents by Their School, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
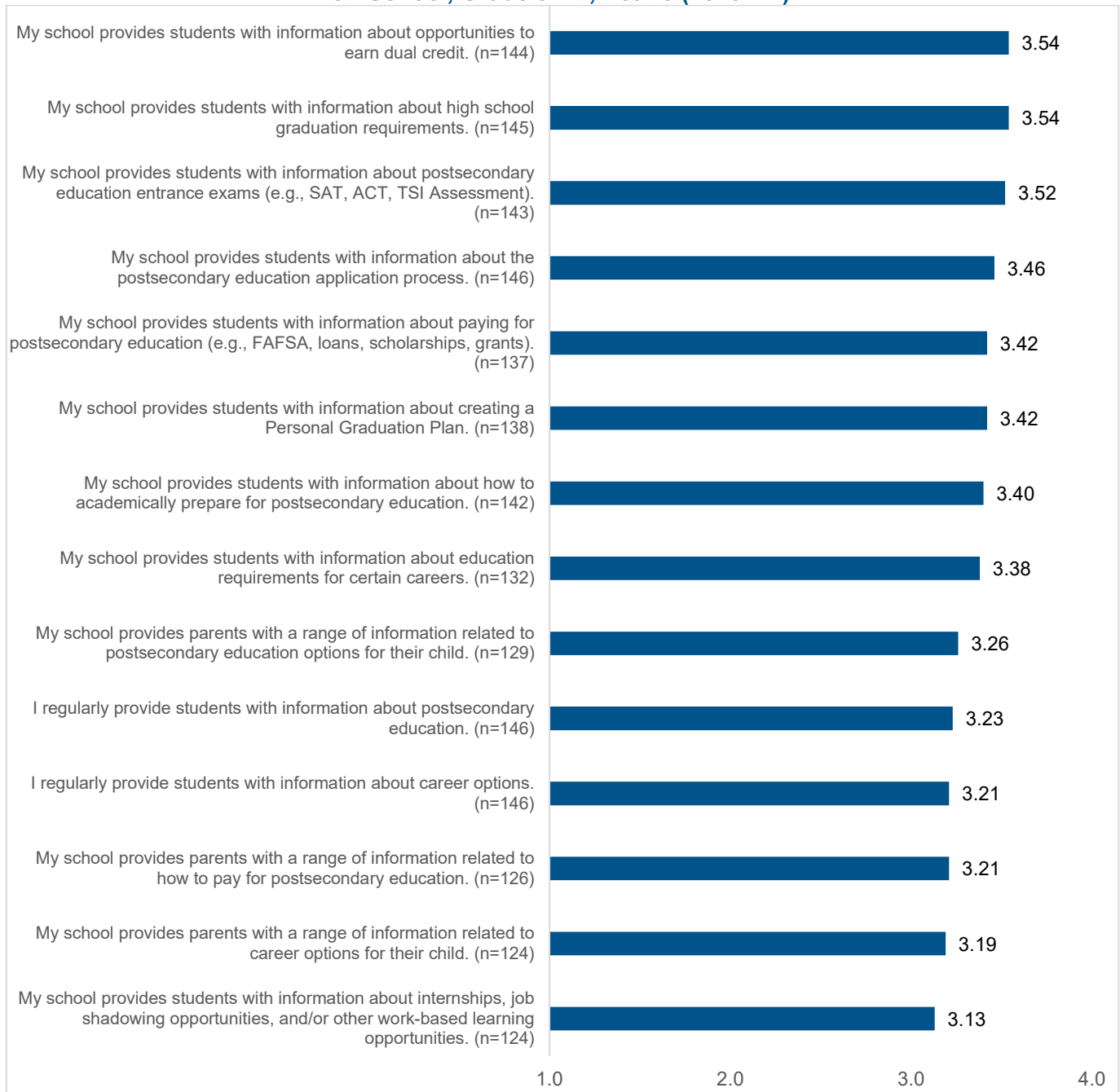
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

In terms of how information was disseminated, during site visits, non-profit advisors from one of the non-profit advising organizations described using a virtual newsletter to provide key college and career information to students and parents. According to one of the advisors, the newsletter was distributed monthly to parents and students through an online marketing platform, MailChimp. The

newsletter highlighted what the parents and students could be focusing on that month to ensure they are on track in the college-going process. One non-profit advisor shared that the contents of the newsletters is based on what students and parents should be working on at specific time points during the school year. For example, the newsletter in March and April encouraged Grade 11 students to begin their college application essays, while an October newsletter focused on financial aid-related information. The student and parent newsletters were very similar, except the parent newsletter also had a section with questions parents were encouraged to ask their child. A non-profit advisor described the parent newsletter noting it "contained like a complete summary of [what is] going on in the college and career readiness world." The advisor added, "That is one of the ways that [the non-profit advisors] keep in constant contact with [parents] and they get announcements if we have webinars coming up with information for them."

Despite efforts noted by school personnel and non-profit advisors to disseminate information, class of 2024 parents from District 4 and a priority cohort student from District 1 indicated that in Year 3 there was not sufficient dissemination of information or advising services for students and parents. For example, according to one parent participant in the site visits, "No one has really tried to engage me. The most information that I've received about post-secondary was prior to the school year. That was it."

> **Promising Practice: Provide monthly student and parent newsletters dedicated to college and career readiness.**
>
> A non-profit advising organization reported that in Year 3 they provided the students and parents within their districts with an online monthly newsletter. Students and parents were provided with two separate, but related, newsletters which advised on what to focus on that month (e.g., college application preparation in March/April and financial aid in October) as well as announcements regarding deadlines or upcoming webinars.
>
> A non-profit advisor explained that the main difference between the student and parent newsletters was that the parent newsletter had a section with questions parents were encouraged to ask their child that month. The advisor added that the newsletters were a helpful way to keep in touch with students and parents and make them aware upcoming deadlines and other topics to be discussing at home.

A parent from District 4 suggested that to reach more parents and increase parent awareness the district should contact parents more routinely. The parent suggested, "I would say…more reach[ing] out to… parents, and just a little bit more persistence to make it so where it becomes more routine [instead of] just not knowing or not getting that information to us as parents."

3.1.3. Dedicated Advising Spaces

As a strategy for expanding high school advising, GEAR UP aimed to establish a dedicated physical space for advising at participating high schools. During the COVID-19 pandemic in Year 3, high schools adapted this strategy to include virtual advising spaces for students and parents. School personnel from all six districts reported in site visits and/or surveys that that their school had a dedicated physical and/or virtual space for advising in Year 3 (Table 3.1; Tables F.3–F.4, Appendix F).

In Year 3, 86% of school personnel respondents reported that students and parents had access to both a physical and virtual space dedicated to postsecondary education and career readiness advising services (Table 3.1; Tables F.3–F.4, Appendix F). One-tenth of school personnel respondents reported that students and parents had access to only a physical advising space and just

3% reported access to only a virtual advising space (Table 3.1; Tables F.3–F.4, Appendix F). School personnel respondents reported that the dedicated physical advising spaces for students and parents were primarily located in a library (41%), classroom (37%), or office (37%) (Table 3.1, Tables F.3–F.4, Appendix F). For additional breakdown of the physical and virtual spaces that were provided, see Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Advising Spaces for Students and Parents According to School Personnel, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Type of Dedicated Space (*n*=27*)*	
Physical Space Only	10.3%
Virtual Space Only	3.4%
Both physical and virtual space	86.2%

Space Locations			
Physical Space (*n*=27)		**Virtual Space (*n*=26)**	
Office	37.0%	School website	61.5%
Classroom	37.0%	Social media page	69.2%
Library	40.7%	Blackboard or another similar virtual learning platform	19.2%
GO Center	25.9%	Virtual meeting platform	69.2%
Other^	25.9%	Other^	11.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages for Space Locations will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

During the site visits, non-profit advisors from Districts 1 and 5 mentioned that they used both physical and virtual advising spaces with students and parents. A non-profit advisor from District 1 mentioned they found that students were more comfortable communicating virtually and have thus provided their services through a virtual space as well as in person. Non-profit advisors from Districts 3 and 4 described the advising spaces were housed in their schools' college and career centers. One of the non-profit advisors from District 4 shared that if they needed to meet with students individually, the school would help them find a private space for counseling. In District 1, the physical advising space contained computers and large workspaces for students to use when working on college and career readiness tasks. Students had to schedule appointments to use the college and career center in Year 3 during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to a non-profit advisor at District 1,

> So, although COVID made that weird because now [students] have to have appointments, whereas they used to be able to just come and collaborate… [Students] can still come into the office or come into the space if they need to work on application or something, they can get permission and they can still do that. So, it's good if they have a place that they can actually go to just specifically for college and career readiness.

Some priority cohort students from Districts 1 and 4 reported limited to no awareness of the location of the dedicated physical for advising or who is housed in the area. A few of the priority cohort students from District 1 mentioned that they never received any information from the center.

Additionally, the majority of school personnel survey respondents reported that that the dedicated advising spaces were available to students (96%) and parents (79%) during regular school hours, as well as before (79%) and after school (68%) for students (Figure 3.3, Table F.5, Appendix F). Only in Districts 1 and 4 did personnel report that the advising space was not open to students or parents before or after school hours (Table F.5, Appendix F). Compared to Year 2, significantly fewer school

personnel survey respondents (21 percentage points) reported that in Year 3 parents could access the physical space after school, a change likely brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic (Table F.6, Appendix F).

Figure 3.3. Times Students and Parents Could Access Physical Advising Spaces According to School Personnel, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
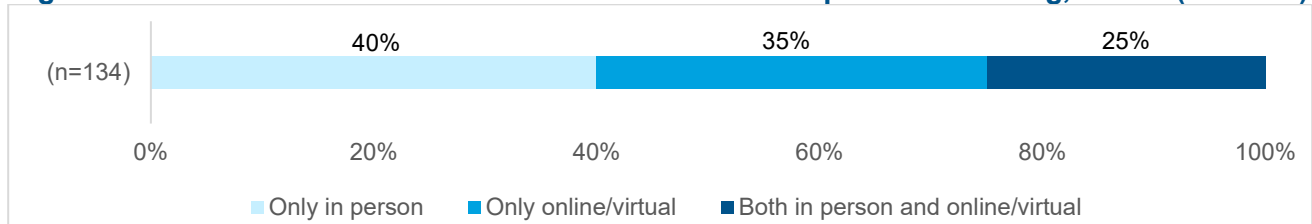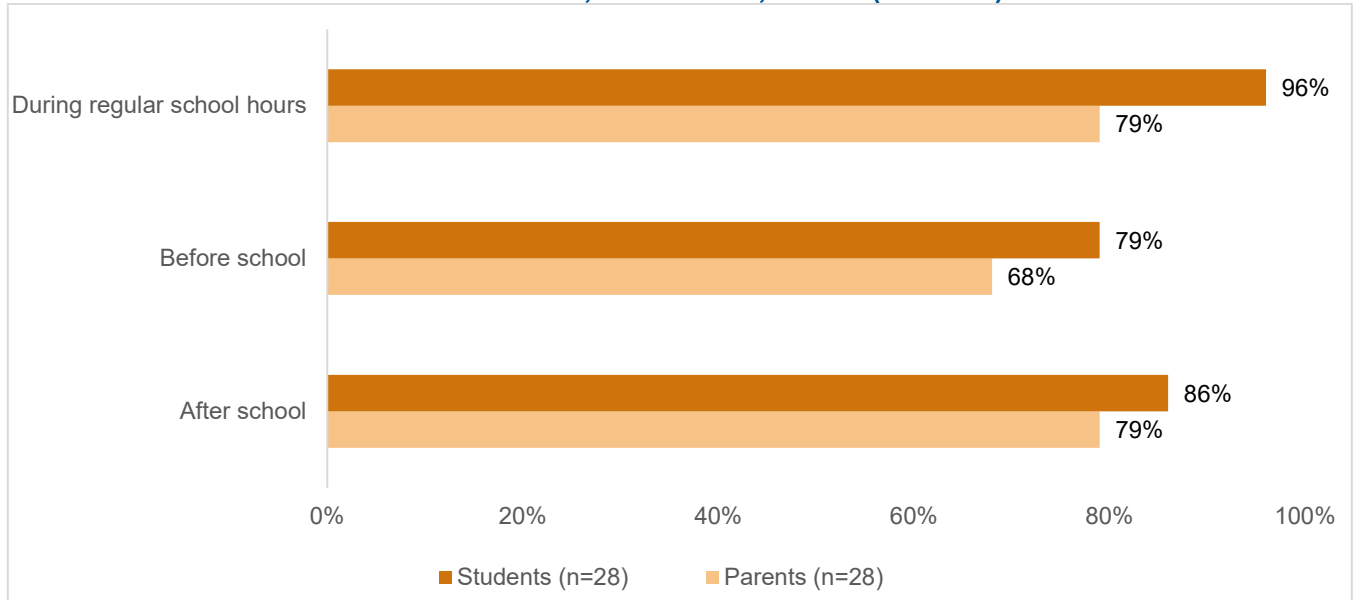

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

3.1.4. Individualized Advising Services for Students and Parents

Individualized college and career advising was provided to students and parents during Year 3. GEAR UP established individualized college and career advising services as project objectives for class of 2024 and priority cohort students and parents. [17] Students, parents, and personnel from all six districts reported in site visits and/or surveys that individual advising sessions were conducted in Year 3.

STUDENT ADVISING

In Year 3, all six districts delivered individualized advising sessions to students. Site visit participants from across the six districts shared that individual advising services were offered by either the non-profit advisors or high school counselors. Across the districts, 41% of student survey respondents reported meeting one-on-one with their school counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff in Year 3, which is similar to Year 2 (Tables D.7–D.8, Appendix D).

Non-profit advisors shared that individual advising sessions for students were offered in various formats, including in person and virtually. Overall, almost half (46%) of class of 2024 and priority cohort student survey respondents, across districts, reported their one-on-one session was held virtually (Table D.9, Appendix D). A GEAR UP coordinator from District 6 shared that non-profit

---

[17] The relevant objectives are as follows: Project Objective 6.3: Each year, 90% of class of 2024 students will receive at least one comprehensive, individualized college and career counseling session; Project Objective 6.4: By the end of the third year, 50% of class of 2024 parents will receive at least one individualized college and career counseling session.

advisors also completed one-on-one advising sessions via text messaging. The GEAR UP coordinator from the district mentioned that many parents were concerned their child was receiving text messages from an individual the parents did not know, suggesting that the district needed to better promote the non-profit advisors to students and parents. Class of 2024 and priority cohort students from District 3 reported that they received one-on-one advising from their high school counselor, who pulled them out of class individually for their sessions. According to one student, "Usually [the school counselors] call people out of their class and bring them to the counselor's office and just talk with them about their future and everything."

More than half (56%) of student survey respondents, from both the class of 2024 and priority cohort, reported that they discussed their grades during one-on-one advising sessions (Figure 3.4; Table D.10, Appendix D). Nearly half (48%) of class of 2024 student respondents and two-fifths (41%) of priority cohort student respondents also reported that they discussed course selection/scheduling during their one-on-one advising session (Figure 3.4). Additionally, significantly more class of 2024 students, compared to priority cohort students, reported discussing endorsements (13% and 8%, respectively) and dual credit opportunities (43% and 31%, respectively) in one-on-one advising sessions (Figure 3.4). One priority cohort student from District 6 also shared in their focus group that they discussed how to build their resume in a one-on-one advising session.

Figure 3.4. Counseling Topics Discussed During One-On-One Advising Sessions According to Students, by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
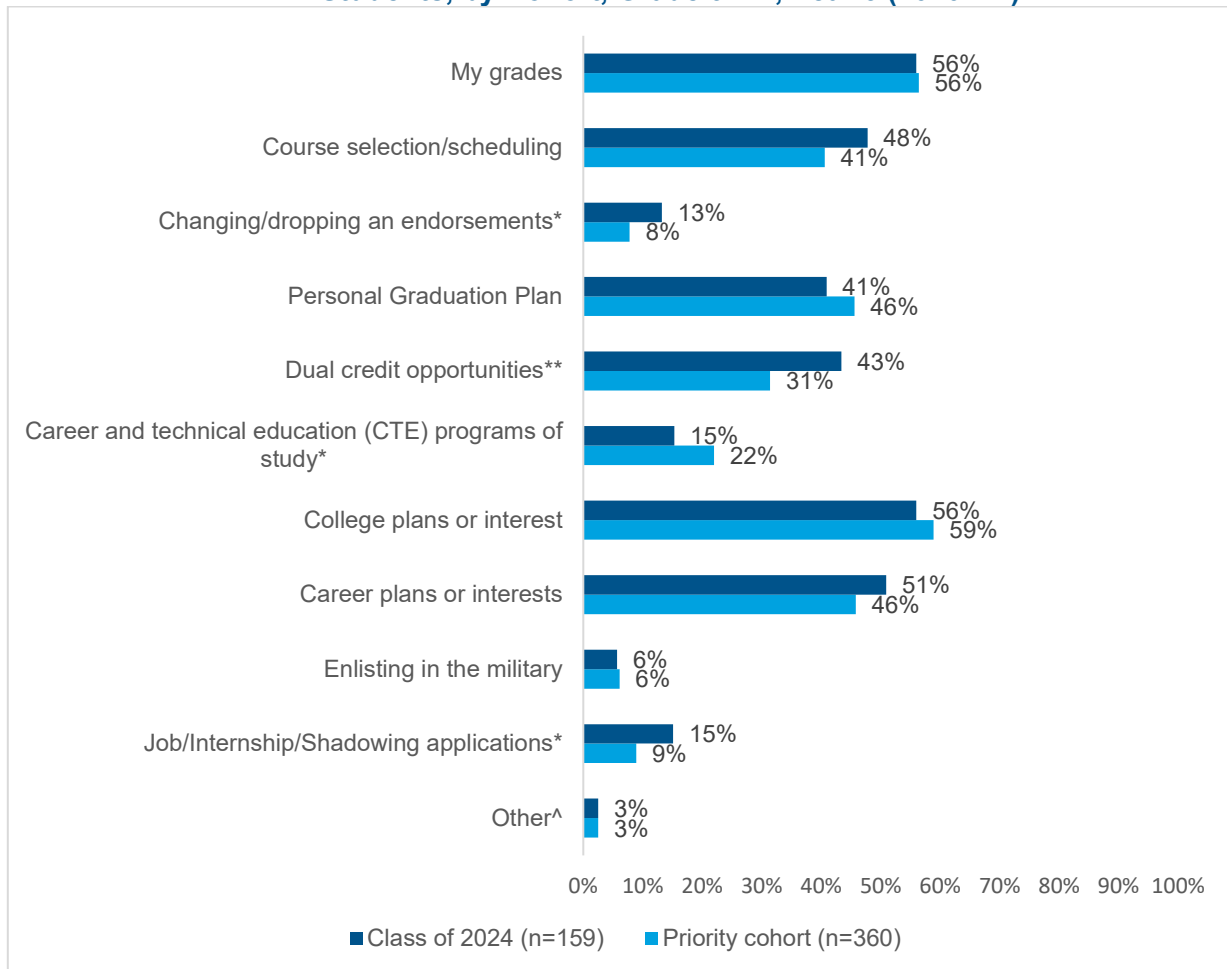
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Examples of other responses included: Vaccines (1), Attendance and credit hours (1), and If I owe hours (1).
*Topics discussed during one-on-one counseling sessions differed significantly across cohorts: Changing/dropping an endorsement: $\chi^2(1) = 3.8$, $p<.05$; Job/internship/shadowing applications: $\chi^2(1) = 4.4$, $p<.05$; Career and technical education (CTE) programs of study: $\chi^2(1) = 3.5$, $p<.05$.
**Topics discussed during one-on-one counseling sessions differed significantly across cohorts: Dual credit opportunities: $\chi^2(1) = 7.0$, $p<.01$.

Comparing Year 3 to Year 2, significantly more student survey respondents reported discussing several of the listed topics in Year 3 than Year 2, including their grades, personal graduation plan, entrance examinations (i.e., PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT), college plans or interests, college applications, and financial aid for college (Table D.11, Appendix D). Alternatively, significantly fewer student survey respondents reported discussing course selection/scheduling, changing or dropping an endorsement, and career plans or interests in Year 3 than Year 2 (Table D.11, Appendix D). For class of 2024 student survey respondents specifically, there was also a significant increase from Year 2 to Year 3 in the percentage of respondents who reported discussing their grades (41% to 56%), college plans or interests (34% to 56%), and financial aid for college (12% to 21%) (Table D.12, Appendix D).

Some of these changes may be driven by changes in the makeup of the student survey respondents from one year to the next. For example, in Year 2, the class of 2024 cohort was in Grade 8. In addition, because the Year 2 survey was administered in fall 2020 (and asked about students' experiences during the previous year) due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent school closures, the class of 2020 students who were in Grade 12 in Year 2 had already graduated and so were not surveyed, for the most part (Spinney et al., 2021). As a result, the grades primarily represented in the Year 2 survey sample were Grade 8–11 whereas the grades represented in the Year 3 survey sample were Grade 9–12. Changes in topics addressed in advising sessions may reflect particular topics typically covered for certain grade levels that were or were not surveyed from one year to the next (i.e., there could have been a decrease in the Grade 8 advising topics and an increase in the Grade 12 advising topics).

There were also significant variations across grade levels regarding the topics covered during one-on-one advising sessions with students. Of the Grade 12 students who reported participating in individual advising, about 41% reported discussing college entrance exams (i.e., PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT), 6–23 percentage points more than Grade 9–11 students (Figure 3.5). Significantly more Grade 12 student respondents also reported discussing postsecondary education applications (54%), 27–39 percentage points more than Grade 9–11 students, and financial aid for postsecondary education (54%), 33–42 percentage points more than Grade 9–11 students (Figure 3.5). Figure 3.5 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each grade level as well as additional topics discussed during one-on-one advising.

Figure 3.5. Counseling Topics Discussed During One-On-One Advising Sessions According to Students, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
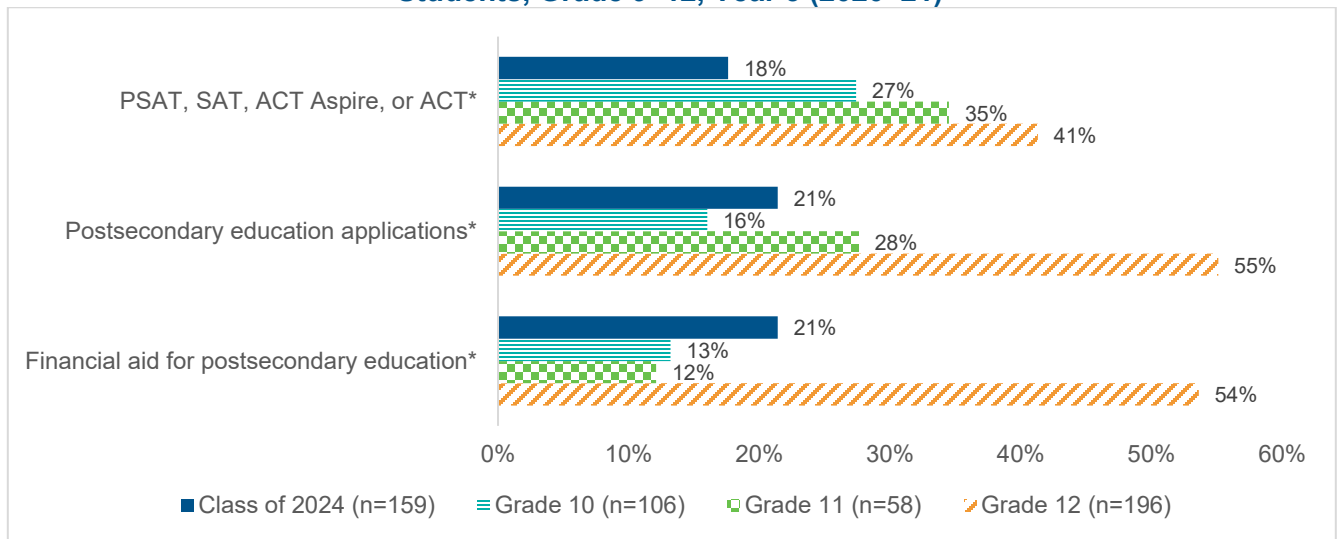
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. PSAT – Preliminary SAT.
*Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across grades: PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT: χ^2 (3) = 24.25, *p*<.01; Postsecondary education applications: χ^2 (3) = 66.73, *p*<.01; Financial aid for postsecondary education: χ^2 (3) = 79.20, *p*<.01.

Overall, all students from both the class of 2024 and the priority cohort who reported participating in one-on-one advising reported that they were *Satisfied* with the experience (with a mean score of 3.15; Table D.15, Appendix D). Priority cohort student respondents reported higher agreement than class of

2024 student respondents across all advising session experiences listed in Figure 3.6. Students from both cohorts reported the lowest levels of agreement that the session(s) provided them with information about how to pay for education after high school (a mean score of 2.82 for class of 2024 students and 2.97 for priority cohort students; Figure 3.6). Priority cohort student respondents also reported significantly higher overall satisfaction with individual sessions than class of 2024 students. Figure 3.6 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as additional perceptions of individual advising sessions.

Figure 3.6. Student Agreement and Satisfaction with One-On-One Advising Session Experiences, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating for perceptions: 1–*Strongly Disagree,* 2–*Disagree,* 3–*Agree,* 4–*Strongly Agree.* Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Very Satisfied.* *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing. The satisfaction item in the figure was asked of students as a separate question from the advising items, resulting in means that are not dependent on the preceding items.
*Students' mean level of satisfaction with their advising sessions differed significantly across cohorts: The session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education: $F(1, 493) = 5.0$, $p<.05$; The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school: $F(1, 482) = 4.1$, $p<.05$; Overall, how satisfied were you with the individual counseling/advising session(s) this school year (2020–21): $F(1, 484) = 6.8$, $p<.05$.

Comparing student perceptions of the advising sessions longitudinally, there were significant increases in agreement from Year 2 to Year 3 for each of the following items: the session(s) helped me develop a plan for my education, provided me with information on the grades and testing scores needed to achieve my education and career goals, provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school, and provided information that was specific to my individual needs or interests (for additional details, see Figure 3.7; Table D.14, Appendix D). There was also a significant

increase in the percentage of students who reported speaking to their family about some of the topics that were covered in the advising session (Figure 3.7; Table D.14, Appendix D). Students' overall satisfaction in their advising session remained steady from Year 2 to Year 3 (Figure 3.7; Table D.16, Appendix D). Figure 3.7 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year as well as additional perceptions of individual advising sessions.

Figure 3.7. Student Agreement and Satisfaction with One-On-One Advising Session Experiences, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)
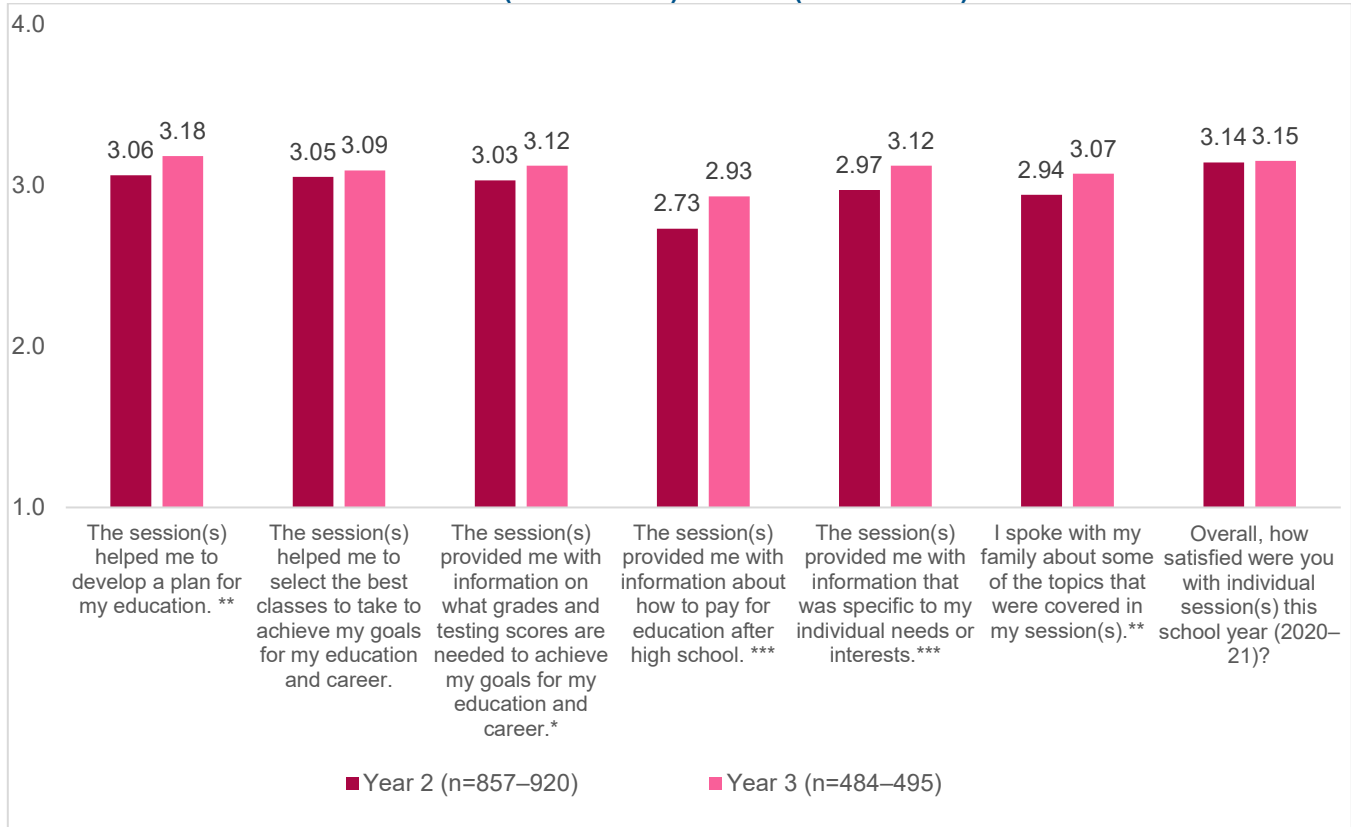
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating for perceptions: 1–*Strongly Disagree,* 2–*Disagree,* 3–*Agree,* 4–*Strongly Agree.* Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Very Satisfied. I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing. The satisfaction item in the figure was asked of students as a separate question from the advising items, resulting in means that are not dependent on the preceding items. Given that in Year 2, Grade 8–12 were surveyed for this item while in Year 3, Grade 9–12 were surveyed, caution should be used in comparing results from these years.
*Students' mean level of satisfaction with their advising sessions differed significantly across years: The session(s) provided me with information on what grades and testing scores I needed to achieve my goals for my education and career: $F(1, 1391) = 4.99$, *p*<.05;
**Students' mean level of satisfaction with their advising sessions differed significantly across years: The session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education: $F(1, 1403) = 10.49$, *p*<.01; I spoke with my family about some of the topics that were covered in my session(s): $F(1, 1411) = 7.83$, *p*<.01.
***Students' mean level of satisfaction with their advising sessions differed significantly across years: The session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school: $F(1, 1339) = 17.89$, *p*<.001;l The session(s) provided me with information that was specific to my individual needs/interests: $F(1, 1379) = 12.90$, *p*<.001.

Approximately half (49%) of the student survey respondents across the districts reported they did not meet one-on-one for an advising session because they did not know meetings were being offered (Table D.17, Appendix D). During the site visits, class of 2024 and priority cohort students from one

district, District 1, mentioned they did not participate in a one-on-one advising session in Year 3, indicating they were not invited to participate in a session. This district was without a non-profit advisor for the first half of the school year, which may be one reason why the students who participated in the site visit had not yet participated in individual advising. Aside from not knowing advising sessions were being offered, the next most common reason student survey respondents reported was that they were busy with school/family/work or their schedule did not allow them to participate (21%) (Table D.17, Appendix D).

PARENT ADVISING

Overall, one-quarter of parent survey respondents, across districts, reported meeting one-on-one with their child's counselor, advisor, and/or GEAR UP coordinator in Year 3, a significant increase from Year 2 (Tables E.2–E.3, Appendix E). None of the parent participants who participated in the site visits reported participating in any one-on-one advising session in Year 3.

Parent survey respondents reported various formats in which counseling/advising services were offered throughout Year 3, including virtual (online or on the phone), in person, or a combination of virtual and in person. The most common format class of 2024 parent respondents reported participating in was virtual sessions, while the most common format priority cohort parent respondents cited was in-person sessions (Figure 3.8). Figure 3.8 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort and the reported format of parents' one-on-one counseling/advising session.

Figure 3.8. Format of Parents' One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*
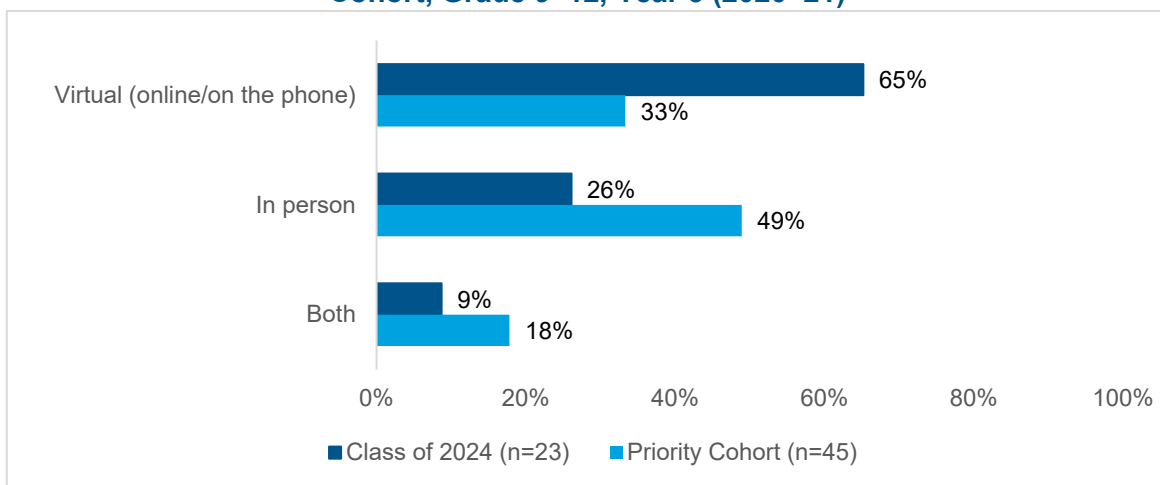
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*The percentage of parents' one-on-one counseling/advising sessions differed significantly across cohorts: $\chi^2(2) = 6.33$, $p<.05$.

Parent respondents reported the topics discussed during one-on-one advising sessions and there were some differences by cohorts. More than one-half (52%–57%) of class of 2024 parents reported discussing their child's grades, course selection/scheduling, and college plans or interests during individual sessions (Figure 3.9). Of the priority cohort parents who reported participating in one-on-one advising, about one-half (51%) of the parents reported discussing their child's grades, course selection/scheduling, and dual credit opportunities (Figure 3.9). Figure 3.9 provides additional detail about the topics discussed during one-on-one parent advising session(s).

Figure 3.9. Topics High School Parents Reported Discussing During One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
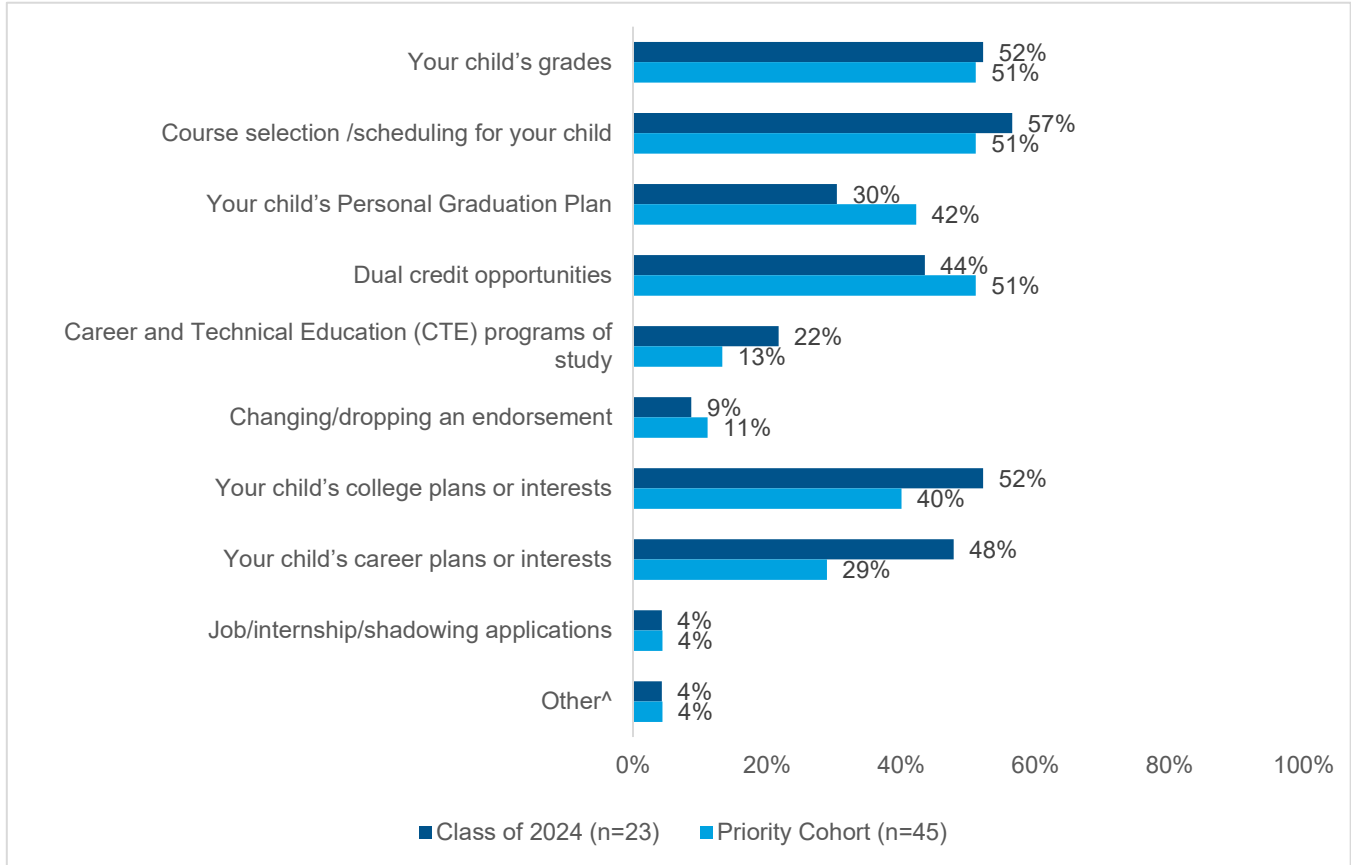
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Examples of other responses included: Completion of Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application (1).

A grade-level breakdown of the topics discussed during one-on-one advising session(s) shows that there were significant topical variations across grade levels. More Grade 12 parents (27–38 percentage points) who reported participating in individual advising noted discussing financial aid for college (FAFSA, Texas Application for State Financial Aid [TASFA], Pell Grant, etc.) than parents from other grade levels (Figure 3.10). Additionally, more Grade 12 parents (34–51 percentage points) reported discussing college applications compared to parents in other grades. The most frequently reported topic for Grade 11 parents was college entrance examinations (i.e., PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT) (55%). Figure 3.10 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each grade level as well as additional topics discussed during one-on-one advising.

Figure 3.10. Topics High School Parents Reported Discussing During One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by Grade, Year 3 (2020–21)
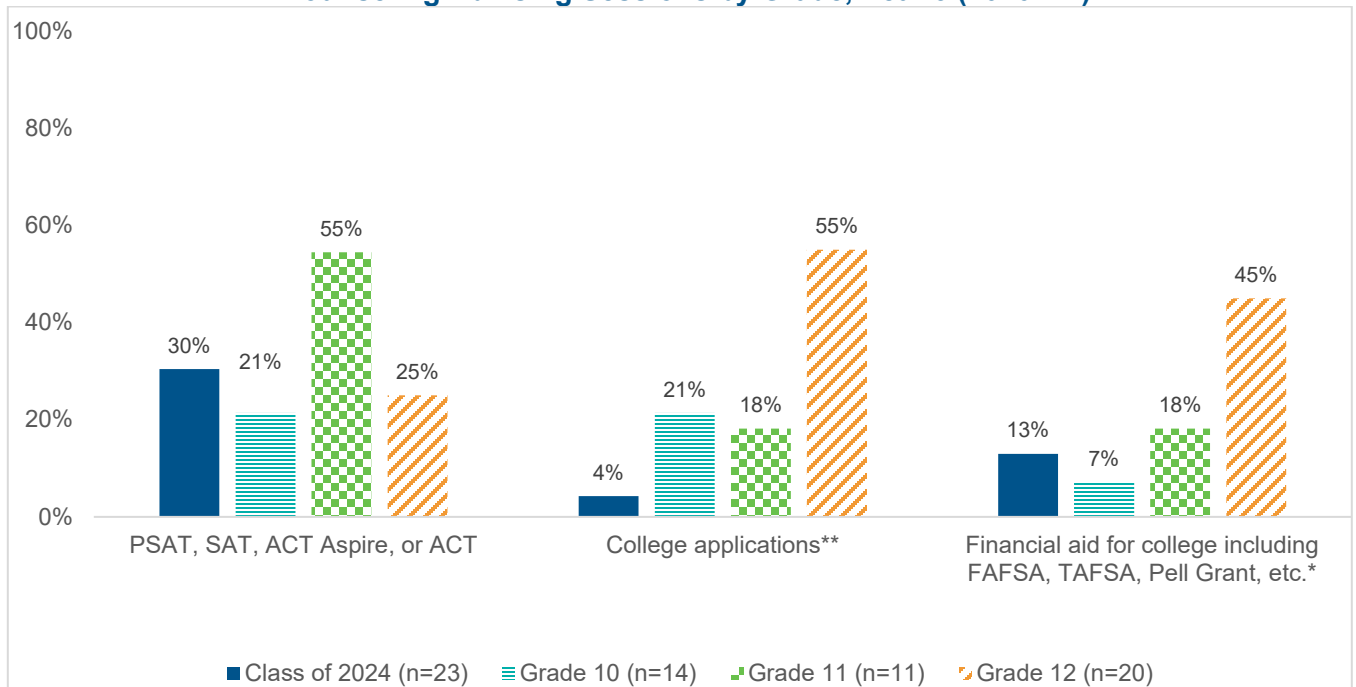
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. PSAT – Preliminary SAT. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid.
*The percentage of parents who reported they discussed financial aid for college including FAFSA, TASFA, Pell Grant, etc. differed significantly across grades: $\chi^2(3) = 8.79$, $p<.05$.
**The percentage of parents who reported they discussed college applications during one-on-one counseling/advising sessions differed significantly across grades: $\chi^2(3) = 15.75$, $p<.001$.

Of the parents who reported participating in one-on-one advising, there was variation in their satisfaction level across cohorts and grade levels. Overall, class of 2024 parents reported being *Satisfied* (with a mean score of 3.18; Figure 3.11). The priority cohort parents reported higher overall satisfaction (a mean score of 3.27; Figure 3.11). Parents' overall satisfaction in their advising session remained steady from Year 2 to Year 3 (Table E.7, Appendix E). Parents from both cohorts *Agreed* that the session(s) helped them and their child think about their/their child's college/career plan with a mean score of 3.14 for class of 2024 parents and 3.07 for priority cohort (Figure 3.11). Similar to Year 2, parents from both cohorts had lower levels of agreement in Year 3 that the session(s) provided them with information about how to pay for college (with a mean score of 2.94 for class of 2024 students and 2.85 for priority cohort students) (Figure 3.11). Figure 3.11 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as additional parent perceptions of one-on-one advising.

Figure 3.11. Parent Agreement Regarding One-On-One Counseling/Advising Session Experiences by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Class of 2024 (n=18–21)	Priority cohort (n=38–45)
The counseling/advising session helped me and my child think about his/her college/career plans.	3.14	3.07
The counseling/advising session helped me and my child understand the best classes my child should take to achieve his/her college/career goals.	3.24	3.05
The counseling/advising session provided my child with information about his/her grades/test scores to achieve his/her college/career goals.	3.26	3.07
The counseling/advising session provided me with information about how our family may pay for college.	2.94	2.85
The counseling/advising session provided me and my child with information that was specific to our family's situation.	3.00	2.82
Overall, how satisfied have you been with the individual counseling/advising session(s) that you have received this school year (2020–21)?	3.18	3.27

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied*, 2–*Dissatisfied*, 3–*Satisfied*, 4–*Very Satisfied*. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The satisfaction item in the figure was asked of parents as a separate question from the advising items, resulting in means that are not dependent on the preceding items.

While parents from both cohorts had lower levels of agreement that the session(s) provided them with information about how to pay for college, there was variation in parents' agreement level across grades, with Grade 12 parents reporting the highest level of agreement to this item (a mean score of 3.10; Figure 3.12). Figure 3.12 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each grade level.

Figure 3.12. Parent Agreement Regarding One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by Grade, Year 3 (2020–21)

…provided me with information about how our family may pay for college.	Class of 2024 (n=18)	Grade 10 (n<15)	Grade 11 (n<10)	Grade 12 (n=20)
	2.94	2.82	2.33	3.10

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* was 11.

Parent survey respondents who reported not participating in a one-on-one counseling/advising session indicated various reasons as to why they did not participate. The most common reason parents from both cohorts reported not participating was that they did not know meetings were being offered (Figure 3.13). More than one-tenth (11%–16%) of parents from both cohorts also shared that they did not attend a one-on-one session since they were busy with family/work and because of COVID-19 (Figure 3.13). Figure 3.13 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as other reasons parents reported not participating.

Figure 3.13. Reasons Parents Reported They Did Not Participate in One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
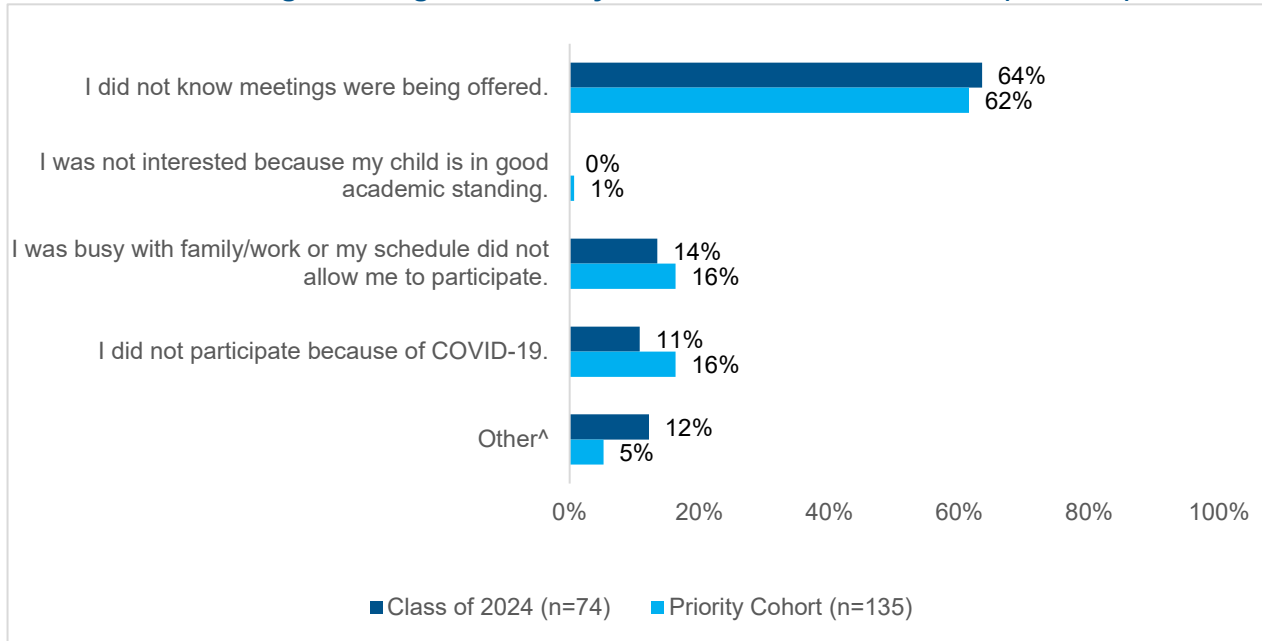
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
^Examples of other responses included: School counselors/staff did not communicate with parents (4), Parents forgot about session (2), and Information was not beneficial or needed by parents/family (1).

3.2. College Visits

College visits offer students exposure to a college campus, which may include a tour of the campus, classroom observations, and presentations by different college departments (e.g., admissions, financial aid, academic departments). GEAR UP established college visit participation as a project objective for class of 2024 students; however, this was an activity delivered to both the class of 2024 and priority cohort students.[18] Students from all six districts reported in surveys and/or site visits that they attended at least one college visit in Year 3.

Overall, more than one-quarter (27%) of student survey participants, across all districts, reported they participated in an in-person or virtual college visit in Year 3, significantly fewer than students in Year 2 (Table D.19, Appendix D). Staff from all six districts mentioned during site visits that they offered students virtual college tours in Year 3.

Of the students who reported participating in college visits in the survey, about three-quarters (73%) reported participating in a virtual college visit (Table D.20, Appendix D). Priority cohort students described during the site visits that for one of their virtual college visits, the students were gathered in the library to view the virtual session. One priority cohort student added, "If we had questions or anything, they would answer it for us, but they would mostly just give us a lot of information that helped us apply for college too." Significantly more class of 2024 students reported participating in a virtual campus tour than the priority cohort respondents, 52% to 35%, respectively (Figure 3.14). Significantly more class of 2024 student respondents also reported participating in a virtual college classroom observation than priority cohort students, 24% to 11%, respectively. Figure 3.14 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as additional activities that occurred during Year 3 college visits.

> **Promising Practice: Use a virtual college visit program to increase exposure.**
>
> The District 1 GEAR UP coordinator noted that they used an online software program to offer students and parents access to virtual college visits. The GEAR UP coordinator shared that the virtual visits were "well received by students." One of the benefits of the online program is that it provides the district with the ability to highlight the universities they wish to show to students, while allowing students and parents to access them on their own time anywhere.
>
> The program not only provides virtual tours, but also teaches students what to look for on university websites. According to the coordinator, "So, we're kind of giving them the tools so they can go ahead and look for this information on their own."
>
> The GEAR UP coordinator added that they plan to continue using online program next year, even when the district returns to in-person instruction.

---

[18] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 7.1: Each year, 75% of class of 2024 students will attend at least one college visit.

Figure 3.14. Student Activities Participated in During College Visits by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Examples of other responses included: Website information (1), Normal classes (1), and Spoke with a college counselor from the select college (1).
*Activities participated in by students during their college visit differed significantly across cohorts: Virtual campus tour: $\chi^2(1) = 8.67$, $p<.01$; Virtual college class observation: $\chi^2(1) = 9.10$, $p<.01$.

Comparing the activities students reported participating in during either in-person or virtual college visits from Year 2 to Year 3, there were several significant differences. While there was a significant decrease in the percentage of student respondents who reported participating in an in-person campus tour from Year 2 to Year 3, there was also a significant increase in the percentage of student respondents who reported participating in a virtual campus tour from Year 2 to Year 3 (Figure 3.15; Table D.22, Appendix D). These changes were most likely a result of the social distancing restrictions in place from the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 3.15 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year as well as additional activities students participated in during college visits.

Figure 3.15. Student Activities Participated in During College Visits, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

^Examples of other responses included: All of the above (1), Asking about my knowledge of Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and life after high school (1), Attendance and credit hours (1), and Vaccines (1).

*Activities participated in by students during their college visit differed significantly across cohorts: Other: χ^2 (1) = 5.20, *p*<.05.

**Activities participated in by students during their college visit differed significantly across cohorts: In-person speaker session: χ^2 (1) = 8.86, *p*<.01.

***Activities participated in by students during their college visit differed significantly across cohorts: In-person campus tour: χ^2 (1) = 661.13, *p*<.001; Virtual campus tour: χ^2 (1) = 200.89, *p*<.001.

Of the class of 2024 and priority cohort student survey respondents who reported participating in college visits, more than half of students from both cohorts) reported that their college visit provided them with information about the layout/environment of the campus (53% of class of 2024 students and 54% of priority cohort students and the various academic programs or areas of study (63% of class of 2024 students and 53% of priority cohort students) (Figure 3.16). Compared to class of 2024 respondents, significantly more priority cohort student respondents reported learning about firsthand experiences of college students (15% and 28%, respectively) and financial aid/resources (29% and 49%, respectively). Figure 3.16 provides the breakdown by cohort as well as additional information learned during college visits. Priority cohort students from District 5 who participated in the site visits additionally reported learning from current college students about what helped them succeed, the programs they used, and what the application process was like for them.

Figure 3.16. Student Information Learned During College Visits by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
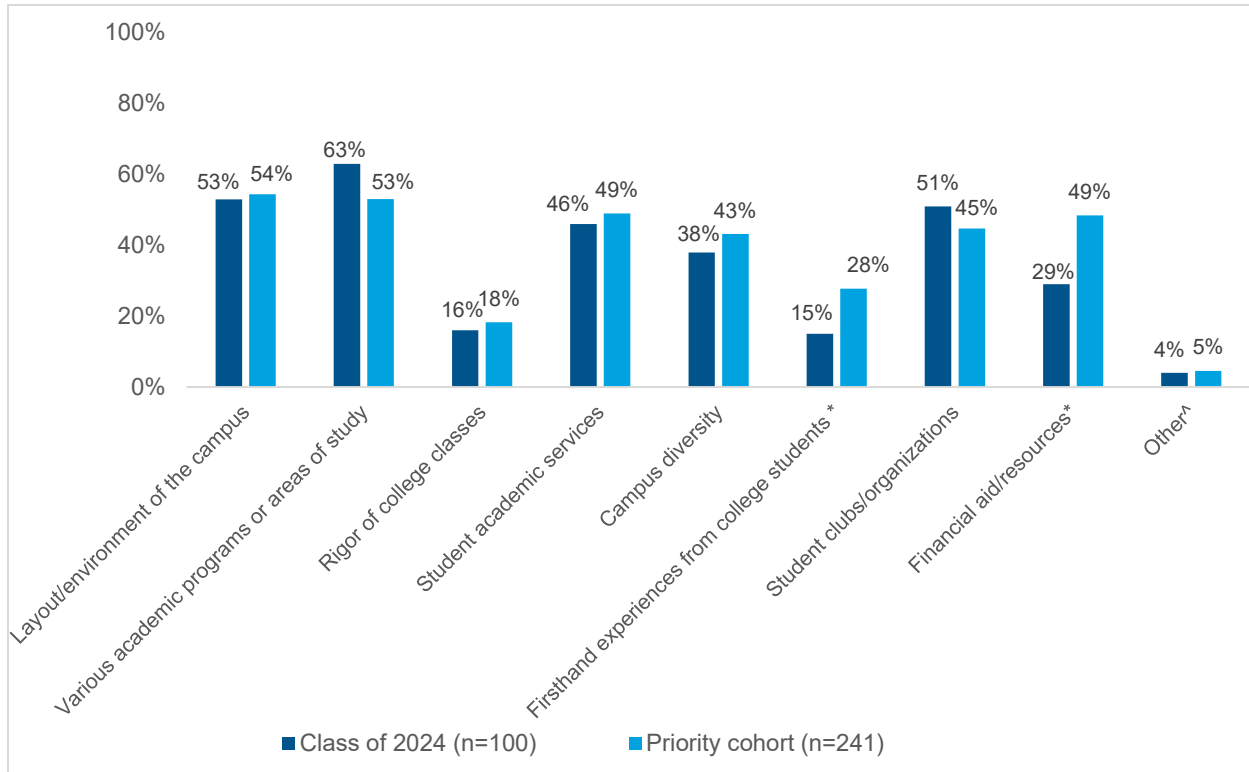
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Examples of other responses included: Website information (1), Normal classes (1), and Spoke with a college counselor from the select college (1).
*Activities participated in by students during their college visit differed significantly across cohorts: Firsthand experiences from college students: $\chi^2(1) = 6.34$, $p<.01$; Financial aid/resources: $\chi^2(1) = 11.03$, $p<.01$.

There were also significant variations from Year 2 to Year 3 in the information students learned during college visits. In Year 3, significantly more student respondents reported discussing rigor of college classes and student academic services (Table D.24, Appendix D).

Overall, students and personnel had diverse perceptions about GEAR UP college visits in Year 3. Priority cohort student survey respondents reported being *Satisfied* to *Strongly Satisfied* (with a mean score of 3.19) with their college visit experiences in Year 3 (Figure 3.17). Class of 2024 student survey respondents reported slightly lower satisfaction levels with a mean score of 2.93 (Figure 3.17).

Figure 3.17. Student Satisfaction Regarding Their College Visit by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

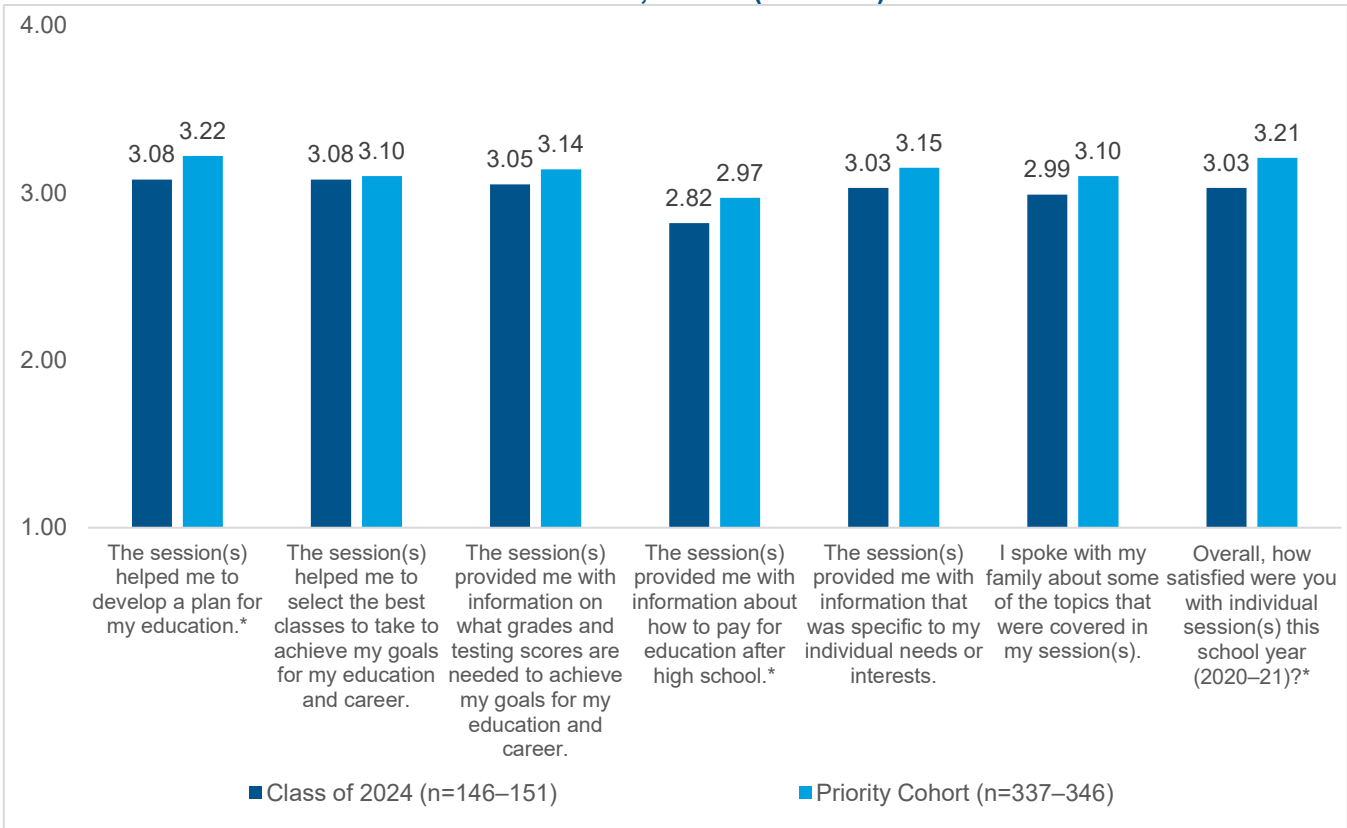*Source.* GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Very Satisfied*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.
*Students' mean level of satisfaction with their college visit differed significantly across cohorts: $F_{(1, 305)} = 10.8$, *p*<.01.

Overall, student satisfaction regarding their college visit across cohorts in Year 3 was significantly lower than student satisfaction in Year 2 (a mean score of 3.29 and 3.11; Table D.26, Appendix D). The switch to virtual college visits may have contributed to the decrease. A GEAR UP coordinator from District 2 shared that they felt the virtual tours were not as beneficial or enjoyable for the students as in-person sessions, agreeing that it was harder for students to picture themselves belonging on campus through a virtual screen rather than in person.

Nevertheless, during site visits, priority cohort students from three districts, Districts 3, 5, and 6, who mentioned attending a virtual college tour reported that they found the tour(s) to be helpful and informative. In addition, a District 4 principal highlighted a silver lining from the shift to virtual college visits, noting they allow students to visit a larger variety of schools:

> *So out of all this, the possibilities that we have through visiting different colleges and universities virtually.…We were also able to conduct a visit to two or three schools rather than just one.…With technology and virtual tours, we've been able to do things that would not have been possible.…Of course, you always want to have all of these things in person, and do take your kids, and have them experience these things.…But…there are certain positive things that we've seen.*

Many students, from both cohorts and across multiple districts, indicated they did not participate in a college tour or visit in Year 3 though their high school. Class of 2024 students from Districts 1, 3, and 5 mentioned not participating and priority cohort students from Districts 1, 3, 4 and 6 also reported not participating in a college tour in Year 3. Many site visit participants noted that the decrease in college visits/tours in Year 3 was due to COVID-19. Approximately, two-fifths (19%) of student survey respondents reported they did not attend college visit because of COVID-19 (Table D.27, Appendix D). The most common reason student respondents reported not attending a college visits in Year 3 was that they were not aware college visits were being offered (41%) (Table D.27, Appendix D).

3.3. College and Career Fairs

College and career fairs provide students with the ability to learn about different postsecondary educational opportunities or career opportunities available to students centrally located in one event. Generally, for in-person sessions, booths were set up with representatives from participating organizations so students may visit booths to receive informational handouts and ask questions individually. With social distancing restrictions in place during Year 3, some districts transitioned the in person to virtual events, using online systems or websites.

In Year 3, across districts, fewer than one-quarter (21%) of class of 2024 and priority cohort student survey respondents reported participating in a college and career fair (Table D.36, Appendix D). Of those who participated, more than half (58%) reported the fair was offered virtually (Table D.37, Appendix D). Student survey respondents reported the types of information they learned about in college and career fairs. More than two-thirds (68% of class of 2024 and 70% of priority cohort) of students from both cohorts said that the college and career fairs provided them with information about one or more colleges (Figure 3.18). Significantly more class of 2024 student respondents reported they learned about the education required for certain careers and significantly more priority cohort student respondents reported learning about the rigor of college classes, the firsthand experiences of college students, and financial aid/resources than class of 2024 students (Figure 3.18). Figure 3.18 provides the breakdown by cohort as well as additional types of information learned in college and career fairs.

Figure 3.18. Types of Information Students Learned About in College and Career Fairs by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
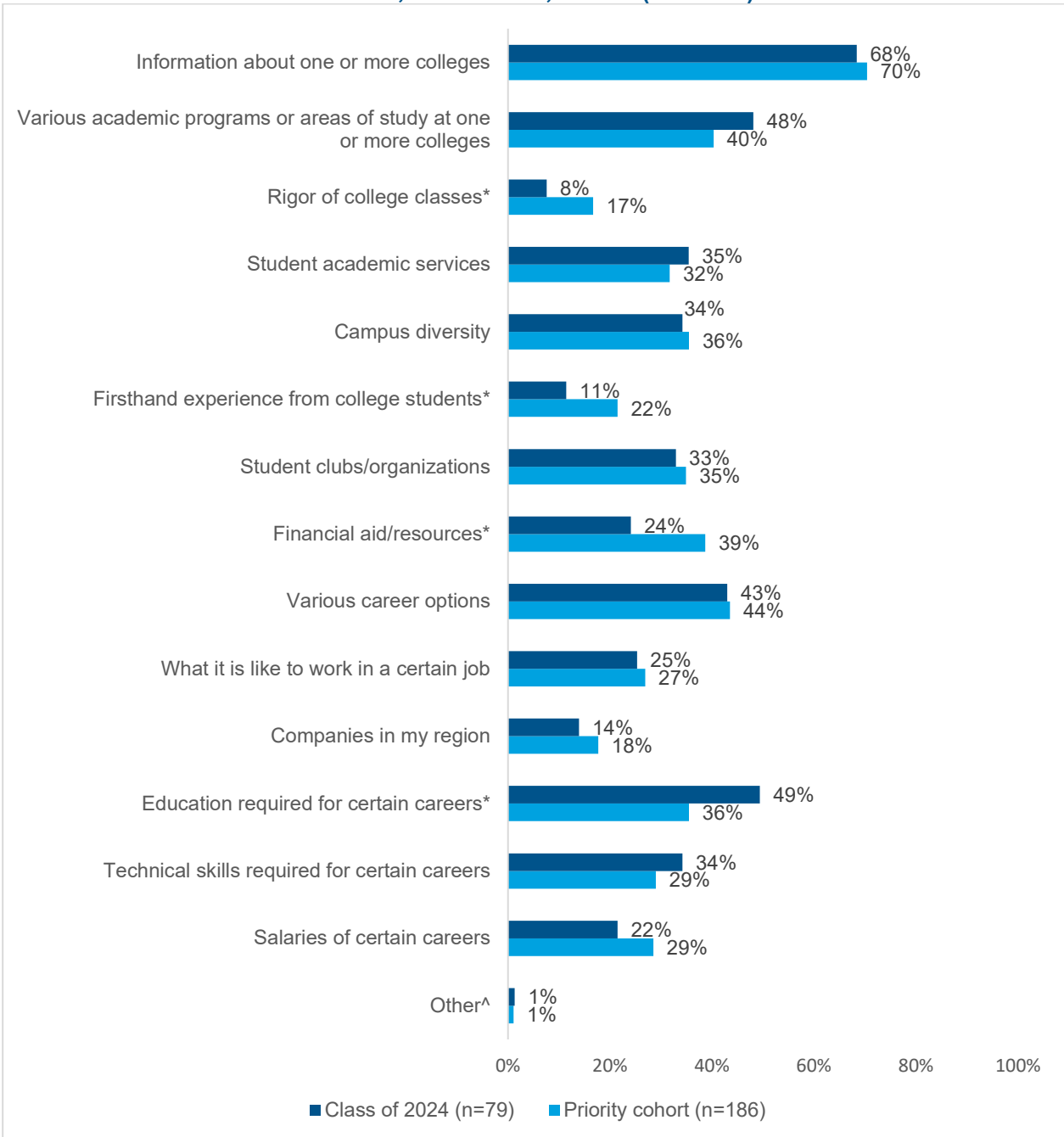
Category	Class of 2024 (n=79)	Priority cohort (n=186)
Information about one or more colleges	68%	70%
Various academic programs or areas of study at one or more colleges	48%	40%
Rigor of college classes*	8%	17%
Student academic services	35%	32%
Campus diversity	34%	36%
Firsthand experience from college students*	11%	22%
Student clubs/organizations	33%	35%
Financial aid/resources*	24%	39%
Various career options	43%	44%
What it is like to work in a certain job	25%	27%
Companies in my region	14%	18%
Education required for certain careers*	49%	36%
Technical skills required for certain careers	34%	29%
Salaries of certain careers	22%	29%
Other^	1%	1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.
*Types of information learned about in college and career fairs differed significantly across cohorts: Rigor of college classes: $\chi^2(1) = 3.80$, $p<.05$; Firsthand experience from college students: $\chi^2(1) = 3.76$, $p<.05$; Financial aid/resources: $\chi^2(1) = 5.29$, $p<.05$; Education required for certain careers: $\chi^2(1) = 4.47$, $p<.05$.

Three of the six districts (District 3, District 5, and District 6) reported in their site visits holding either an in-person or virtual career fair during Year 3. Across the three districts, two of the districts (District 5 and District 6) described hosting a virtual career fair for students. Priority cohort student participants

from District 5 who attended a virtual career fair noted that the event could have been longer, because they felt there was not enough time and they wanted to learn more about the different options available to them.

District 3 site visits participants reported they held multiple in-person career fair events for students in Year 3, including an outside career fair with local businesses and a career/technical college fair. The District 3 principal reported that the outside setting for the fair was a success, adding, "In fact, I think I always want to do it outside now….I think it's a great way for our community to see that these are some options that we're providing our students."

Priority cohort student participants from District 3 described a career and technical college fair held by the district, which provided information about various opportunities available to students after high school. Priority cohort student participants mentioned that there were representatives from the U.S. Army, a police academy, and various trade schools. Priority cohort student participants had mixed feedback on the usefulness of the event. For example, while some priority cohort students from District 3 mentioned that the event was not relevant to them since they were planning to enroll in a college or university after graduation, another priority cohort student from the same district emphasized the value in the event with the following statement: "I think that was really cool, they brought those people up here to speak to us and it gives a lot of people that might not go to college the opportunity to do something."

Overall, class of 2024 and priority cohort students across districts reported that they were *Satisfied* with the college and/or career fair activities they participated in during Year 3 (a mean score of 3.19; Table D.39, Appendix D).

Of the student survey respondents who reported not participating in a college and/or career fair in Year 3, the most common reasons for not attending were that they did not know college and/or career fairs were being offered (44%) and they did not participate because of COVID-19 (23%) (Table D.40, Appendix D).

3.4. Summer Programming

Summer programming provides students with activities and services to address gaps in knowledge between academic years, covering topics such as academic acceleration, enrichment, and college exploration. Activities and services can range from brief one-day courses to longer multi-day summer courses or camps. GEAR UP established participation in summer programming for class of 2024 and priority cohort students as a program objective. [19] Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, summer 2020 programs were cancelled. The following comments about summer programming pertain to plans for the upcoming summer 2021, rather than reflections on past programming. The Year 4 Annual Implementation Report will include findings on how the summer 2021 programs were ultimately implemented.

During the site visits, a principal from District 3 shared plans for a summer bridge camp for all honors and Advanced Placement (AP) students to teach test-taking skills, note-taking skills, how to identify a

---

[19] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 7.4: Each year, 30% of class of 2024 students will attend a summer program (academic acceleration, enrichment, college exploration, etc.).

credible source of information, and other tips needed to be successful in high school and college. The principal explained that even though the summer program is geared toward honors and AP students, it will still be open to all interested students. In addition, the District 3 principal also mentioned their district would hold a summer bridge program for students struggling with Algebra I.

A principal from District 6 reported their district is planning on holding a dual credit academy in summer 2021 to provide students with advising support.

A GEAR UP coordinator from one district, District 4, expressed potential challenges to summer 2021 programming, given the late start to the academic year and the possibility that summer school may not happen. According to the coordinator, it may be difficult to recruit summer program participants when there is no summer school:

> *Because of school starting so late, I don't even know that we're going to have summer school, so I don't know how we're going to get that summer programming in...because the problem is getting the students there. So, when there's summer school and there's other programs that are happening, then more kids will come. But if you just have a standalone program, the students may not feel comfortable coming. So, I think that's one of the things that we're worried about.*

3.5. Work-Based Learning

Work-based learning offers students exposure to the workplace in a field of interest as well as reinforcing students' understanding of classroom learning, work requirements, and the importance of postsecondary education. GEAR UP established work-based learning as a project objective for class of 2024 students and priority cohort students.[20]

Across all six districts, about one-third (30%) of students from both class of 2024 and priority cohorts reported participating in work-based learning activities, which was similar to Year 2 (Table D.29, Appendix D).[21] GEAR UP coordinators from Districts 1 and 4 described in the site visits the work-based learning opportunities offered to students in Year 3. The District 4 coordinator explained that they partnered with local banks to assist in mock student interviews and with other local businesses who shared "what they're looking for, for future employees from our students, and what would be the best classes for them to take." The District 4 coordinator added that they took the information provided by local businesses and worked it into programming for students. District 1 used an online tool to incorporate work-based learning sessions into students' online learning, using both live and prerecorded sessions. More than half (57%) of student survey respondents who reported participating in work-based learning in Year 3, reported it was completed virtually (Table D.30, Appendix D).

Of the student survey respondents who reported participating in work-based learning activities, approximately two-thirds of students from both the class of 2024 (67%) and priority cohorts (63%) noted learning about various career options while participating in work-based learning activities

---

[20] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 7.5: Each year, 30% of class of 2024 and priority cohort students will participate in a work-based learning opportunity.

[21] Work-based learning activities include activities such as job site visits, job shadowing, career day, presentations about different career options, and online discussions with professionals in a field of student's interest.

(Figure 3.19). Approximately one-half of the class of 2024 student respondents (55%) and priority cohort students (47%) noted that their work-based learning provided information on the education required for certain careers. Figure 3.19 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as additional topics learned during work-based learning opportunities. The distribution of the types of information student survey respondents reported learning about during work-based learning in Year 3 was similar to that of Year 2 (Table D.32, Appendix D).

Figure 3.19. Types of Information Students Learned While Participating in a Work-Based Learning Activity by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
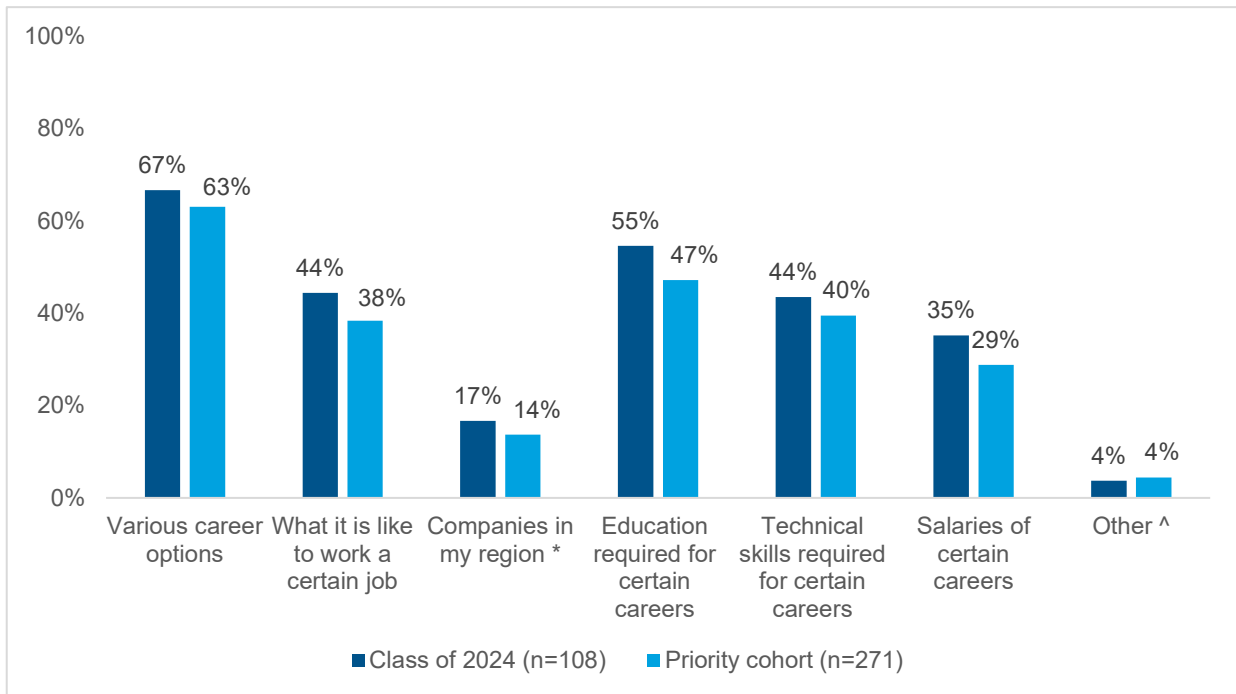
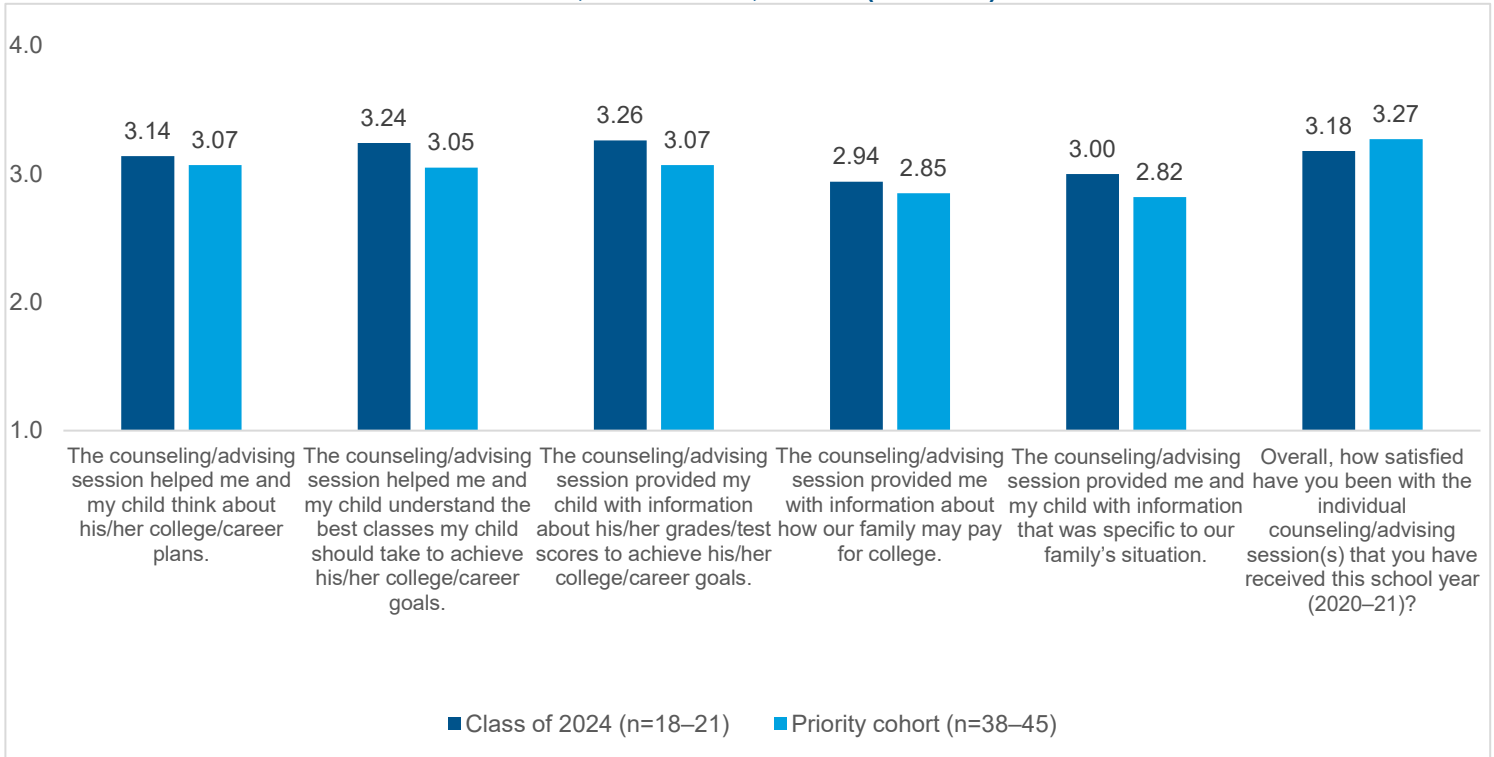*Source.* GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

GEAR UP coordinators from Districts 1 and 4 described the effect the COVID-19 pandemic had on work-based learning opportunities offered to students in Year 3. The District 4 coordinator explained that the COVID-19 pandemic had not impacted the work-based learning opportunities, due to the persistence of the work-based learning coordinator in maintaining relationships with local businesses. On the other hand, the District 1 coordinator explained that COVID-19 had impacted the work-based learning opportunities available to students in Year 3:

> *All across the board, we're trying to re-engage businesses in making it a priority for students to [get] work-based learning experiences…because all across the country, but certainly in our region, small to medium-size employers were very hard hit with COVID. A lot of people were on unemployment because hours were cut down.*

Overall, student survey respondents were pleased with the work-based learning activities offered to them. Class of 2024 and priority cohort students reported being *Satisfied* with their work-based learning activities in Year 3 (with mean scores of 3.03 and 3.11, respectively; Figure 3.20). Comparing across years, there was a significant decrease in student survey respondents' satisfaction with work-based learning activities from Year 2 to Year 3 (Table D.34, Appendix D). During site visits, priority cohort students from District 5 recommended that to improve the work-based learning opportunities available to students, a larger selection of careers should be included. One priority cohort student explained, "I would say maybe just having a wider variety, instead of just having one specific career. Maybe we won't be interested in that one career, maybe have more options to select from."

> **Promising Practice: Establish a dedicated work-based learning coordinator.**
>
> Unlike at other districts, the District 4 GEAR UP coordinator explained that work-based learning opportunities offered to students in Year 3 were not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the support offered by their work-based learning coordinator. The GEAR UP coordinator explained, "[Local businesses] need as much support as we do…and so, I don't think we ever lost touch. And then especially with our work-based learning person that's in charge of keeping us all together, we've got a pretty good effective team."

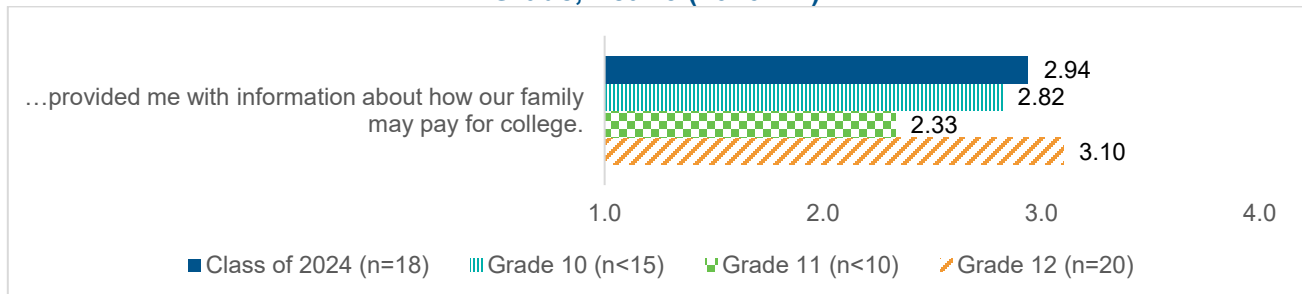**Figure 3.20. Student Satisfaction Regarding Work-Based Learning Activities by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)***
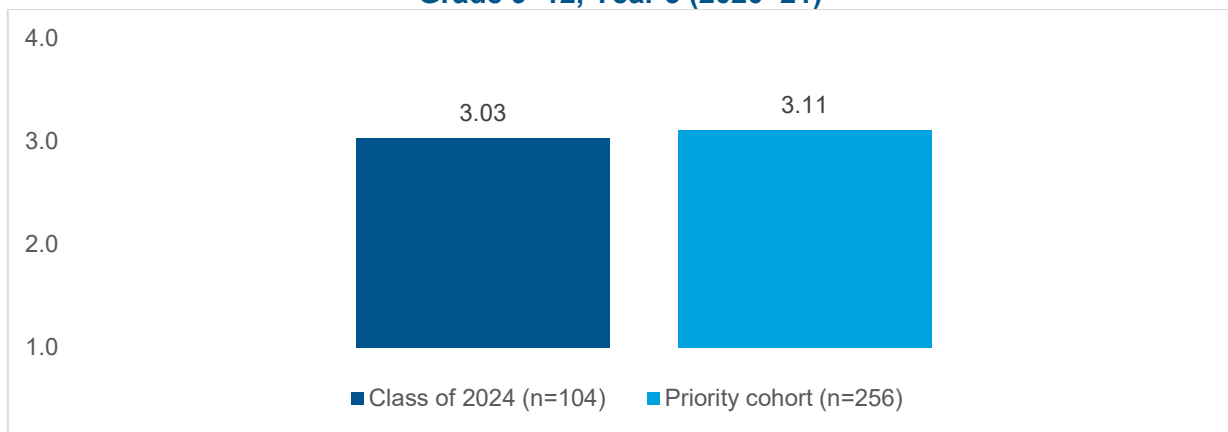
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied*. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis.

Of the student survey respondents who reported not participating in a work-based learning activity in Year 3, the most common reasons reported were not knowing the work-based learning activities were being offered (47%) and not participating because of COVID-19 (20%) (Table D.35, Appendix D).

3.6. Parent and Family Events

Parent events provide GEAR UP parents and families with the academic supports and resources needed to help their child with college and career preparation (e.g., navigating the education system, assisting their student with college preparation and financial aid processes). GEAR UP established a project objective that class of 2024 parent attendance at GEAR UP events and services would

increase each year.[22] Parents and/or personnel from all six districts reported in site visit and survey data that the district held at least one parent event in Year 3.

3.6.1. Participation

Approximately, one-fifth (21%) of parent survey respondents, across districts, reported participating in a parent/family event at their child's school (Table E.9, Appendix E). Parent survey respondents from across all six districts reported participating in at least one event in Year 3 (Table E.9, Appendix E).

During the site visits, class of 2024 parents from Districts 1, 4, and 5 who did not participate in a parent event reported they did not attend because either they were not aware of any event or it did not fit into their work schedule. As shown in Figure 3.21, the two most common reasons class of 2024 parent survey respondents reported not attending a parent/family event were also lack of awareness (53%) and being busy with family/work (22%). Class of 2024 parents from District 4 noted that "it was very difficult for [them] to make it to the time meetings were scheduled." The parents explained that even when the parent/family events were virtual, they were still offered during their workday and thus they were not able to attend. The most common reasons priority cohort parent survey respondents reported not attending a parent/family events were that they also did not know about any events (43%) and they did not participate due to COVID-19 (29%). Figure 3.21 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as additional reasons parents reported they did not participate in an event.

Figure 3.21. Reasons Parents Reported They Did Not Participate in Family/Parent Events by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
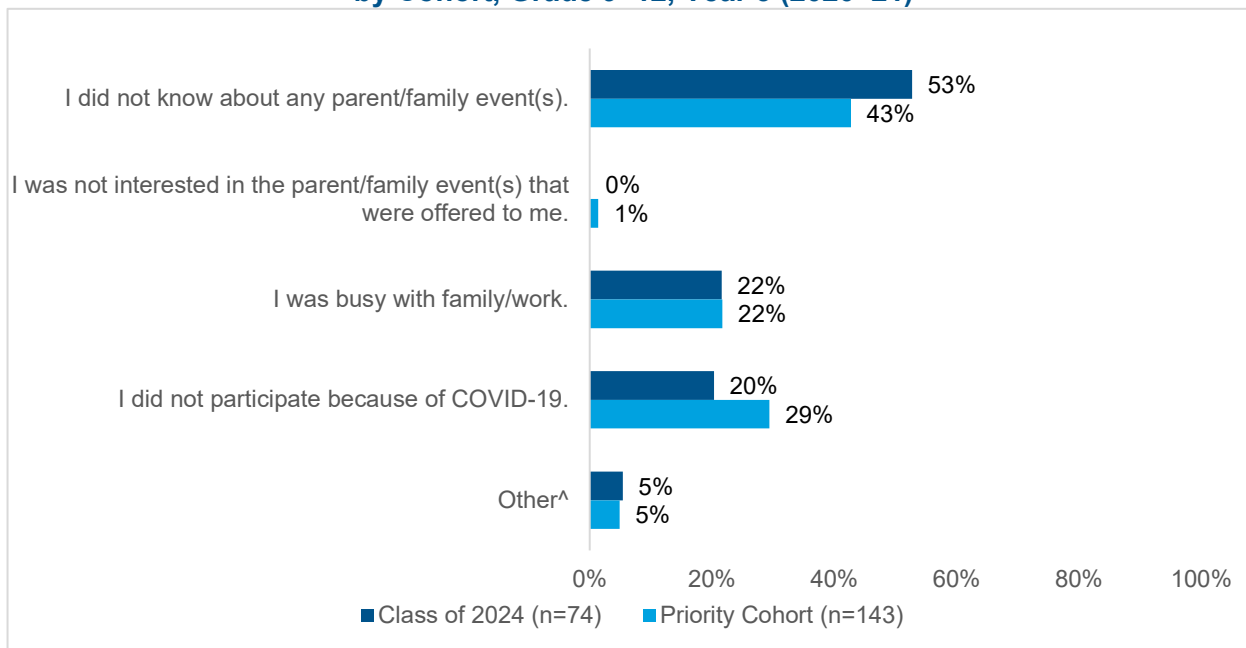
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
^Examples of other responses included: Parents not seeing event invitations (2) and Connection/connectivity issues (2).

---

[22] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 6.5: Each year, class of 2024 parent attendance at Texas GEAR UP events and services will increase.

In comparing the reasons parent respondents did not participate in a parent/family event, there were some variations between Year 3 and Year 2. In Year 3, there was a 19-percentage-point decrease, compared to Year 2, in the percentage of parent respondents who reported not participating in a parent event because they did not know about any parent/family events (Figure 3.22; Table E.16, Appendix E). Conversely, in Year 3 there was a 19-percentage-point increase in the percentage of parent respondents who reported they did not participate in a family/parent event due to COVID-19. Figure 3.22 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year as well as additional reasons parents reported they did not participate in an event.

Figure 3.22. Reasons Parents Reported They Did Not Participate in Family/Parent Events, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)*
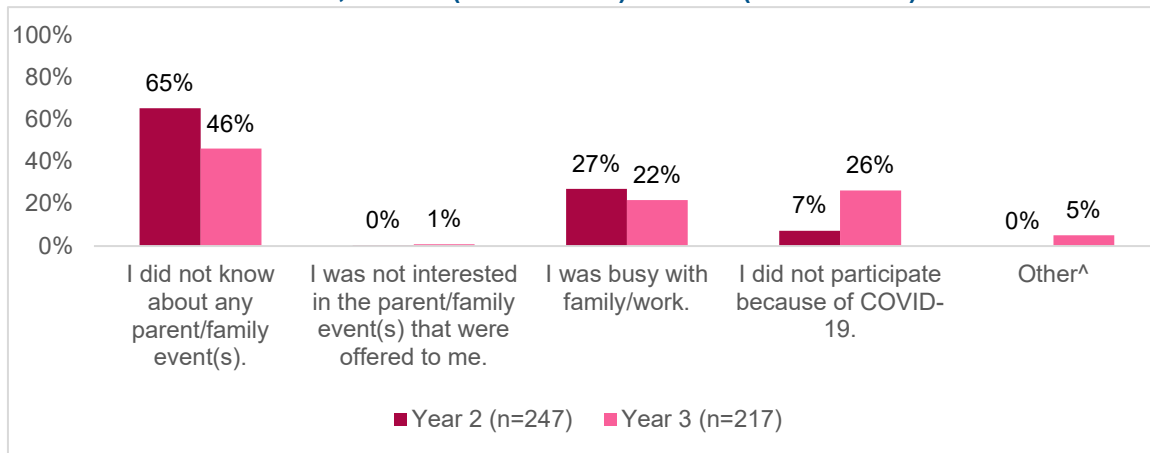
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

*The percentage of parents who reported reasons for not participating in parent events differed significantly across years: χ^2 (4) = 52.88, p<.001.

^Examples of other responses included: Not seeing event invitation while working (2) and Connection/connectivity issues (2).

During site visits, one parent participant suggested that to increase parent awareness of parent/family events, districts should have smaller parent events offered at various times to account for parents' schedules. The parent described:

> *You have people that are still working and kind of set a time where they can grab a couple of parents that can, at a certain time, [participate]. Not necessarily everybody at once, but at least....Well, at least throw it out there and if the parent doesn't get into Zoom, well, you know who's interested and who's not.*

Conversely, class of 2024 parent participants from District 1 described that increasing parent participation in events would be challenging, since some parents do not want to be involved in their child's college and career readiness. One site visit participant shared,

> *It's about parental responsibility…I don't know what to say about the parents. They send us many emails; they post on Facebook, there are announcements, they call us on the phone. I say that the parents are the ones who don't want to participate….I don't know what else you could do for parents to receive the information because you do give a lot of information….If they don't check, it's because they don't want to.*

3.6.2. Event Format and Types

Parent survey respondents reported on the different formats in which parent events were held during Year 3, with more than half (52%) of class of 2024 parent respondents participating in an in-person parent/family event (Figure 3.23). The most common format reported by priority cohort parents was virtual parent/family events, with 47% of priority cohort parent respondents reporting attending a virtual event in Year 3 (Figure 3.23). Figure 3.23 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort.

Figure 3.23. Format of Parent/Family Event at Their Child's School by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
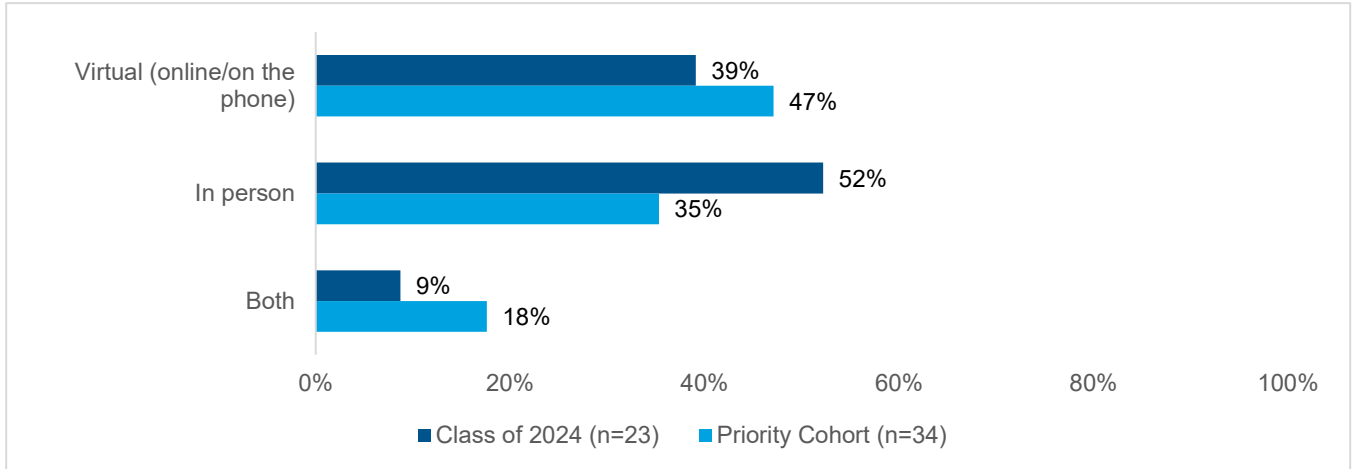
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

A GEAR UP coordinator from one district, District 5, described during the site visits that most of the parent/family events held in in their district in Year 3 were held virtually via Zoom. The coordinator expressed the drawback of this format in making personal connections: "It's great to Zoom and I know that's something we've moved into as a country as a whole. And [yet] I still think it in some way impedes the personal connection."

In contrast, personnel from another district reported on the upside of virtual parent/family events. A District 3 principal shared that there is more availability for parents in virtual events and a larger sampling of parents involved. District 3 offered parent/family events via Zoom, telephone conferences, and in-person sessions. The District 3 principal emphasized that "it's necessary to consider how those additional options have actually helped [the school] reach out to [the] community and families." The principal also noted that they plan to continue to offer parent/family events in a variety of formats in the future.

Class of 2024 parents from District 1 described that the district offers many parent events in two sessions, one in Spanish and one in English. A Spanish-speaking parent from District 1 explained during the site visit that they are very grateful to the district, adding "I respect the district because they have taken the time to think about those of us who don't know English."

Promising Practice: Implement innovative parent events to increase engagement.
The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator mentioned that in the past the district had struggled with parent involvement. During one of the district's "progress meetings," the district developed and implemented an idea for an initiative to boost parent engagement, referred to as the 'Chat & Chew.' The coordinator described that they established goals for students and parents to meet and "if [they] came in to speak with an advisor and [if they] had met these four goals, then dinner is on us. So, we called it Chat & Chew." The GEAR UP coordinator also mentioned that the new initiative had been successful, resulting in "good turnout." By participating in the required steps, the coordinator explained the parents "don't even know how much they're learning until they get there. So, I think that's been a problem that we had, that we found an idea and it's actually a good solution."

Parent survey respondents and site visit participants also reported that the different events covered a range of topics supporting postsecondary education and career (Figure 3.24). Based on survey data, the most popular topics addressed in parent events for class of 2024 parents/guardians were on options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers (27%), the availability of college and career advising (27%), and different types of college options (18%). The most popular topics addressed in parent events for priority cohort parents/guardians were different types of college options (25%), academic requirements for college (22%), and options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers (16%). During site visits, District 1 described their FASFA event, FAFSA Fridays, held for parents in Year 3. A principal from the district described that parents were invited to the school library to walk through the application. Class of 2024 and priority cohort parents also reported learning about other topics in parent/family events, including dual credit opportunities. A non-profit advisor described a dual credit night event in which both students and parents participated. Figure 3.24 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort as well as other topics parents reported learning about during parent/family events.

Figure 3.24. Topics Parents Reported They Learned About at Parent/Family Events by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

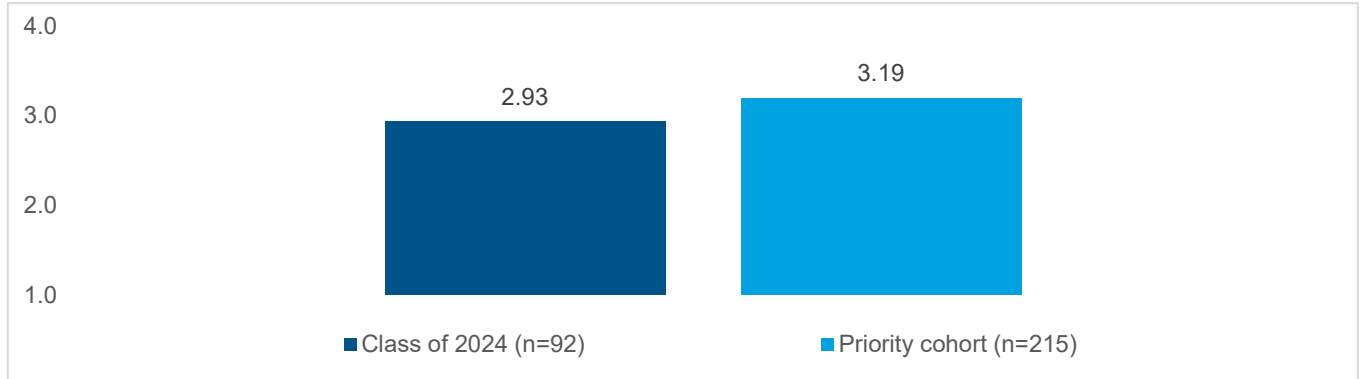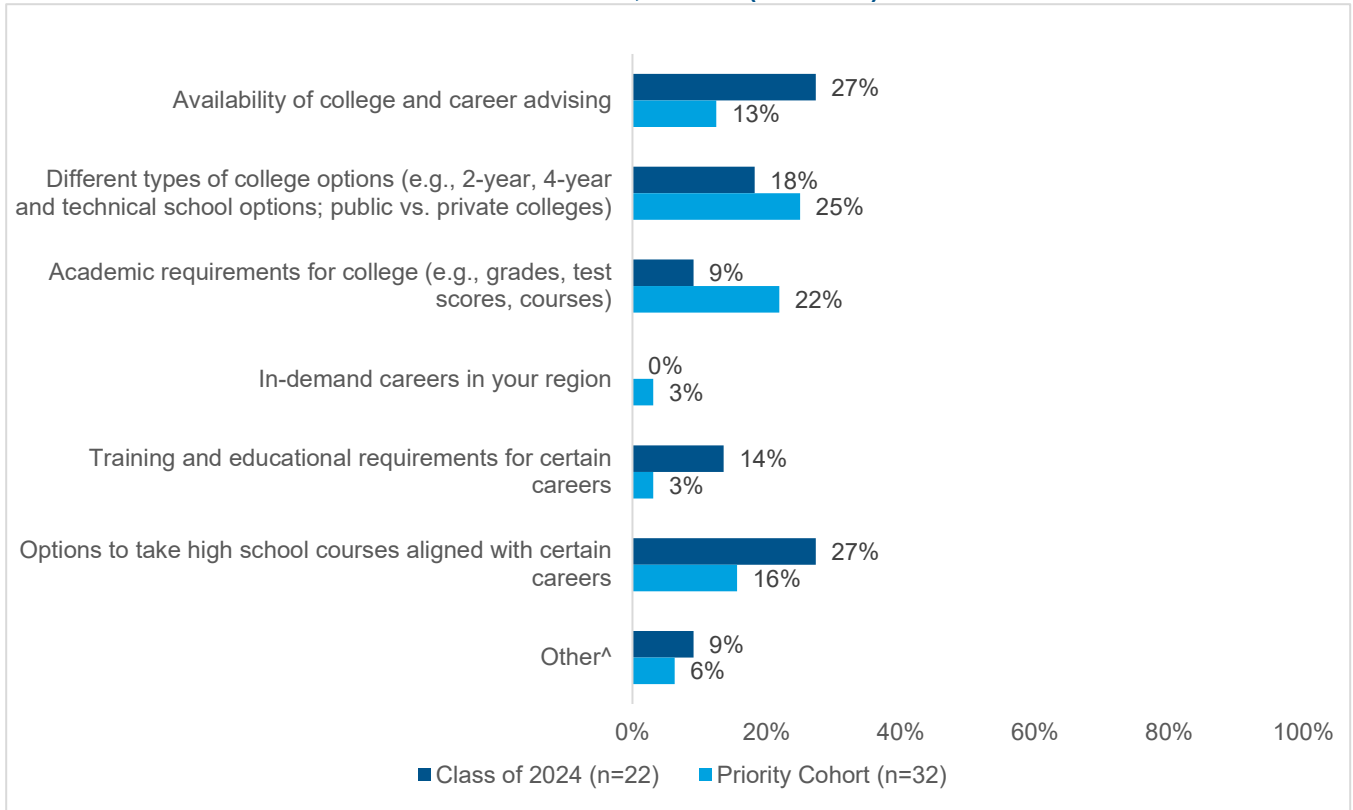*Source.* GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Examples of other responses included: Dual credit opportunities (3) and College/non-profit advisors in the school (1).

In Year 3, there was a decrease compared to Year 2, in the percentage of parent respondents who reported learning about the availability of college and career advising, the different types of college options, the options for paying for college, and the academic requirements for college (Figure 3.25; Table E.12, Appendix E). For career topics, fewer parent respondents reported learning about training and educational requirements for certain careers and options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers (Figure 3.25; Table E.12, Appendix E). Figure 3.25 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year.

Figure 3.25. Topics Parents Reported They Learned About at Parent/Family Events, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)
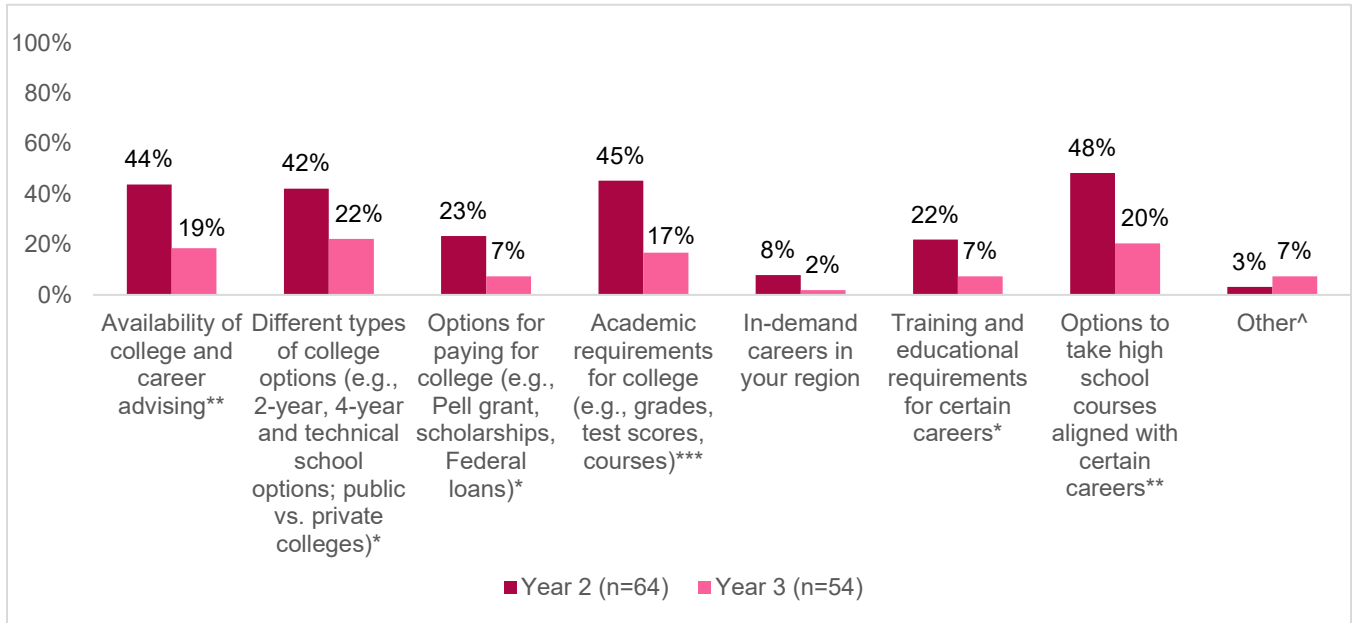
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Examples of other responses included: Dual credit opportunities (3) and College/non-profit advisors in the school (1).
*The percentage of parents who reported learning about the different types of college options at parent events differed significantly across years: χ^2 (2) = 5.28, p<.05, options for paying for college: χ^2 (2) = 5.57, p<.05, training and educational requirements for certain careers: χ^2 (2) = 4.74, p<.05.
**The percentage of parents who reported learning about the availability of college and career advising at parent events differed significantly across years: χ^2 (2) = 8.54, p<.01, options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers: χ^2 (2) = 10.06, p<.01.
***The percentage of parents who reported learning about academic requirements for college at parent events differed significantly across years: χ^2 (2) = 11.01, p<.001.

3.6.3. Event Perceptions

Parents from both cohorts who reported attending a parent event reported being overall *Satisfied* to *Strongly Satisfied* with the event (with mean scores of 3.45 for class of 2024 parents and 3.29 for priority cohort; Figure 3.26). Parents from both cohorts also *Agreed* that they felt comfortable asking questions at parent/family events, that the staff who led the events provided helpful information, and that they plan to attend future events (Figure 3.26). Figure 3.26 provides additional detail about the mean breakdown for each cohort.

Figure 3.26. Parent Agreement and Satisfaction with Family/Parent Events by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 0, 0, and <10, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied*, 2–*Dissatisfied*, 3–*Satisfied*, 4–*Very Satisfied*. The satisfaction item in the figure was asked of parents as a separate question from the advising items, resulting in means that are not dependent on the preceding items.

3.7. Student and Parent Awareness of College and Career Topics

Overall, students and parents participated in a range of college and career advising and exploration initiatives in Year 3, as described in the previous sections. In addition to student and parent survey respondents reporting on their perceptions of advising and exploration initiatives, they also reported their awareness of various college and career topics. Students and parents from all six districts reported about their college and career awareness in Year 3 in surveys.

3.7.1. Student Awareness

Overall, students from both cohorts reported that they were aware of general postsecondary education and career options, with a few significant differences between the class of 2024 and priority cohort students. Students from both cohorts *Agreed* to *Strongly Agreed* (with a mean score of 3.42 for each cohort) that they would like to continue their education after high school, noting that they were aware of what grades were needed in high school to enroll in college (Figure 3.27; Table D.2, Appendix D). Conversely, during Year 3 site visits, class of 2024 students from one district, District 1, shared that they had not learned about postsecondary education (i.e., 2-year college, 4-year college, technical school, going to public school versus private, and what preparation was need for after high school). While both class of 2024 and priority cohort students *Agreed* to knowing what subject area they would like to study in college and being aware of the education path necessary for the career they plan to pursue, priority cohort student respondents reported significantly higher awareness compared to class of 2024 students (Figure 3.27). This finding may be related to the fact that in Year 3, priority cohort students were in higher grade levels than class of 2024 students and so were closer to implementing their plans after high school. Figure 3.27 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort regarding awareness of postsecondary education and career options.

49

Figure 3.27. Student Agreement Regarding Postsecondary Education Items by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.
*Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across cohorts: I am aware of the education path necessary for the career I plan to pursue: $F(1, 1160) = 5.4$, $p<.05$.
**Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across cohorts: I know what subject area I would like to study in my postsecondary education after high school: $F(1, 1104) = 7.2$, $p<.01$.

Comparing students' level of awareness of postsecondary education from Year 2 to Year 3, students generally reported similar levels of awareness across both years for postsecondary education items, with significant increases for two items. Specifically, in Year 3, significantly more student respondents (from both cohorts) compared to Year 2 reported they were aware of the grades they needed to earn in high school in order to enroll in college and of the opportunities that a postsecondary education degree could provide for them (Figure 3.28; Table D.3, Appendix D). Figure 3.28 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year.

Figure 3.28. Student Agreement Regarding Postsecondary Education Items, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.
*Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I am aware of what grades I need to earn in high school so that I can enroll in postsecondary education after high school: $F(1, 3532) = 4.7$, $p<.05$.
**Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I am aware of the opportunities that a postsecondary education degree can provide for me: $F(1, 3415) = 38.5$, $p<.001$.

In addition to awareness of general postsecondary education topics, students were also asked about their awareness of financial aid topics. For all financial aid topics (i.e., scholarships, Pell Grant, FAFSA, TASFA, Federal student loan programs), there were significant variations across grade levels. Grade 12 student respondents reported higher levels of awareness than Grade 9–11 student respondents for awareness of all financial aid topics (Figure 3.29). The only financial aid topic class of 2024 students reported that they *Agreed* that they were aware of was scholarships available to help them pay for college (with a mean score of 3.09). The topics that consistently had the lowest level of agreement regarding awareness for Grade 9–12 respondents were the Pell Grant and TASFA, both of which Grade 9–12 student respondents across districts reported they were not aware (Figure 3.29). Figure 3.29 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each grade level regarding awareness of postsecondary education financing opportunities.

Figure 3.29. Student Agreement Regarding Postsecondary Education Financing Items by Grade, Year 3 (2020–21)
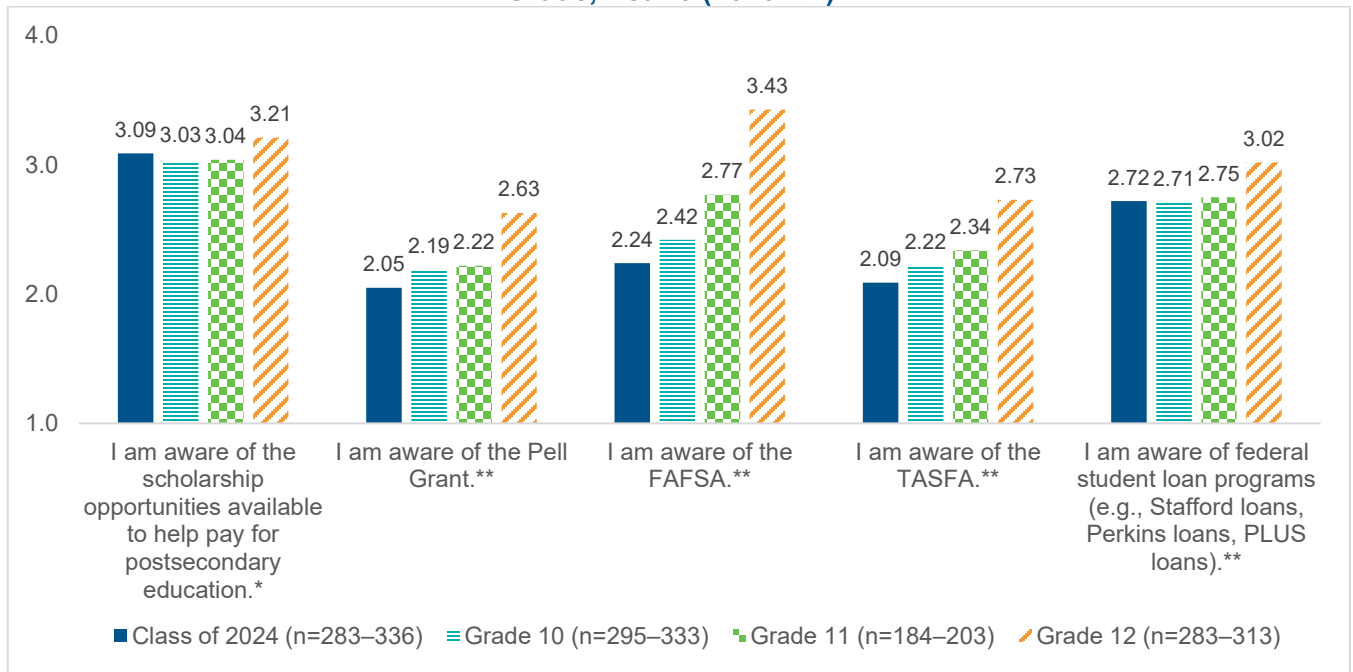
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

*Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across grades: I am aware of the scholarship opportunities available to help pay for postsecondary education: $F(3, 1180) = 3.4$, $p<.05$;

**Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across grades: I am aware of the Pell Grant: $F(4, 1048) = 23.8$, $p<.01$; I am aware of the FAFSA: $F(4, 1099) = 126.3$, $p<.01$; I am aware of the TASFA: $F(4, 1054) = 29.9$, $p<.01$; I am aware of federal student loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, Plus loans): $F(4, 1128) = 9.1$, $p<.01$.

3.7.2. Parent Awareness

For parent awareness levels of general postsecondary education and career options, there were no significant differences between the class of 2024 and priority cohort parents. Overall, parents from both cohorts reported that they were aware of the grades needed for their child to enroll in postsecondary education, opportunities to earn dual credit within the school, the opportunities that a postsecondary education degree would provide their child, and the education path needed for their child's desired career (with mean scores of 3.10–3.35; Figure 3.30). During site visits, many class of 2024 parents from three districts (District 2, District 4, and District 5) shared that they were not aware of postsecondary education information/resources in Year 3. Some class of 2024 parents from District 4 who reported some understanding of postsecondary education topics noted that the understanding came from their own personal experience, not through their child's school. One class of 2024 parent from District 4 added, "No one has really tried to engage me. The most information that I've received about postsecondary is prior to the school year. That was it." Figure 3.30 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each cohort.

Figure 3.30. Parent Agreement Regarding Postsecondary Education Items by Cohort, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
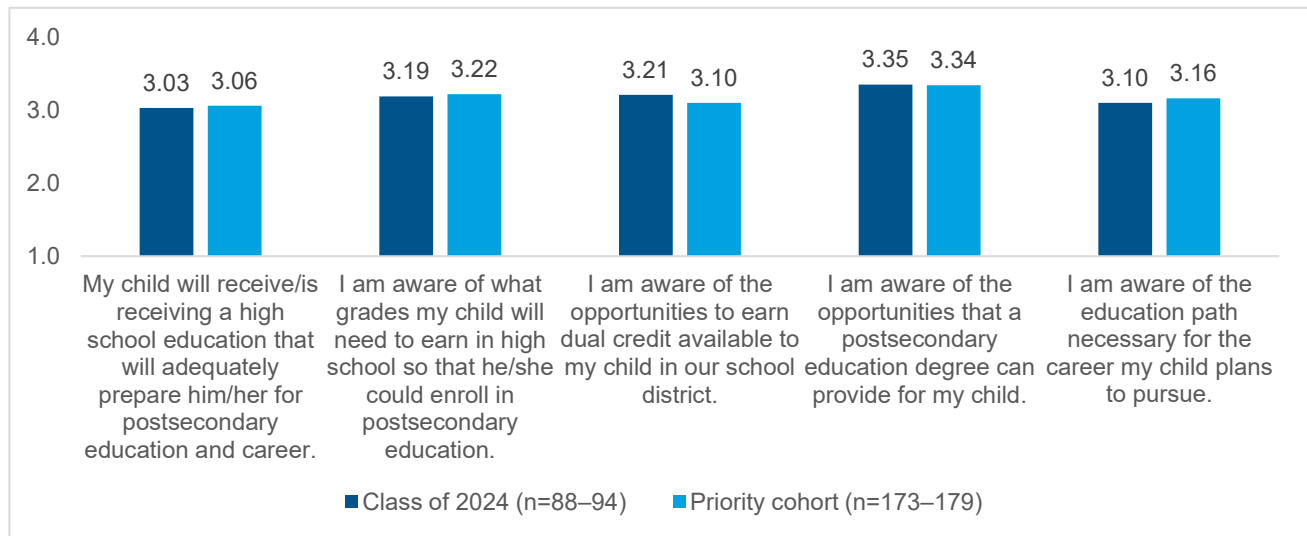
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Additionally, for class of 2024 and priority cohort parents, there were no significant differences between grade levels regarding awareness of financial aid opportunities and applications (Figure 3.31). Overall, class of 2024, Grade 10, and Grade 12 parents *Agreed* that they were aware of the FAFSA (with mean scores of 3.00–3.08). Grade 11 parent respondents reported lower levels of agreement that they were aware of the FAFSA, a mean score of 2.82 (Figure 3.31; Table E.17, Appendix E). Parents from across the grade levels also reported slightly lower levels of agreement regarding their awareness for other financial aid topics, such as the TASFA (with mean scores of 2.27–2.63), Pell Grant (with mean scores of 2.71–2.91), scholarship opportunities (with mean scores of 2.55–2.77), and other Federal loan programs (with mean scores of 2.70–2.93). Figure 3.31 provides additional detail on the grade-level breakdown and postsecondary education and career opportunities.

Figure 3.31. Parent Agreement Regarding Awareness of Postsecondary Education Financing Items by Grade, Year 3 (2020–21)
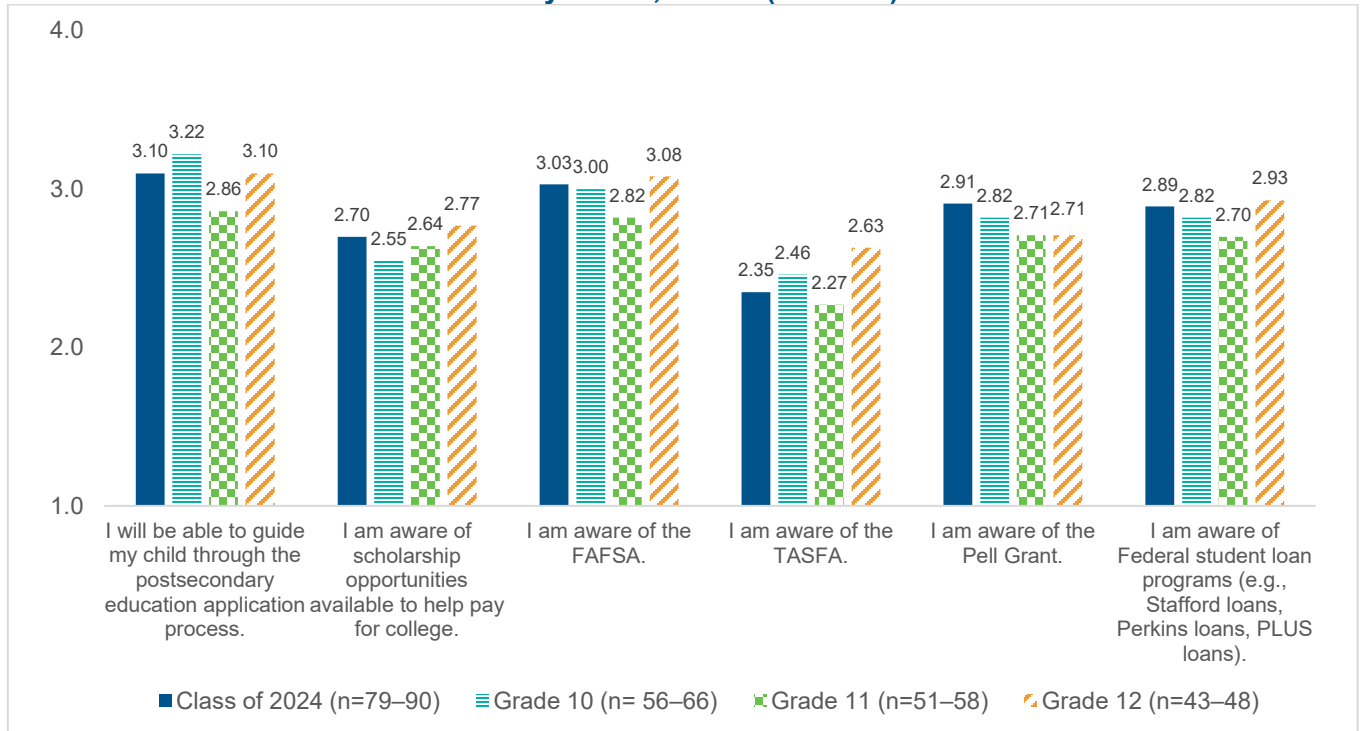
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. . FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

In Year 3, fewer parent respondents reported they were aware of the FAFSA (with a mean score of 2.99 as compared to a mean score of 3.10 for Year 2), the TASFA (with a mean score of 2.41 as compared to a mean score of 2.46 for Year 2), the Pell Grant (with a mean score 2.81 as compared to a mean score of 2.96 for Year 2), and Federal student loan programs (with a mean score of 2.84 as compared to a mean score of 2.93 for Year 2) (Figure 3.32; Table E.18, Appendix E). Figure 3.32 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year as well as additional financial aid opportunities.

Figure 3.32. Parent Agreement Regarding Awareness of Postsecondary Education Financing Items, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)
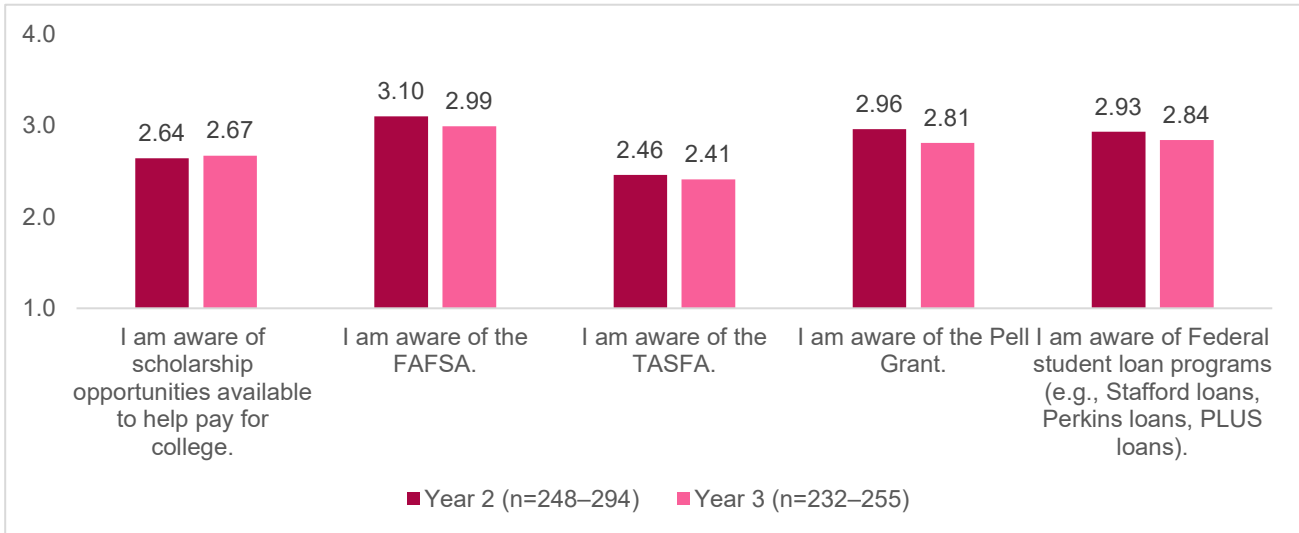
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. FAFSA = Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA = Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

3.8. Recommendations for College and Career Initiatives

Class of 2024 and priority cohort students and parents offered several recommendations regarding the college and career initiatives outlined in sections 3.1–3.6. Respondent recommendations referred to increased communication with students and parents and additional hands-on opportunities for students and parents.

3.8.1. Student Recommendations

Student survey respondents suggested improving college and career activities and services in upcoming years. Student suggestions included additional interactive services for students and increased communication on services and opportunities available to students.

Suggestions related to additional interactive services for students included more college tours/visits and college/career fairs. Representative comments from student survey respondents were as follows:

> "Would have loved to go on a college tour with school."

> "Well not much other than make it more hands on and more offered for all students attending [school name]."

Student survey respondents also shared suggestions related to increasing communication with students to share updates on events and key information related to college and career readiness, such as financial aid and scholarship opportunities. Representative comments from student survey respondents were as follows:

> "They should probably make sure they tell EVERYONE especially new students!!! And maybe enforce [participation] more."

> "Start teaching the fellow students about college and why it's important to attend."

"Offer more opportunities and promote it more."

"Tell students about monthly scholarship opportunities."

3.8.2. Parent Recommendations

Parent site visit participants and survey respondents also offered suggestions for improving college and career activities and services offered in upcoming years. During the site visits, parents from two districts, Districts 4 and 6, shared various topics they would like more information on in the future, including exposure to various programs available for students in postsecondary education and more information on what their child needs to do to be prepared for college.

A class of 2024 parent from District 6 mentioned that they were unaware of the career and program options available to their child, suggesting that the district provide more opportunities for parents to learn about what is available to students. Additionally, parent participants noted that they would like more information on how their child can prepare for college, including information on what students at each grade level should focus on. One class of 2024 parent from District 6 explained,

> We haven't had anything that I know of or attended that is straight, "Okay. [They are] a freshman. This is what [they] need to be thinking of. This is what's going to come the end of freshman year. This is what's going to come at the beginning of sophomore year." We haven't had anything quite that extensive yet.

Additionally, parent site visit participants and survey respondents recommended increased communication between school staff and parents. A parent site visit participant from District 4 mentioned they would like more opportunities to engage with school staff and other parents to regularly share experiences. The class of 2024 parent noted,

> It's still a work in progress trying to get through this pandemic and schoolwork. I don't know if it happens or some teachers even provided it, I think this little outlet right here [the parent focus group] where we all able to kind of share our own experiences, what we have been going through, maybe once every couple of months or once a month, I guess someone like a support group for the parents.

Parent survey respondents echoed that sentiment, expressing that they wanted to see increased communication. One parent respondent said they wanted to see "constant communication with parents, especially for students that are virtual." Parent survey respondents also suggested that parent and family events needed to be planned to meet parents' schedules and parents need to be told in advance of the events.

3.9. Summary

GEAR UP college and career advising and exploration initiatives during Year 3 focused on providing postsecondary and career information to students and families. Initiatives centered on providing relevant information and introducing students and parents to the various options available. Even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, many districts found ways to continue offering college and career advising and exploration initiatives. Activities were provided to students and parents from the class of 2024 and priority cohort with the goal of expanding students' and parents' awareness and understanding of postsecondary education and career options.

Class of 2024 and priority cohort students received advising services to discuss available postsecondary education and career options. Class of 2024 and priority cohort students and parents also received one-on-one advising sessions, discussing topics related to students grades and course selection. Student and parent survey respondents across the districts reported the most common reason they did not participate in an individual advising session was that they did not know the meetings were being offered.

Class of 2024 and priority cohort students were exposed to various types of postsecondary education opportunities though virtual or in-person college visits and fairs. Students were able to engage with current college students and college administrators to learn about postsecondary education requirements and course offerings though in-person or virtual speaker sessions, classroom observations, or campus tours. Students were also able to engage in work-based learning opportunities in Year 3, learning about career options and the education or technical skills needed for each career. Similar to individual advising sessions, the most common reason students reported not participating in college visits, college and career fairs, and work-based learning opportunities was that the did not know the activities were being offered. Site visit participants and survey respondents across the districts mentioned low awareness of postsecondary education and financing items, especially among parents, even though personnel survey respondents reported that their school provided students and parents with information about paying for postsecondary education (e.g., FAFSA, loans, scholarships, grants). Although COVID-19 disrupted some student activities, such as college visits, summer programming, and individual advising, districts were able to adapt programing for virtual learning through virtual events and sessions. Across the districts, participants noted unique adaptations to college and career advising services and career explorations in Year 3, including outside events, new online programs for virtual college visits, text messaging advising services, and virtual parent events.

4. Professional Development Initiatives

A core strategy of GEAR UP is to increase academic rigor by providing extensive PD to a variety of school personnel.[23] This strategy is designed to help GEAR UP meet a variety of goals and objectives.[24, 25] This chapter provides an overview of the PD initiatives used in Year 3, including teacher and personnel PD, and vertical alignment.

4.1. Teacher and Personnel Professional Development

PD activities in GEAR UP aimed to provide personnel with teaching strategies, a firm understanding of how to best implement a rigorous curriculum, and college and career advising techniques. As the PD provider for GEAR UP, TNTP was responsible for helping facilitate PD at the participating districts through training and coaching opportunities. Based on school personnel survey data and site visit interviews, all districts offered PD activities related to increasing academic rigor in core content classes and individualized educator coaching and/or mentoring. Counselors were also offered training in college and career advising.

4.1.1. Teacher and Administrator Professional Development

Across all six districts, varying percentages (8% to 82%) of personnel survey respondents indicated that they participated in one or more PD sessions intended to increase the academic rigor of their curriculum (Table F.11, Appendix F). According to personnel survey respondents, the most common reported format for PD was both in person and virtual (45%), followed by only online/virtual (32%) (Figure 4.1; Table F.13, Appendix F).

---

[23] The relevant strategy is as follows: GEAR UP Strategy 1: Increasing academic rigor by facilitating an increase in access to, perceived value of, and student success in academically rigorous courses through extensive PD for teachers, counselors, and administrators and targeted tutoring for students.

[24] The relevant goal is as follows: Project Goal 3, Provide educator training and PD for rigorous academic programs.

[25] The relevant objectives are as follows: Project Objective 3.1: Each year, 50% of high school core content teachers will participate in PD that supports a rigorous curriculum (e.g., project-based learning, advanced instructional strategies, teacher externships, student engagement, etc.); Project Objective 3.2: Each year, teams of educators and administrators (middle school, high school, and institutions of higher education) will complete at least five days of vertical teaming in order to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level; Project Objective 3.3: Each year, 20% of high school class of 2024 core content teachers will participate in at least three individualized educator coaching and/or mentoring sessions; Project Objective 3.4: By the end of the project's second year, all high school counselors will complete training in college and career advising.

Figure 4.1. Format of TNTP-Driven Professional Development Participated in by Personnel, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

(n=38)	24%	32%	45%

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Only in person   ■ Only online/virtual   ■ Both in person and online/virtual
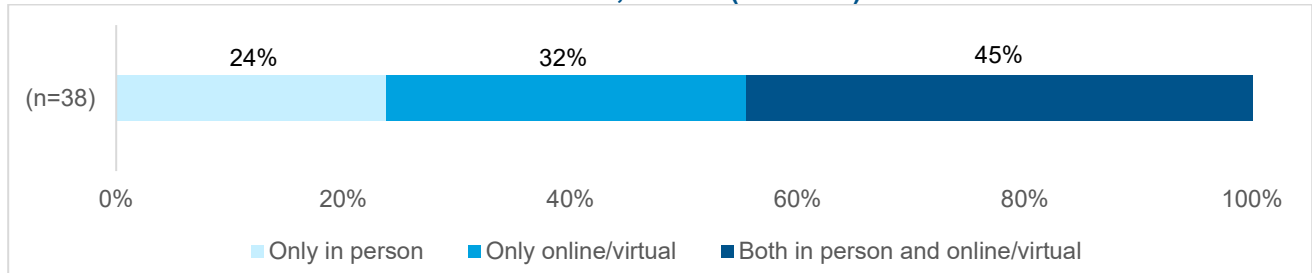
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Personnel survey respondents noted that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the format of PD. A representative comment from a personnel survey respondent noted, "I've always found out about training opportunities online so that much hasn't changed. However, many of the trainings that I have attended over the years have been face-to-face and that changed dramatically due to COVID-19." The increase in virtual PD was noted as a barrier to collaboration among personnel respondents, with one respondent stating, "Meeting online is problematic when working collaboratively because it is difficult to effectively engage all participants in meaningful work."

In addition to the impact COVID-19 had on the format of PD, school personnel and grant partners also discussed other effects COVID-19 had on PD, including the focus of PD as well as teacher and administrator participation and engagement. TNTP staff said that in Year 3, many districts were managing multiple crises as a result of the pandemic and had to consider the limited time available that school and district personnel could dedicate to PD. According to one TNTP staff member,

> *Our districts are really incredibly committed to this work and I've noticed that a lot of the coordinators really probed, 'Okay, if I have limited time, what is the thing I can do that has the greatest student impact?'....Where they might drop the ball on something, be late to something, or not invest in something, it's because they have crises. They have [crises related to] buildings, student health, access to resources, and internet. So, I would say that the bar is different this year…and I don't mean less rigorous. It's actually more, they have more on their plates. But I would consider they are different this year.*

Personnel survey respondents who participated in a PD activity *Agreed* that the pandemic had encouraged more PD focused on virtual education and learning (a mean score of 3.11; Figure 4.2; Table F.14, Appendix F). Additionally, personnel survey respondents had low levels of agreement that COVID-19 made it more difficult for them to learn about upcoming PD activities (with a mean score of 2.57) and that it prevented them from fully engaging in PD in which they participated (a mean score of 2.73; Figure 4.2; Table F.14, Appendix F).

Figure 4.2. Personnel Agreement Regarding the Effects of COVID-19 on Professional Development, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
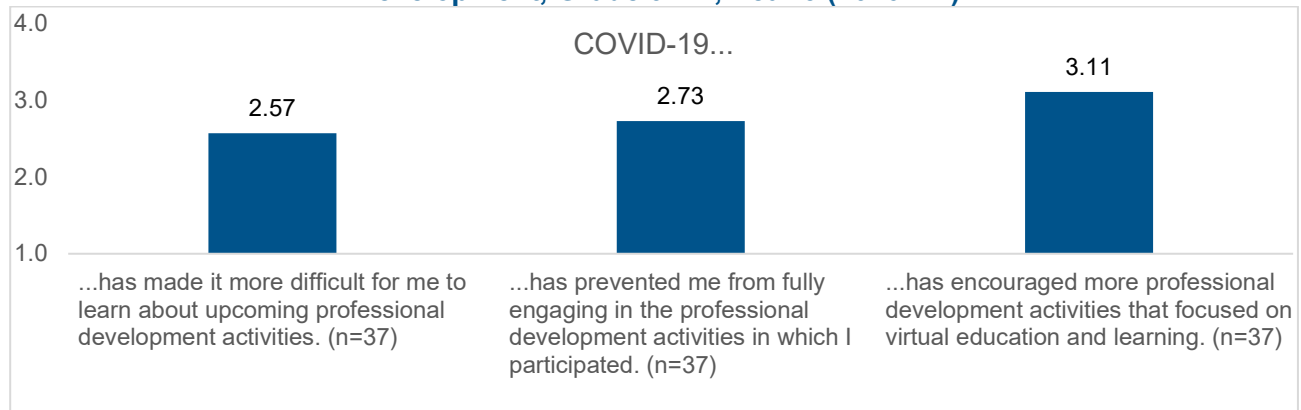
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree,* 2–*Disagree,* 3–*Agree,* 4–*Strongly Agree.*

Comparing personnel perceptions of PD from Year 2 to Year 3, there were some significant differences. In Year 3, personnel survey respondents had significantly lower agreement on the effectiveness of the PD in increasing the rigor of their courses compared to Year 2 (mean scores of 3.25 and 2.94, respectively; Figure 4.3; Table F.16, Appendix F). Additionally, from Year 2 to Year 3, there was a significant decrease in personnel agreement that the strategies they acquired in the PD were easy to implement (mean scores of 3.16 and 2.83, respectively; Figure 4.3; Table F.16, Appendix F). During site visit discussions with District 5, participants noted a general satisfaction among personnel regarding the PD offered. A GEAR UP coordinator from District 5 noted that the PD offered by TNTP helped increase the rigor within classroom and made sure teachers received the training needed for their grade level. The coordinator added, "It's just really nice to have an accountability partner [TNTP] there with our rigor."

Figure 4.3. Personnel Agreement Regarding Professional Development Sessions, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)
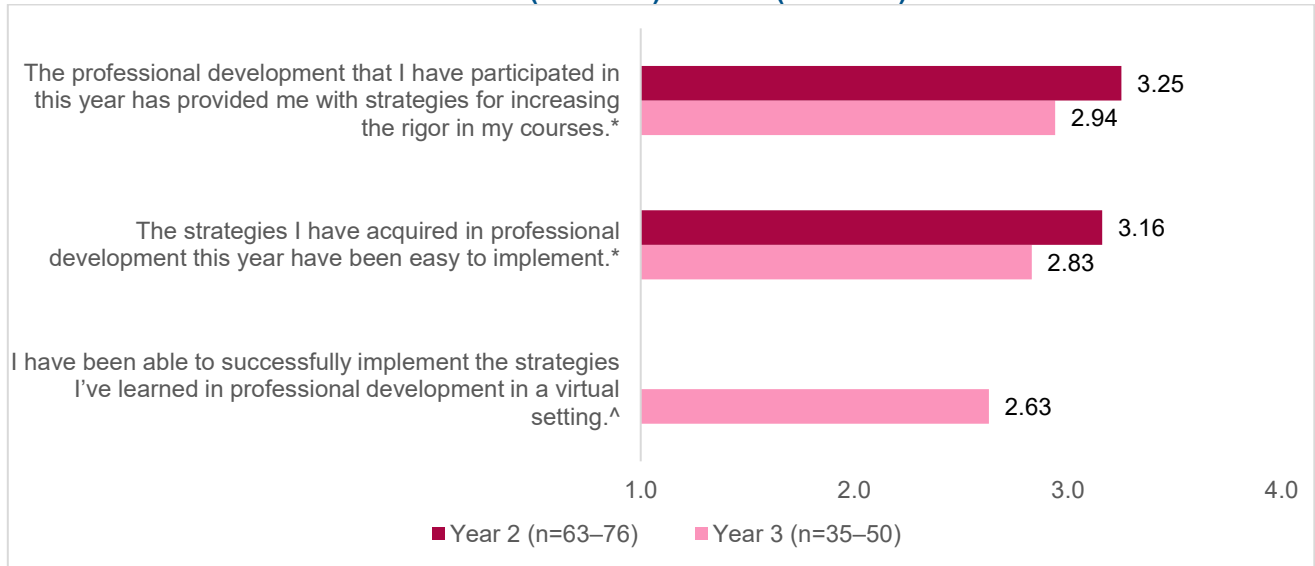
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.
^This response option was only included in Year 3.
*Mean responses differed significantly across years: The professional development that I have participated in this year has helped with strategies for increasing the rigor in my courses: $F_{(1, 110)}=4.6$, $p<.05$; The strategies I have acquired in professional development this year have been easy to implement: $F_{(1, 110)}=5.5$, $p<.05$.

For those personnel who did not participate in any TNTP-driven PD, they reported several reasons as to why they did not attend. The most common reason reported by almost three-quarters (73%) of personnel respondents was that they did not know such PD was offered (Figure 4.4; Table F.12, Appendix F). Less than one-tenth (9%) of personnel survey respondents reported they did not attend because they were busy with either school/family/work or their schedule did not allow them to participate (Figure 4.4; Table F.12, Appendix F).

Figure 4.4. Reasons Personnel Did Not Participate in TNTP-Driven Professional Development Intended to Increase Academic Rigor, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
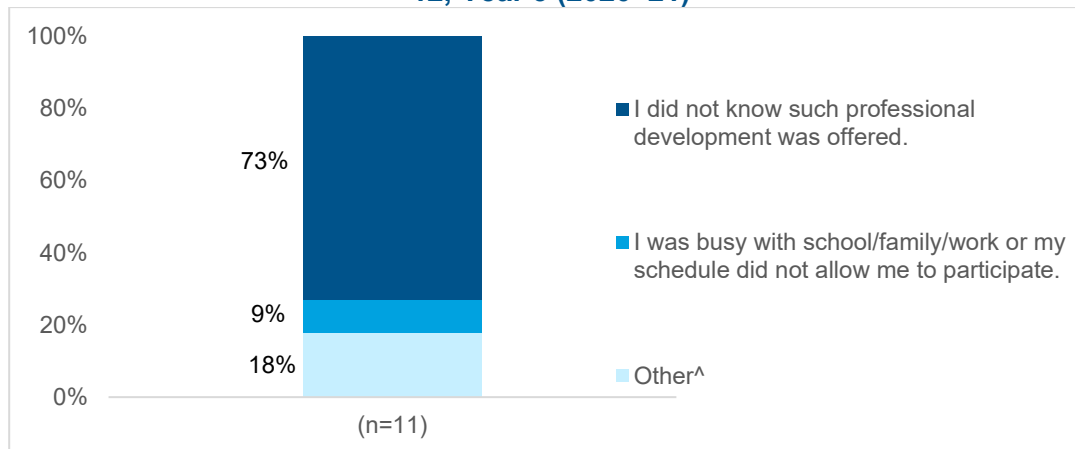
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

During site visits, participants from District 4 echoed that sentiment noting that it is challenging for teachers to take breaks or get substitute teachers to cover their classes so they can participate in PD. The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator explained,

> *And so teachers aren't getting a break, and also they're not getting subs to cover to be a part of professional development…so, I don't know how impactful the professional development has been, because we don't really get to sit down together and talk together because there's no time, there's no coverage for you to sit down and talk to us.*

TNTP staff also noted in Year 3 that the logistics of scheduling PD had been a significant barrier due to many districts shifting back and forth between in-person and virtual learning.

4.1.2. Individualized Educator Coaching/Mentoring to Improve Academic Rigor in Core Content Classes

According to personnel survey data, each district also implemented educator coaching for teachers in Year 3 (Table F.17, Appendix F). Across districts, 44% of personnel survey respondents reported participating in between one and four educator coaching sessions and an additional 29% of respondents reported participating in five or more educator coaching sessions (Figure 4.5; Table F.17, Appendix F).

Figure 4.5. Number of Coaching Sessions Participated in by Personnel, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
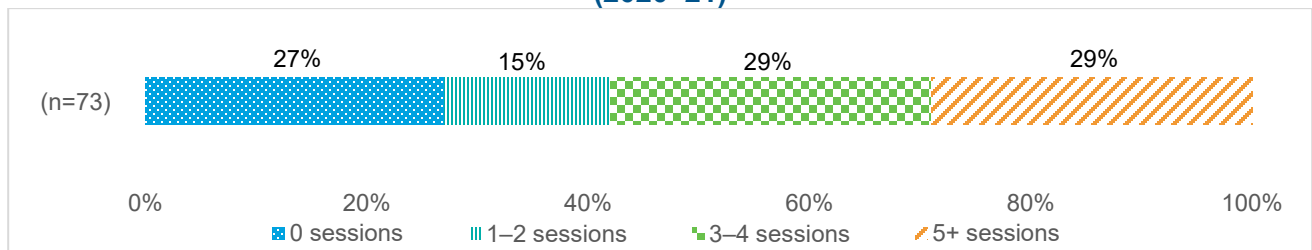
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

The teacher coaching/mentoring sessions addressed a range of topics in Year 3; according to personnel survey respondents, the most popular topics were student engagement, virtual or distanced-based learning, and academic supports for students, with 72%, 60%, and 60% of personnel reporting discussing each topic, respectively (Figure 4.6; Table F.19, Appendix F). Topics reported in Year 3 were similar to those in Year 2, except in Year 3 there was a significant decrease (22 percentage points) in the percentage of personnel who reported discussing project-based learning in coaching/mentoring sessions (Table F.20, Appendix F). Figure 4.6 provides additional detail about the breakdown for Year 3 as well as topics discussed during coaching/mentoring sessions.

Figure 4.6. Topics Discussed During Teacher Coaching/Mentoring Sessions, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
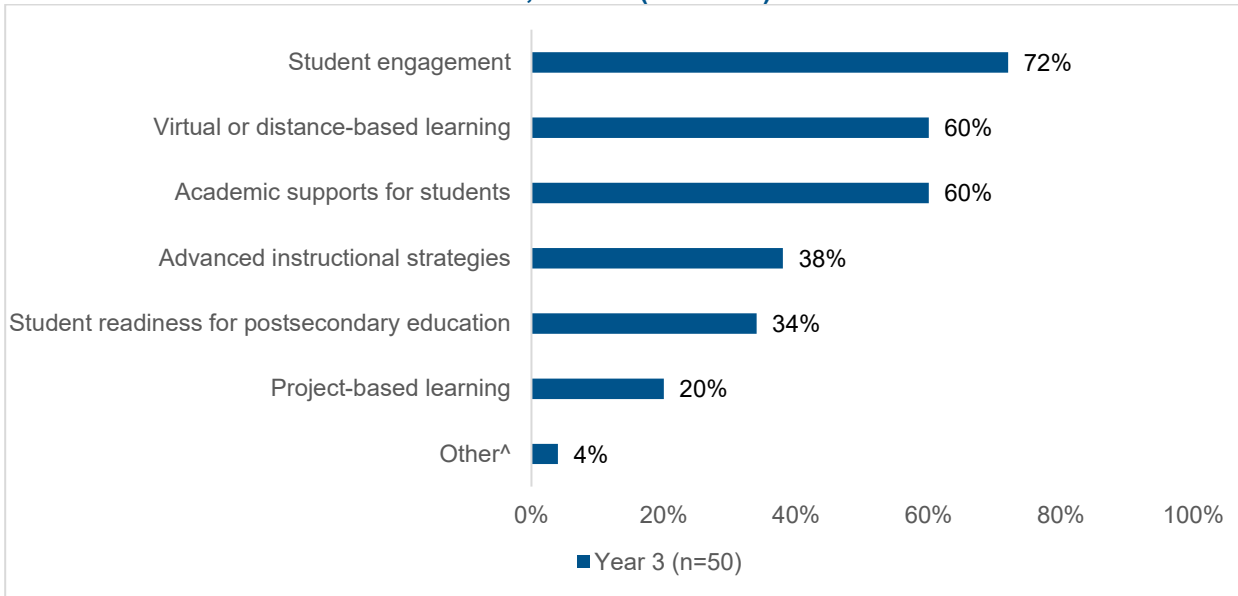
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

In Year 3, personnel survey respondents *Agreed* that the teacher mentoring/coaching they received from TNTP helped them to increase the academic rigor in their courses (with a mean score of 3.00*; Figure 4.7; Table F.22, Appendix F).

Figure 4.7. Personnel Agreement Regarding TNTP-Driven Coaching/Mentoring Sessions, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)
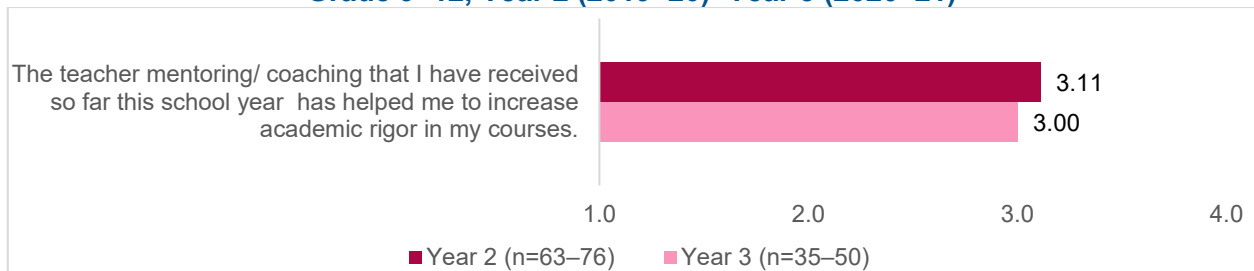
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
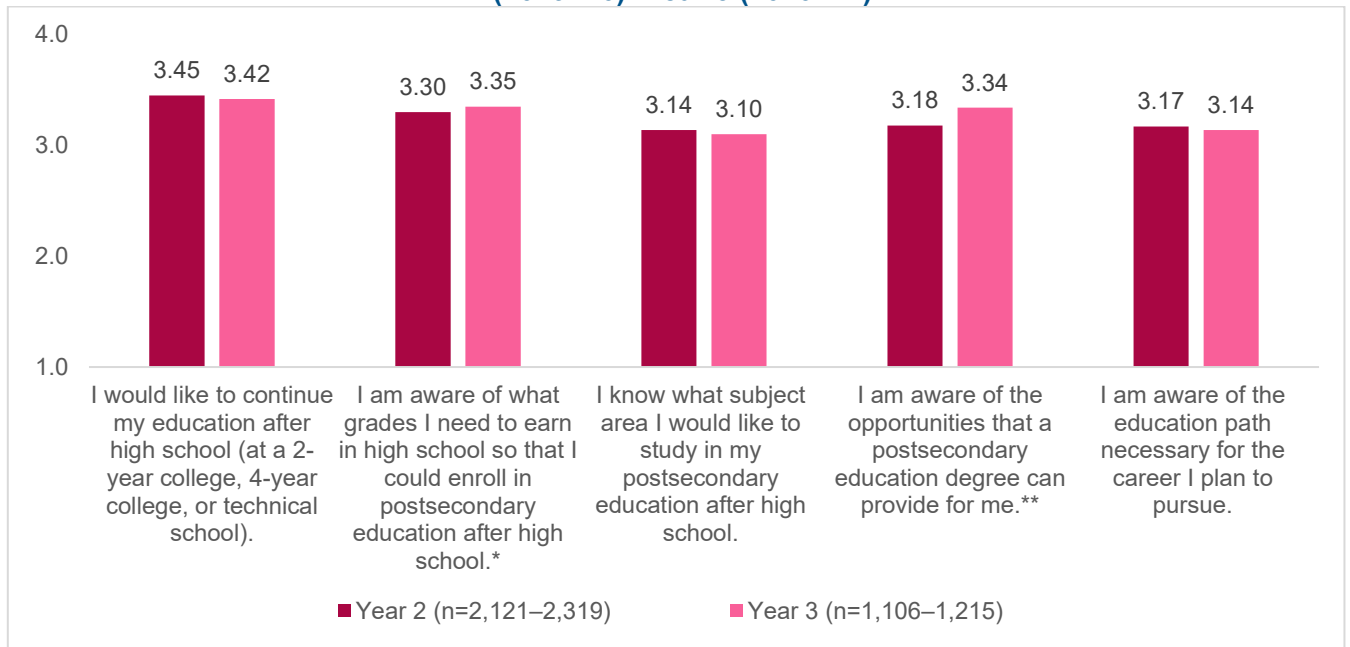*Note.* Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree,* 2–*Disagree,* 3–*Agree,* 4–*Strongly Agree.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

4.1.3. Texas OnCourse Academy Counselor and Advisor Program

As a strategy for providing training to counselors and advisors in college and career advising, a GEAR UP project objective, TXOC established a new training program, the TXOC Academy, that was piloted to the GEAR UP districts in Year 3. [26] During site visits or surveys, representatives from all six districts reported participating in the TXOC Academy in Year 3 (Table F.23, Appendix F).

---

[26] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 3.4: By the end of the project's second year, all high school counselors will complete training in college and career advising.

Training participants who participated in the site visits described the format of the TXOC Academy as a self-paced online training program that consisted of 31 modules for each topic area. Each module contained a pre-test, so the training participants could test out of the modules about which they were already knowledgeable.

According to some of the training participants, the topics covered in the program included the following: financial aid/services (e.g., FAFSA); college applications (Common Application and ApplyTexas), personal graduation plans, endorsements, college entrance examinations (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSIA), scholarships, military programs, and student advising strategies. Overall, training participants reported that while they may have been aware of some of the information covered in the modules, the modules provided more detailed information. One training participant from District 4 noted, "I would say there were a lot of things that [the program] touched on [that] are new. I guess [I knew] like the surface of it, but [the module] just was diving deeper."

Training participants across the districts also provided feedback on some of the key information they learned about through the TXOC Academy. Training participants from Districts 2 and 3 discussed learning about how to advise "at-risk populations," such as low-income, first-generation, or homeless students, mentioning that this module helped them understand how to better help these student groups. Training participants from Districts 3 and 5 mentioned that the module on military programs included a lot of information about postsecondary military programs that was new for training participants. A training participant from District 6 also shared that the endorsement module was very helpful, since they previously were not aware of the content. Training participants noted that while not all of the information included in the program was new, the added details were helpful. Some training participants also mentioned that the program helped inform participants of Texas-specific initiatives, such as endorsements and ApplyTexas, and helped the participants become more "well-rounded." A training partner from District 1 noted that the program aligned with the needs of students and families, sharing,

> *Because now there's a state requirement about the FAFSA and all that. And the college career readiness is an initiative of the state of Texas. So absolutely, it's going to benefit our parents and our children, now that's the state initiative.*

Overall, training participant survey respondents reported that they *Agreed* that they had learned new information for postsecondary education advising as a result of their participation in the TXOC Academy (a mean score of 3.44; Figure 4.8, Table F.24, Appendix F).

Figure 4.8. Personnel Agreement Regarding Texas OnCourse Academy Counselor and Advisor Program Experiences, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)
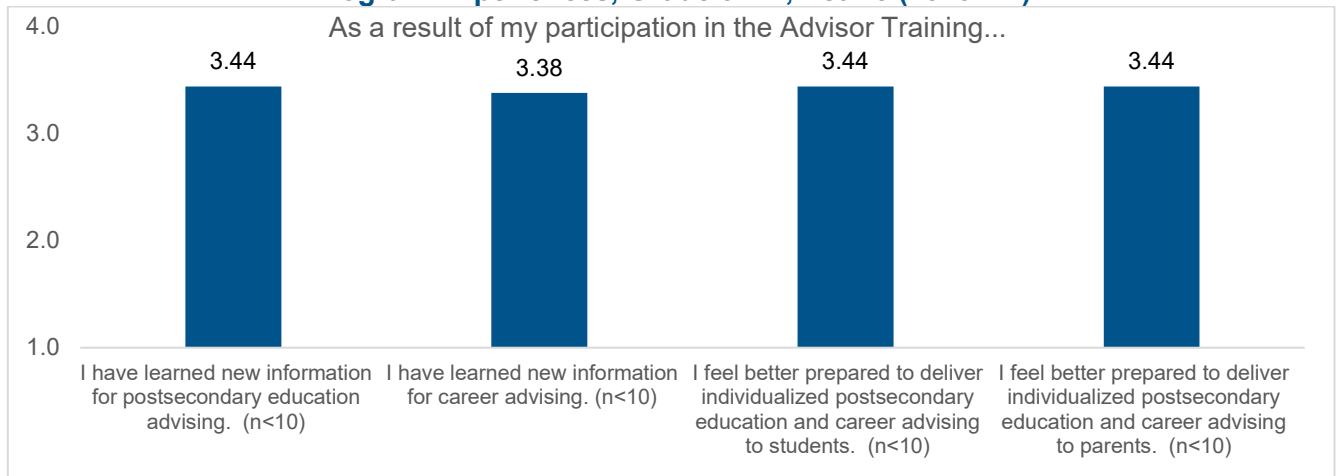
As a result of my participation in the Advisor Training...

3.44	3.38	3.44	3.44
I have learned new information for postsecondary education advising. (n<10)	I have learned new information for career advising. (n<10)	I feel better prepared to deliver individualized postsecondary education and career advising to students. (n<10)	I feel better prepared to deliver individualized postsecondary education and career advising to parents. (n<10)

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Many training participants mentioned that they had already shared the program or information they learned in the program with other district staff to increase the general knowledge of all staff. According to one training participant,

> And so, I'd be like, I learned this really cool thing. This is what I learned. This is a statistic I learned and stuff like that. So, on a regular basis, I wouldn't say that I share a whole bunch with other teachers, but as I was going through the training, I did find some things really interesting. So, I was able to share those with other teachers.

One training participant from District 4 even noted that they shared the information with school counselors outside of their district since they were "impressed with the information" included in the program and wanted to "spread the wealth and invite other counselors so they can stay abreast of all the new information as well."

One challenge that a few of the training participants across the districts mentioned was that they experienced technical issues in the online modules. Training participants described that at times after the user finished a module it was not marked as completed and that the incorrect answers in module assessments were listed as the correct answer choice. Participants found these issues frustrating given the amount of time the training took to complete.

4.2. Vertical Alignment

Vertical teaming is a strategy in which educators in one subject from multiple grade levels collaborate to align their curricula to better enable students to progress from one grade level to the next. This helps ensure that students have the requisite skills to succeed in each grade and are also adequately challenged. GEAR UP established a project objective regarding the use of vertical teaming at middle schools, high schools, and institutions of higher education, with the ultimate goal of reducing the need

for remediation at the postsecondary level. [27] Personnel from all six districts reported participating in some type of vertical teaming activity in Year 3.

As the PD provider to GEAR UP, TNTP was responsible for supporting vertical teaming at the participating districts. TNTP staff emphasized the importance of vertical alignment within the districts, sharing that it helped the districts focus on how to better engage their students, especially in the pandemic. One TNTP staff member shared,

> *They are using their vertical teams to figure out how to better engage students or why [some students] are failing. We're not yet at the place where kids are actually learning really great stuff. Lessons are not yet rigorous….Virtual learning was a very, very, very hard shift. They had to really try to figure out even what their structures were and then to try to get the academics right.*

One of the districts, District 4, described the format of vertical teaming in Year 3, sharing that similar to PD activities, teaming sessions were held virtually. The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator mentioned that teachers were overwhelmed with virtual meetings in Year 3, and the virtual format of vertical teaming may not have been as effective as previous in-person sessions. The coordinator described that many teachers did not receive breaks during the day and were unable to get substitute teachers to cover their classes, which presented challenges for participation in vertical teaming.

During site visits, personnel from Districts 4, 5, and 6 described the vertical teaming their school or district completed in Year 3. Staff from District 6 added that occasionally, representatives from both the middle and high school participated in vertical teaming and then distributed relevant material to other school staff through PLCs. District 4 shared that former students participated in one of their vertical teaming sessions to provide student insights.

> **Promising Practice: Invite former students to participate in vertical teaming.**
> The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator mentioned that a panel of former students participated in one of the district's vertical teaming sessions to provide insight on their high school experience and suggest improvements for teachers. The coordinator explained that the former students "were able to talk to [the] teachers about some of the things that they wished were a little bit different, and how the teacher could improve."

Personnel from District 5 described that the vertical teaming completed in Year 3 focused on closing the gaps in students' academic performance. The GEAR UP coordinator from the district noted they were focused on identifying how to fill the gaps through academic instruction. The coordinator explained:

> *For our vertical teaming and refocusing our efforts, what [makes] our students tick, where [are] the gaps? And how do we look at those gaps and fill those gaps in instructionally for students? What does research show that's going to benefit our students?*

---

[27] The relevant objective is as follows: Project Objective 3.2: Each year, teams of educators and administrators (middle school, high school, and institutions of higher education) will complete at least five days of vertical teaming in order to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level.

Personnel survey respondents were asked to select the staff with whom they participated in vertical teaming in Year 3. As shown in Figure 4.9, most respondents selected high school teachers in Years 2 and 3 (67% and 65%, respectively). In Year 3, that was followed by high school administrators (38%) and district staff (37%) (Figure 4.9; Table F.26, Appendix F). Only 8% of respondents reported participating in vertical teaming with personnel from postsecondary institutions in Year 3 (Table F.25, Appendix F). Additionally, in Year 3, there were significant decreases in the percentages of middle school administrators and middle school teachers that participated in vertical teaming according to personnel respondents, compared to Year 2 (Figure 4.9; Table F.26, Appendix F). The significant decline in middle school administrators' and teachers' participation may be due to the fact that middle and high school personnel were surveyed in Year 2, but only high school personnel were surveyed in Year 3. It is therefore possible that vertical teaming was not frequently occurring across middle and high school, but primarily occurring within the respective schools. Figure 4.9 provides additional detail about the breakdown for each year as well as other personnel who were reported to participate in vertical teaming activities.

Figure 4.9. Staff Who Participated in Vertical Teaming According to Personnel Survey Respondents, Year 2 (Grade 7–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)
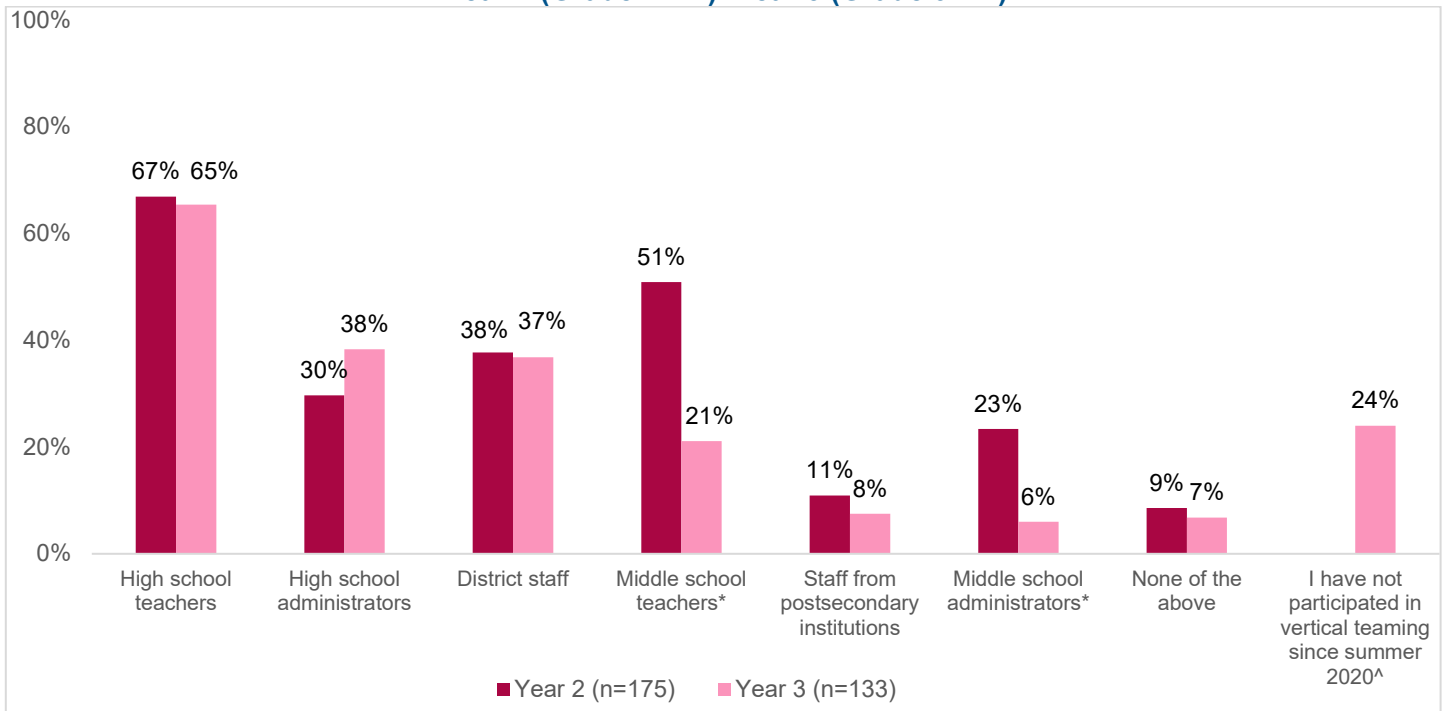
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^This response option was only included in Year 3.
*Responses differed significantly across years: Middle school teachers: $\chi^2(1)=28.5$, *p*<.001; Middle school administrators: $\chi^2(1)=17.1$, *p*<.001.

In Year 3, personnel survey respondents who participated in vertical teaming reported lower levels of agreement, compared to Year 2, that vertical teaming helped align curriculum and reduce the need for future remediation at the postsecondary level among students within their respective schools (a mean score of 3.11 in Year 2 and 2.90 in Year 3; Figure 4.10; Table F.28, Appendix F).

Figure 4.10. Personnel Agreement Regarding Vertical Teaming Experience, Year 2 (Grade 7–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)
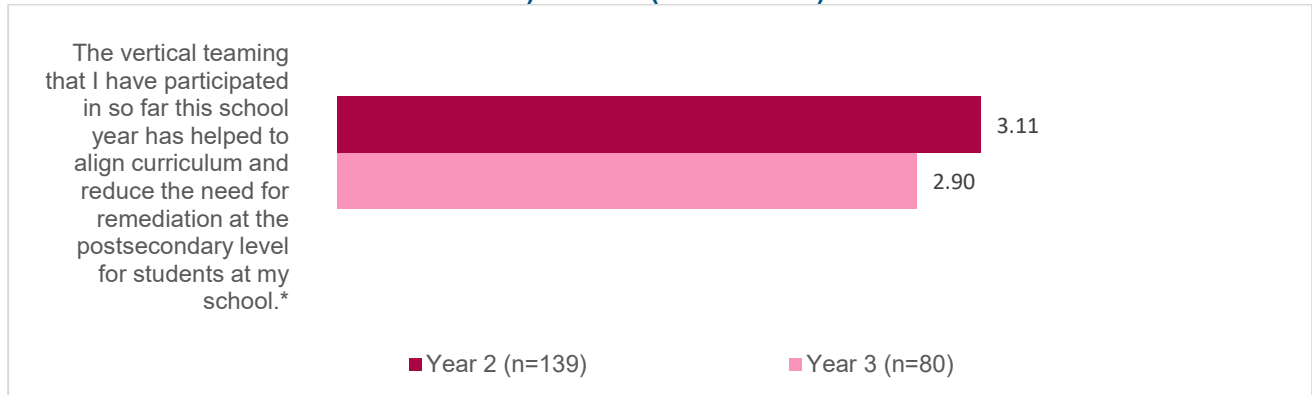
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.
*Mean responses differed significantly across years: $F(1, 217) = 4.5$, $p<.05$.

One GEAR UP coordinator from District 4 reported that the district had positive perceptions of TNTP's vertical alignment, sharing that the school personnel participating in vertical alignment

> *…definitely appreciate the feedback. When they've done those task analyses, [the school personnel have] received the information well, even though it's a third party coming in and telling you what to work on. It's never negative because they don't criticize, they're there to help.*

GEAR UP coordinators from two districts, Districts 2 and 4, noted several challenges with TNTP's vertical alignment guidance provided in Year 3. Challenges described by participants included limited flexibility in vertical alignment and teacher engagement during the pandemic. The GEAR UP coordinator from District 2 shared that at times, TNTP's recommendations did not always seem to be customized for the needs of the district.

> *It's just sometimes I feel like with TNTP, like they have boxes to check. For example, with our vertical teaming this year, they really wanted us…to focus on a strategy for English. I met with our assistant superintendent and I told her, that's not where our weaknesses [are], that's not where we need help right now. We need help in getting our high schoolers TSI[A] ready and college ready by taking the TSI[A]. And so, they were really, I don't want to say trying to push me to have a different type of goal. But it kind of felt that way. And so, in [a] meeting with [an administrator they] said, no, we're going to go with what we need as a district. And so our goal as a vertical team that we came up with was strictly about our TSI[A] component.*

The GEAR UP coordinator from District 4 echoed that sentiment, noting that the needs of the district were rapidly changing and therefore the goals of vertical alignment needed to be adjustable. The coordinator shared that in Year 3, they "were able to tweak [the vertical teams] to what [the district] need[s], versus what [TNTP] wanted [them] to do." The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator also emphasized that during the pandemic, the district was able to shift their focus of vertical teams to student attendance and passing rates. The coordinator added that TNTP was aware that the teams may not be solely dedicated to academic rigor.

4.3. Summary

PD initiatives in Year 3 included teacher and administrator PD sessions dedicated to increasing academic rigor, individualized educator coaching/mentoring, the TXOC Academy, and vertical teaming. Many site visit participants noted that in Year 3 amidst the pandemic, PD shifted to focus on student attendance and engagement instead of only academic rigor. As the PD provider, TNTP worked with the districts, with many site visit participants and personnel survey respondents reporting positive perceptions of TNTP-led PD. Some participants shared challenges regarding the effectiveness of the format of vertical teaming in Year 3 and TNTP's suggestions, requesting more district-specific guidance.

5. Sustainability Initiatives

A core goal of GEAR UP is to build sustainable college and career readiness strategies and practices at participating schools and districts that last beyond the life of the grant. This chapter provides findings related to efforts to sustain GEAR UP services, including those at the middle schools that are no longer serving the class of 2024 and the high schools that are currently serving the class of 2024 and priority cohort.

5.1. Planning for Sustainability of Services and Activities

During the Year 3 site visits, three districts shared their progress in sustaining services and activities. GEAR UP coordinators from Districts 1 and 5 shared their perception of how sustainability is taking shape in their districts.

The coordinator from District 1 explained that a conscientious, concerted effort had been to sustain GEAR UP in the district, citing leadership discussions about aligning GEAR UP, district, and campus goals with one another. Aligning the goals, according to the District 1 coordinator, would allow for future leadership meetings to discuss college and career activities that would meet the unified goals. The coordinator noted, "That way, when we meet, we can now have a discussion as to what activities, how are we going to get things done, instead of just seeing things [i.e., district priorities and GEAR UP] separately."

The coordinator from District 5 described a more passive approach to sustaining GEAR UP services and practices, highlighting the overall cultural shift within the district since GEAR UP implementation began. The coordinator explained that successful GEAR UP practices have now become district practices. According to the coordinator, "Those [GEAR UP] initiatives have become practices. Those initiatives have become what we do as a school district because they work."

5.2. Sustaining Middle School Initiatives

While middle schools are no longer receiving GEAR UP services in Year 3, following the class of 2024's transition to Grade 9, district personnel shared efforts to sustain GEAR UP initiatives at the middle school level.

5.2.1. Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Course

All six districts reported continued implementation of the TXOC CCR curriculum to middle school students in Year 3. The District 5 coordinator explained that the TXOC CCR middle school instructor's teaching experience and familiarity with college-going initiatives—such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and GEAR UP—facilitated continued implementation of the curriculum. The coordinator also noted the importance of reaching out to younger students about college and career and how the TXOC CCR curriculum can achieve that goal. The coordinator said, "The younger they are when they're exposed to those college and career readiness strategies that we've learned through our GEAR UP implementation is important. And so we want to continue [that] in our middle school."

While the TXOC CCR curriculum has continued to be implemented in the GEAR UP middle schools, there have been some challenges in doing so. According to the coordinator in District 4, competing

priorities have added an extra layer of difficulty in ensuring that implementation of the TXOC CCR is fully sustainable. The coordinator said,

> We have a new advising framework that we're working on…so we had to really sell [the TXOC CCR curriculum] and how it's going to be beneficial—which it is beneficial—but it's just one more thing they have to do…the difficult pieces have been trying to get the extra things done.

Districts 1, 2, and 5 specifically mentioned the challenges that came with virtual learning, reporting that students struggled learning the TXOC CCR curriculum in the virtual format that was offered.

5.2.2. Algebra I in Grade 8

In Year 2, a priority of the GEAR UP program was to increase the number of students from the class of 2024 who participated in and successfully completed Algebra I in Grade 8. In Year 3, a sustainability priority was continuing to enroll and support Grade 8 students in Algebra I. Four districts reported in site visit interviews and focus groups that they continued to offer Algebra I to Grade 8 students in Year 3.

The District 1 coordinator shared in an interview that the district increased Algebra I classes for middle school students, saying that more sections were made available and accessible. In District 3, the high school principal highlighted that a majority of Grade 8 students were enrolled in Algebra I. Additionally, the principal also explained how the middle school placed a new emphasis on the importance of Grade 8 students completing Algebra I before entering high school. The principal added that as an additional academic support, they developed a new summer bridge program focused on remediating those students who were not successful in Algebra I in Grade 8. The principal stated,

> **Promising Practice: Sustain efforts to increase Algebra I enrollment rates among Grade 8 students.**
>
> A high school principal in District 3 cited their middle school's progress in sustaining increased Grade 8 enrollment in Algebra I, as well as broader remediation efforts initiated at the high school to support any students who need additional support. The principal described use of a summer bridge program and additional support at high school once students arrive for Grade 9. According to the principal, these efforts have supported increased Algebra I enrollment in Grade 8: "It's the largest amount of [students] ever taking Algebra I, ever."

> We know that some students are still not going to be successful. So, we do have a plan in place to make sure that we're going to get them that core in that very important subject of algebra down if they haven't gotten it in eighth grade. We already have summer plans lined out to make sure we can make that bridge over into high school. And if they're not successful within that bridge program, we have a plan for them when they come to high school so we can get them what they need.

5.3. Summary

As GEAR UP implementation shifted fully to high schools in Year 3 following the class of 2024 cohort's transition to Grade 9, district personnel described active and passive efforts to sustain GEAR UP initiatives. Site visit participants highlighted specific GEAR UP initiatives in middle schools that have been sustained in Year 3, including continued enrollment in Algebra I among Grade 8 students and continued implementation of the TXOC CCR curriculum.

6. Scaling Initiatives Across Texas

One of the intentions of TEA's GEAR UP grant is to pilot various activities and services in the six participating districts to determine which services should be scaled to other districts in Texas. In Year 2, TEA piloted the TXOC CCR curriculum in the six GEAR UP districts and in three additional pilot districts that were not part of TEA's GEAR UP grant (Spinney et al., 2021). In Year 3, TEA expanded the number of districts to pilot the curriculum to include 18 districts in Texas, including the six GEAR UP districts and 12 additional districts—Aldine ISD, Aransas County ISD, Dimmit ISD, Frisco ISD, Dallas ISD, Harlingen Consolidated ISD, Houston ISD, Killeen ISD, Merkel ISD, Montgomery ISD, San Antonio ISD, and Wichita Falls ISD. This chapter provides an overview of findings regarding scaling the curriculum across Texas.

6.1. Scaling the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Curriculum—Perceptions from GEAR UP Districts

TEA staff reported that even though GEAR UP did not fund middle school initiatives past Year 2 since neither the class of 2024 nor the priority cohort was enrolled in middle school, the middle schools in the GEAR UP districts still found value in implementing the TXOC curriculum and decided to continue to deliver the curriculum into Year 3. Further, GEAR UP schools continued to provide helpful feedback to TXOC and TEA throughout the year as the curriculum was refined. As a result of the feedback, TEA staff hoped that the curriculum would transition to a year-long course from a semester-long course and result in an increase in enrollment among Grade 7 students. A TEA staff member said,

> I think that initiative on a statewide basis will make a stronger course for all middle schools in the state. As we get ready to roll out next year the 4.0 version of [TXOC CCR curriculum], we're going to be able to provide not just a strong curriculum, but a methodology that will help students learn and help schools adjust to the delivery of the materials.

Promising Practice: Invite guest speakers to supplement the TXOC CCR Curriculum and increase exposure to postsecondary education and career options.

TXOC CCR teachers from District 3 highlighted that one of the key successes of the course was the use of guest speakers. Speakers provided students with insight into college and career options. Guest speakers included teachers from the high school who also held other careers, such as a pilot and a lawyer, as well as current college students. TXOC CCR teachers suggested that district administrators facilitate partnerships with local colleges, whose staff/students could additionally serve as guest speakers. The teachers suggested that college staff/students could present students with information about college from various points of view (e.g., financial aid staff, student services staff, college admissions staff, and current college students).

GEAR UP teachers who implemented the TXOC CCR curriculum in Year 3 also provided feedback on scaling of the curriculum. Teachers from Districts 1 and 5 felt that the curriculum was ready to be scaled further across the state. A teacher from District 1 explained that the latest version of the curriculum helped Grade 8 students better understand topics such as high school endorsements and course registration than in previous years:

I've been in eighth grade 10 years here, and every year, we would get an email [that] the high school counselors are coming next week and we're going to pre-register. And so they would get a five minute explanation….I felt that the students were so much more informed [as a result of exposure to TXOC CCR curriculum].

However, teachers from District 4 reported that they believed the curriculum was in need of more "foundational" information that was relevant to students in Grade 8 before it was scaled statewide. A teacher added, "Definitely has to provide more training so the teachers can be comfortable implementing the lessons.…I feel like I have to be a little bit more comfortable implementing the lessons." A teacher from District 1 also recommended more trainings for teachers who implement the curriculum as well as more support and a better structure. Teachers from Districts 1 and 2 explained that they had to continue to supplement the TXOC CCR curriculum with other college and career curriculum because they did not have enough TXOC CCR curriculum to fill out an entire course.

6.2. Perceptions of Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Curriculum from New Sites Across Texas

Feedback on the TXOC CCR curriculum was also collected from teachers and counselors who implemented the curriculum in Year 3 in Texas school districts that were not part of TEA's GEAR UP state grant. Due to low response rates, these responses should be interpreted with extreme caution (Table G.1, Appendix G). Respondents were asked to report their agreement with statements regarding their and their students' experiences with the curriculum, as seen in Figure 6.1. The highest mean agreement was for the statements "The course provided students with information about different types of postsecondary education options, including 2-year, 4-year, and technical schools" (3.75); "The course helped students understand how to pay for postsecondary education" (3.60); and "The course provided students with relevant information on how to select an endorsement" (3.60). Fewer respondents agreed that the course provided grade-appropriate information (3.40) and that the level of difficulty of the materials in the course was grade-appropriate (3.00) (Figure 6.1; Table G.2, Appendix G).

Figure 6.1. District Scaling Survey Respondent Agreement Regarding Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Curriculum Implementation, Year 3 (2020–21)
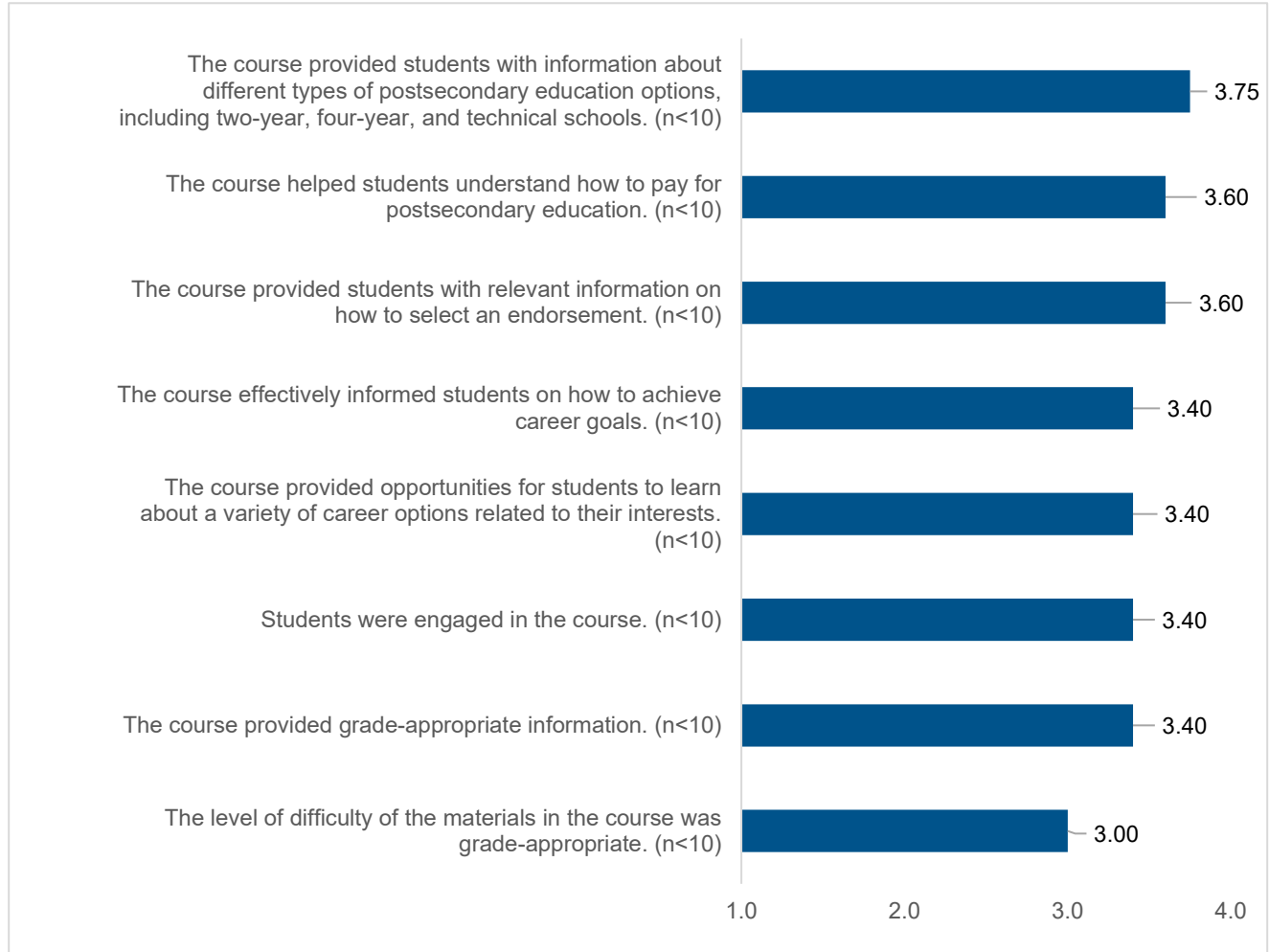
Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Scaling Survey for Districts administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the figure.

Respondents were also asked to provide feedback on their level of satisfaction with resources and training. As seen in Figure 6.2, the mean satisfaction rating regarding instructor resources was 4.0. The mean rating for the student resources and training offered was 3.75 (Figure 6.2; Table G.3, Appendix G).

Figure 6.2. District Scaling Survey Respondent Satisfaction with Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Training, Year 3 (2020–21)
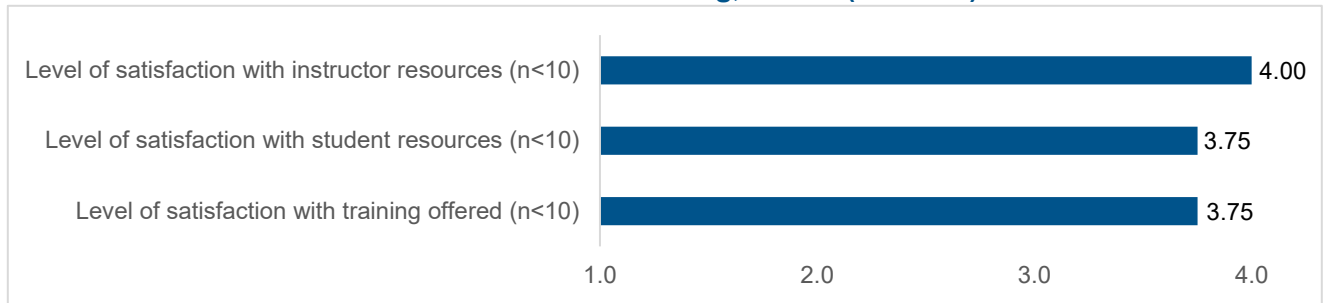
Level of satisfaction with instructor resources (n<10)	4.00
Level of satisfaction with student resources (n<10)	3.75
Level of satisfaction with training offered (n<10)	3.75

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Scaling Survey for Districts administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the figure.

Multiple survey respondents suggested to make more of the curriculum and lessons virtual; one respondent added, "The lessons need to be set up and ready to present to students. I created the presentations for my district. Some lessons would take three hours to prepare."

6.3. Summary

Year 3 of grant implementation included the continuation of a pilot program to scale the TXOC CCR curriculum to 12 districts that were not part of TEA's GEAR UP grant. Feedback from pilot participants (in districts that were not GEAR UP grantees) indicated that they *Agreed* that the curriculum provided students with information about postsecondary education options, helped students understand how to pay for postsecondary education, and provided students with relevant information about endorsements. However, they less frequently *Agreed* that the curriculum provided grade-appropriate materials. Respondents were also *Very Satisfied* with instructor resources and generally *Satisfied* with the student resources and the trainings they received. Due to low response rates, these responses should be interpreted with extreme caution.

7. Grant Implementation Support

This chapter provides an overview of grant implementation in the broad sense, including efforts to integrate GEAR UP into campus plans as well as support provided by TNTP and TEA to support planning and effective implementation strategies.

7.1. Integrating GEAR UP into Schools and Districts

Integration of GEAR UP services and activities into existing school and district plans and goals is essential to ensuring that grant implementation is successful, the support is tailored to the needs of the district, and the support can be sustained long-term after the end of the grant. Site visit participants described how they continued to integrate GEAR UP into the college-going culture already in place in their district. GEAR UP high school principals commented that they believed the GEAR UP grant aligned well to their campus improvement plans as well as school mission/goals. Principals from Districts 2, 3, 4, and 6 described how GEAR UP was used to help facilitate growth of a college-going culture through the implementation and enhancement of strategies, such as one-on-one advising. The District 3 principal added that GEAR UP helped their staff better use data to identify student achievement gaps and students who did not receive the support necessary to prepare them academically. The District 2 principal described how while their high school already had many initiatives in place related to readiness and awareness of postsecondary options, GEAR UP helped their staff to not be complacent in their goals and expectations.

Despite the ongoing GEAR UP activities and services, some students from the class of 2024 and the priority cohort as well as class of 2024 parents from all six districts reported that they had limited or no familiarity with GEAR UP, the purpose of it, nor the support available provided by GEAR UP. A District 1 class of 2024 student reported "I just know that sometimes they help students, I guess, determine what they…want to do in their career." A District 4 class of 2024 parent said, "What is [GEAR UP]? I mean, what's the purpose of it and how is it going to help our kids?" Findings from the Year 3 personnel survey suggest some school staff may also have limited knowledge of GEAR UP. While recognizing the GEAR UP program by name is not needed for stakeholders to be knowledgeable about the college and career services offered through the program, there was also evidence that stakeholders had limited knowledge about those services. For example, inconsistent responses from staff within the same districts about knowledge of advising spaces and college and career information provided by the school may indicate that staff have inconsistent levels of knowledge about college and career services and information available to students and parents (Tables F.3–F.8, Appendix F). As discussed in in section 3.1.1, some personnel survey respondents were not familiar with the non-profit advisor(s) at their school. Overall, ten respondents commented that they did not know who the advisor was or had not had any interaction with the advisor. TNTP staff also reported that they believed some districts struggled through Year 3 to have adequate communication between school or district leadership staff and the GEAR UP coordinator, which prevented GEAR UP coordinators from fully owning the grant implementation. This lack of communication and understanding of GEAR UP services may serve as a barrier for students and parents to access needed postsecondary education and career information and resources.

7.2. Progress Monitoring

A new initiative put in place in Year 3 was regular progress-monitoring meetings between TNTP staff, school staff, and grant staff. TEA staff reported that these meetings in Year 3 took the place of the monthly district meetings with TEA and non-profit advising partners. The goal of the meetings, according to TEA, was to help GEAR UP coordinators use the data they reported to TEA regarding implementation to identify areas for improvement, create action plans to address challenges, and identify successful strategies. TEA staff explained, "[GEAR UP coordinators] needed that ability to own the data, analyze the data, and then action the data." The reason for TNTP's facilitation of these meetings, according to TEA staff, was to relieve pressure on the coordinators from having their funders oversee the discussion. TNTP reported that another purpose of the progress-monitoring meetings was to develop sustainable solutions using data that could be applied to GEAR UP or other college and career readiness initiatives. TEA staff were satisfied with the meetings. Staff added that as a result of the meetings, GEAR UP districts used data to create action plans for addressing low performance and increased their "ownership" of their district's GEAR UP data. TNTP also reported that they were satisfied with the meetings

> **Promising Practice:**
> **Support districts in the use of data to understand progress and drive implementation.**
>
> TEA, TNTP, and most district coordinators reported that they were satisfied with the Year 3 progress-monitoring meetings. The meetings were described as a way for grant staff to reflect on the data they collected for GEAR UP and identify gaps in progress and successful areas of implementation. These reflections also helped grant and district staff develop strategic action plans to address challenge areas. While one coordinator did not prefer the progress-monitoring meetings, they collaborated with school staff to conduct their own progress monitoring and develop action plans. Continued support and encouragement for districts to continue to monitor their grant data to understand their progress in implementation in a style that fits well for the district (e.g., large meeting, independent monitoring) may help districts to tailor the services to meet the needs of their students and school communities.

and said, "Districts are continuing to show more and more investment in student data and a hunger for learning higher-level data skills that will help inform their practice."

Site visit participants from five of the six districts reported that they found the progress-monitoring meetings to also be helpful. Coordinators from these districts reported that the meetings helped their districts to reflect more on the data they reported; identify areas for improvement; help their district grant staff have a shared understanding of the data, action plans, and purpose of the action plans; and identify strengths through the data. Additionally, the dual focus on areas for improvement as well as the celebration of successes and goals met was appreciated by coordinators. A coordinator from one district reported, however, that they felt the meetings were not a good use of time for the attendees because GEAR UP staff had already identified goals that they struggled to achieve and met with school and district staff to implement new strategies to achieve those goals. The coordinator added that TNTP did not offer any feedback or support for the strategies the school and district staff put in place.

7.3. Coordinator Professional Learning Communities

TNTP also facilitated PLCs for GEAR UP coordinators in Year 3. Coordinators described these PLCs as a time to network, share strategies that worked well to help them meet GEAR UP goals, and share with one another their experiences with the goals they struggled to meet. Overall, coordinators reported that they enjoyed getting to meet with staff from other districts and "bounce ideas" off of one another. Strategies and initiatives that coordinators said they intended to modify or replicate in their district included hosting sessions for alumni to speak with current students and organizing different celebrations of Grade 12 students after they were accepted to college. Some coordinators also explained they were not able to implement strategies described by other districts due to differences like enrollment size, course schedules, location in their community, or the location of the coordinator's office (e.g., at the high school, at the district offices). However, coordinators continuously reiterated that it was still helpful to hear from each other. The District 2 coordinator said, "Sometimes the topics may not necessarily be relevant to what is going on in our world, but at the same time, it is nice to meet with the other districts and hear from them."

7.4. Texas Education Agency Support

TEA staff explained that in Year 3, the GEAR UP grant moved from TEA's Special Projects division to the College, Career, and Military Preparation (CCMP) division. The CCMP division included other programs, like Communities in Schools, that provide services similar to GEAR UP. TEA staff explained that GEAR UP's start in the Special Projects division was like starting in an "incubator" as it created a safe space for innovation. The move to the CCMP division in Year 3 helped GEAR UP to be more aligned with key TEA programs. TEA staff added that the transition helped TEA think about how GEAR UP would be able to build off of the work of other CCMP programs and vice versa; TEA staff said, "…how does what we're doing with GEAR UP resonate and add synergy to other [TEA] initiatives that the state is putting forward."

TEA staff also shared their vision of support for GEAR UP districts as they operated in "crisis mode" during much of Year 3 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. TEA staff expressed that they felt it was important for

> **Promising Practice:**
> **Establish monthly communications to share program-wide updates, upcoming activities, and deadlines.**
>
> One of the ways that TEA staff strengthened their communication with districts about GEAR UP was through a monthly communique which highlighted upcoming activities and deadlines. This streamlined communication helped GEAR UP coordinators to remain informed of important dates and events as their districts remained focused on academics and instruction. According to one coordinator, "They've always communicated very well…[they do] a monthly communication, [a] communique.…That's been extremely helpful. It gives us basically an outline of…things going on this month.…That's been very nice this year to have that."

districts to place their focus on instruction for the year and to have GEAR UP goals prioritized in other ways than in previous years. To best understand the local and individual needs of the GEAR UP districts, TEA staff emphasized the need for strong and ongoing communication with GEAR UP coordinators.

Coordinators from Districts 1, 4, and 5 also described the support that they received from TEA staff as helpful. The support provided in Year 3 included answers regarding funding and budgets, data and reporting, and GEAR UP goals.

7.5. Summary

School and district staff reported that they felt GEAR UP goals aligned well to the college-going goals and mission of their schools and also provided strong support for achieving those goals. However, site visit and personnel survey findings revealed that some students, parents, and school staff were unfamiliar with GEAR UP, including the purpose and the services provided. Progress-monitoring meetings and coordinator PLCs were implemented in Year 3 and facilitated by TNTP to help coordinators and other school and district staff better understand the GEAR UP data they report on and discuss strategies to help address challenges in implementation and strategies that yielded successful outcomes. TEA staff explained that their change in divisions as well as their strong communication with districts about their local needs were important and strengthened implementation in Year 3 as well.

8. Summary of Findings, Promising Practices, and Recommendations

This chapter provides an overview of the findings and a description of promising practices from Year 3 as well as recommendations for consideration in upcoming years.

8.1. Findings

Class of 2024 students who took Algebra I as Grade 9 students reported that they generally felt prepared to do so (a mean agreement score of 3.03) but were less likely to agree that their Algebra I class was challenging (a mean agreement score of 2.64) (Table D.43, Appendix D). However, these mean agreement scores were significantly lower than those reported by class of 2024 students who took Algebra I in Grade 8 in Year 2, 3.17 and 2.92, respectively (Table D.44, Appendix D). Regarding dual credit, principals from Districts 2 and 5 reported that dual credit enrollment and interest had increased in recent years; principals credited partnerships with a local community college and more frequent TSIA testing (an effort which was encouraged by GEAR UP) with the increases. To ensure that students receive the necessary academic support to succeed in their courses, a goal of GEAR UP is to provide targeted tutoring to students with a failing grade. Students continued to report in Year 3 that they received tutoring across subjects in a variety of formats, such as in class and after school (Table D.47, Appendix D). Coordinators explained that they offered virtual tutoring to minimize in-person interactions during COVID-19 to students but found it difficult to implement. The majority (90%) of students who reported on the student survey that they participated in tutoring found the tutoring to be helpful (Table D.56, Appendix D). Another academic support that schools focused on in Year 3 was preparation for college entrance examinations. While in Year 3, students reported significantly higher agreement—compared to Year 2—that they knew where to find college entrance examination preparation resources (Figure 2.4, Table D.3, Appendix D), a significantly lower percentage of students reported that the test preparation helped them to prepare for the test (Figure 2.5; Table D.66, Appendix D). Some students recommended having the opportunities to review test content more and engage in more practice tests, which could help increase student preparedness.

In Year 3, non-profit advisors continued to work with priority students and began work with class of 2024 students. Accommodations were made to advising services and spaces to ensure students and parents had access to college and career information in person and virtually. Non-profit advisors relied on other platforms, such as Zoom meetings, newsletters, and texting, to conduct advising sessions and disseminate information. Many school personnel (86%) also reported on the personnel survey that their school had both virtual and physical advising spaces for students and parents to receive college and career information (Table 3.1, Table F.3, Appendix F). In terms of topics discussed during one-on-one advising sessions, students most frequently reported on the student survey that they discussed college plans or interest (58%) followed by their grades (56%), and career plans or interests (47%) (Table D.10, Appendix D). Parent survey respondents most frequently reported that they spoke about course selection/scheduling for their child (53%), their child's grades (52%), and dual credit opportunities (49%) during their one-on-one advising sessions (Table E.5, Appendix E).

In addition to advising, GEAR UP districts offered a variety of activities to help support college and career readiness, including college visits, college and career fairs, work-based learning activities, and parent/family events. As with advising, most of these activities were offered or hosted virtually in Year 3. Class of 2024 students and priority cohort students reported on the student survey that their college visits consisted of a virtual campus tour (52% and 35%, respectively) and virtual speaker sessions (45% and 54%, respectively) (Figure 3.14). Grade 9–12 students reported a mean satisfaction score of 3.11 for their college visits (Table D.25, Appendix D). Overall, class of 2024 and priority cohort students across districts reported that they were *Satisfied* with the college and/or career fair activities they participated in during Year 3 (a mean score for Grade 9–12 of 3.19; Table D.39, Appendix D). Coordinators reported during site visits that Year 3 work-based learning activities consisted of meeting with local businesses to understand what they look for in future employees, mock interviews with local bank employees, and virtual learning sessions. Class of 2024 and priority cohort students reported being *Satisfied* with their work-based learning activities in Year 3 (with mean scores of 3.03 and 3.11, respectively; Figure 3.20). One coordinator highlighted the challenges of partnering with businesses to support work-based learning activities in Year 3 given the impact that pandemic has had on many small and medium-sized business. GEAR UP schools also hosted events for parents and families in Year 3. The topics that class of 2024 parent survey respondents reported they learned about most often in parent events were the availability of college and career advising (27%), options for high school courses aligned with certain careers (27%), and different types of college options (18%). Priority cohort parent survey respondents most often learned about different types of colleges (25%), academic requirements for college (22%), and options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers (16%) (Figure 3.24). As in Year 2, parent survey respondents who did not attend parent/family events reported that they did not know about any of the events (46%) (Figure 3.22; Table E.16, Appendix E). Despite the information disseminated via advising sessions and other GEAR UP activities, student and parent site visit participants and survey respondents across the districts mentioned low awareness of postsecondary education financing items.

To support educators and schools in implementing rigorous academic programs that boost student achievement, GEAR UP implemented several PD initiatives in Year 3, including activities led by TNTP, teacher coaching/mentoring, the TXOC Academy, and vertical teaming. Personnel survey respondents had significantly lower agreement in Year 3 than in Year 2 for two items: (1) the effectiveness of the PD in increasing the rigor of their courses (mean scores of 2.94 and 3.25, respectively; Figure 4.3; Table F.16, Appendix F) and (2) the strategies they acquired in the PD were easy to implement (mean scores of 2.83 and 3.16, respectively; Figure 4.3; Table F.16, Appendix F).. Further, fewer personnel agreed that they were able to successfully implement strategies in a virtual setting in Year 3 (a mean score of 2.63; Figure 4.3). Of the 73% of personnel survey respondents who reported that they participated in at least one coaching session, the most often discussed topics during the sessions included student engagement (72%), virtual or distance-based learning (60%), and academic supports for students (60%) (Figure 4.6; Table F.19, Appendix F). Counselors and other school staff who provide college and career information to students and parents participated in the 31-module self-paced TXOC Academy in Year 3 to learn about topics such as the FAFSA, ApplyTexas, personal graduation plans, endorsements, college entrance examinations, scholarships, military programs, and student advising strategies. Participants reported on the personnel survey that they mostly agreed that they learned new information about postsecondary education (a mean score of 3.44) and career (a mean score of 3.38) and felt better prepared to deliver individualized advising to

students and parents (a mean score of 3.44) because of their participation (Figure 4.8, Table F.24, Appendix F). Similar to Year 2, vertical teaming participants generally agreed on the personnel survey that the vertical teaming they participated in helped to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level (a mean score of 2.90) (Figure 4.10; Table F.28, Appendix F).

TEA staff and site visit participants described efforts made to sustain Grade 8 student enrollment in Algebra I and the TXOC CCR curriculum in middle schools. All six GEAR UP districts sustained the implementation of the TXOC CCR curriculum for Grade 8 students; one coordinator commented that it was a helpful tool to expose younger students to college and career topics. Four districts reported on site visits that they continued in Year 3 to enroll Grade 8 students in Algebra I. Some site visit participants added that their district increased the number of sections of the course to accommodate more students and others noted that their district added a summer bridge program to remediate students who were not successful in Algebra I in Grade 8 and prepare them for success in Grade 9.

TXOC continued the pilot of the TXOC CCR curriculum in Year 3 and added nine new districts to the pilot initiative for a total of 18 participants in Year 3, including the six GEAR UP districts. Teachers who continued to implement the TXOC CCR in GEAR UP schools mostly felt that the curriculum was ready to be scaled more widely; teachers from one district recommended more training be developed to help teachers become more comfortable with the curriculum. District scaling survey respondents indicated that they *Agreed* that the curriculum provided students with information about postsecondary education options (a mean score of 3.75), helped students understand how to pay for postsecondary education (a mean score of 3.60), and provided students with relevant information about endorsements (a mean score of 3.60) (Table G.2, Appendix G). However, they reported lower levels of agreement that the curriculum provided grade-appropriate materials (a mean score of 3.40) (Table G.2, Appendix G). Respondents were also *Very Satisfied* with instructor resources (a mean score of 4.00) and *Satisfied* with the student resources (a mean score of 3.75) and the trainings they received (a mean score of 3.75) (Table G.3, Appendix G).

TEA, GEAR UP coordinators, and other school personnel provided feedback on overall grant implementation. High school principals reported that they felt GEAR UP aligned well with their campus goals and plans and had made progress to integrate GEAR UP goals and supports into their plans as a strategy for achieving their campus goals. Survey and site visit findings suggest that school personnel, students, and parents were unfamiliar with specific GEAR UP services and activities as well as how GEAR UP and the school disseminate college and career information. TNTP took on the facilitation of progress-monitoring meetings and coordinator PLCs in Year 3 as well. These meetings were opportunities for coordinators and other school and district personnel to reflect on the progress of their grants and brainstorm how they may address challenges. TEA staff explained that the change in divisions in which GEAR UP is housed at TEA as well as their strong communication with districts about their local needs also served to strengthen implementation in Year 3.

8.2. Promising Practices

Promising practices include innovative practices or strategies described anecdotally by grant stakeholders as successful. While stakeholders perceived these promising practices as facilitators to successful implementation, the evaluation team has not independently assessed whether the

promising practices are associated with improved grant outcomes. The promising practices identified in Year 3 are as follows:

▸ **Mentor high school dual credit students with college students who are alumni.** The District 4 coordinator reported that alumni from their high school mentored a group of 15 dual credit students and other Grade 10 students to help provide information regarding the dual credit programs and other college and career information. The mentoring was delivered through phone calls and texts. The coordinator remarked, "We have tutors, and those tutors are recent college graduates, and most of them are from our school.…Right now we actually have them working as mentors for some dual credit students and 10th graders to sign up for dual credit.…They're calling them, texting them… every little step that they need to do." The mentors, according to the coordinator, helped to increase the number of students and parents who had access to the information.

▸ **Provide monthly student and parent newsletters dedicated to college and career readiness.** A non-profit advising organization reported that in Year 3 they provided the students and parents, within their districts, with an online monthly newsletter. Students and parents were provided with two separate, but related, newsletters which identified what the recipient could be focusing on that month (e.g., college application preparation in March/April and financial aid in October) as well as announcements regarding deadlines or upcoming webinars.

A non-profit advisor explained that the main difference between the student and parent newsletters was that the parent newsletter had a section with questions parents were encouraged to ask their child that month. The advisor added that the newsletters were a helpful way to keep in touch with students and parents and make them aware upcoming deadlines and other topics to be discussing at home.

▸ **Use a virtual college visit program to increase exposure.** The District 1 GEAR UP coordinator noted that they used an online software program to offer students and parents access to virtual college visits. The GEAR UP coordinator shared that the virtual visits were "well received by students." One of the benefits of the online program is that it provides the district with the ability to highlight the universities they wish to expose students to, while allowing students and parents to access them on their own time anywhere.

The program not only provides virtual tours, but also teaches students what to look for on university websites. According to the coordinator, "So, we're kind of giving them the tools so they can go ahead and look for this information on their own."

The GEAR UP coordinator added that they plan to continue using the online program next year, even when the district returns to in-person instruction.

▸ **Establish a dedicated work-based learning coordinator.** Unlike at other districts, the District 4 GEAR UP coordinator explained that work-based learning opportunities offered to students in Year 3 were not impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the support offered by their work-based learning coordinator. The GEAR UP coordinator explained, "[Local businesses] need as much support as we do…and so, I don't think we ever lost touch. And then especially with our work-based learning person that's in charge of keeping us all together, we've got a pretty good effective team."

▸ **Implement innovative parent events to increase engagement.** The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator mentioned that in the past the district had struggled with parent involvement. During

one of the district's "progress meetings," the district developed and implemented an idea for an initiative to boost parent engagement, referred to as the 'Chat & Chew.' The coordinator described that they established goals for students and parents to meet and "if [they] came in to speak with an advisor and [if they] had met these four goals, then dinner is on us. So, we called it Chat & Chew." The GEAR UP coordinator also mentioned that the new initiative had been successful, resulting in "good turnout." By participating in the required steps, the coordinator explained the parents "don't even know how much they're learning until they get there. So, I think that's been a problem that we had, that we found an idea and it's actually a good solution."

▶ **Invite former students to participate in vertical teaming.** The District 4 GEAR UP coordinator mentioned that a panel of former students participated in one of the district's vertical teaming sessions to provide insight on their high school experience and suggest improvements for teachers. The coordinator explained that the former students "were able to talk to [the] teachers about some of the things that they wished were a little bit different, and how the teacher could improve."

▶ **Sustain efforts to increase Algebra I enrollment rates among Grade 8 students.** A high school principal in District 3 cited their middle school's progress in sustaining increased Grade 8 enrollment in Algebra I, as well as broader remediation efforts initiated at the high school to support any students who need additional support. The principal described use of a summer bridge program and additional support at high school once students arrive for Grade 9. According to the principal, these efforts have supported increased Algebra I enrollment in Grade 8: "It's the largest amount of [students] ever taking Algebra I, ever."

▶ **Invite guest speakers to supplement the TXOC CCR curriculum and increase exposure to postsecondary education and career options.** TXOC CCR teachers from District 3 highlighted that one of the key successes of the course was the use of guest speakers. Speakers provided students with insight into college and career options. Guest speakers included teachers from the high school who also held other careers, such as a pilot and a lawyer, as well as current college students. TXOC CCR teachers suggested that district administrators facilitate partnerships with local colleges, whose staff/students could additionally serve as guest speakers. The teachers suggested that college staff/students could present students with information about college from various points of view (e.g., financial aid staff, student services staff, college admissions staff, and current college students).

▶ **Support districts in the use of data to understand progress and drive implementation.** TEA, TNTP, and most district coordinators reported that they were satisfied with the Year 3 progress-monitoring meetings. The meetings were described as a way for grant staff to reflect on the data they collected for GEAR UP and identify gaps in progress and successful areas of implementation. These reflections also helped grant and district staff develop strategic action plans to address challenge areas. While one coordinator did not prefer the progress-monitoring meetings, they collaborated with school staff to conduct their own progress monitoring and develop action plans. Continued support and encouragement for districts to continue to monitor their grant data to understand their progress in implementation in a style that fits well for the district (e.g., large meeting, independent monitoring) may help districts to tailor the services to meet the needs of their students and school communities.

▶ **Establish monthly communications to share program-wide updates, upcoming activities, and deadlines.** One of the ways that TEA staff strengthened their communication with districts about GEAR UP was through a monthly communique which highlighted upcoming activities and

deadlines. This streamlined communication helped GEAR UP coordinators to remain informed of important dates and events as their districts remained focused on academics and instruction. According to one coordinator, "They've always communicated very well…[they do] a monthly communication, [a] communique.…That's been extremely helpful. It gives us basically an outline of…things going on this month.…That's been very nice this year to have that."

8.3. Recommendations

In addition, the evaluation team identified the following recommendations for TEA to consider in future grant implementation and implementation of similar programming outside of GEAR UP:

▸ **Reprioritize GEAR UP goals in Year 4.** Like many schools across the country, GEAR UP schools reported that their focus during the COVID-19 pandemic was on the transition to virtual schooling and services as well as student attendance and engagement. Looking ahead to Year 4, GEAR UP and school personnel have to opportunity to re-prioritize GEAR UP goals that were difficult to achieve in Year 3, such as tutoring, work-based learning activities, and increasing academic rigor. Feedback from students and staff indicated that they preferred to participate in meetings and class while in person instead of virtually. As it is safe to do so, GEAR UP staff should consider how to engage with stakeholders in person. When it may not yet be safe to meet in person, GEAR UP coordinators may consider collecting feedback on other innovative ways to meet and increase engagement in a virtual setting.

▸ **Ensure recommendations made by external partners, such as TNTP, take state and local context into consideration.** Some school and GEAR UP staff commented in site visits that recommendations from TNTP were not the right fit for their school or district. The District 2 and 4 coordinators commented that TNTP recommended vertical alignment activities that did not align with the needs and focus areas of the school administrators. The District 6 coordinator expressed concern that sometimes TNTP staff, especially staff new to GEAR UP in Texas, may not be able to provide recommendations through a lens of the Texas context since TNTP staff are in other states. As external organizations provide recommendations and support implementation in GEAR UP districts, they may increase buy-in if they frame ideas and suggestions in state and local contexts to demonstrate their understanding of how they are tailored to fit specific student and school needs.

▸ **Provide more opportunities for students to participate in practice PSAT, SAT, ACT, or TSIA examinations.** Student site visit participants recommended their school provide them with practice tests to help them become more prepared for college entrance examinations. Students commented that they either did not participate in any test preparation activities or did not receive test preparation resources to prepare them for the content of the examinations or the types of questions to expect.

▸ **Align college and career communication topics and timing with the interests and values of students and parents.** Multiple parent site visit participants acknowledged that some parents may not have interest in college and career information provided through GEAR UP. To increase receptivity to college and career information among students and families, it may be helpful for coordinators and non-profit advisors to consider strategies for tailoring communications to better resonate with student and family values and address any historical or cultural sentiments towards

postsecondary education among community members. In addition, some parents also expressed the desire for more grade-level specific information on how their child can prepare for college. Tailoring the communications to specific grade levels of students may be another way to enhance the relevance of messages. An example of how to provide customized information may be to include a calendar across multiple years that outlines the steps to take each year to prepare for college and career and why the step is important. Overall, tailored communication may help parents and students better understand the value of college, become more interested in how to prepare for college, and understand key steps to take at each grade level.

▸ **Increase student and parent awareness of financial aid topics through one-on-one advising and enhanced information dissemination.** Students and parents generally reported lower levels of agreement regarding their awareness of financial aid topics (e.g., scholarships, Pell Grants, FAFSA, TASFA, and Federal student loans) compared to other postsecondary topics. Both groups also reported low levels of agreement that they discussed how to pay for postsecondary education in one-on-one advising sessions. Lack of understanding of available financial aid may be a barrier for some students and parents regarding students' pursuit of postsecondary education. Non-profit advisors and high school counselors may consider incorporating these topics in a grade-appropriate manner in one-on-one advising sessions, other activities and events, and information dissemination efforts to help increase their awareness and better understand options to fund college.

▸ **Use data to inform how successful GEAR UP services and activities may be sustained.** Positive feedback was provided by TEA and most coordinators regarding the Year 3 progress-monitoring meetings facilitated by TNTP. Looking ahead to Year 4, TNTP, TEA, and GEAR UP coordinators may find it helpful to build time into these meetings to reflect on successful GEAR UP activities and services that should be sustained. As some district and school administrators also attend these progress-monitoring meetings, this may be an ideal time to provide data-driven recommendations regarding services to those who will oversee the implementation and funding after the completion of the grant.

▸ **Address technical issues in the TXOC Academy Counselor and Advisor Program.** Some who reported that they participated in the TXOC Academy shared that they experienced technical issues in the online modules. These issues included modules not marked as completed once the user finished and incorrect answers in assessments. Participants found these issues frustrating given the amount of time the training took to complete. TXOC may consider addressing these issues as the Academy is accessed by other districts across Texas.

▸ **Offer parent events at flexible times in various formats.** As coordinators plan to increase awareness among parents of GEAR UP meetings and events, parents continued to suggest in Year 3 for schools to host parent event at multiple times to accommodate varying work and family schedules. Some parent survey respondents reported that they were unable to attend meetings because they were busy with their family or work and concerns regarding COVID-19. Feedback from school personnel and GEAR UP coordinators suggest schools may consider offering sessions in both in-person and virtual formats (such as Zoom meetings, conference calls, etc.) to increase the opportunities for parents to attend meetings and events. Schools may also consider recording events for parents to access and view after the live event if they were not able to attend.

▶ **Host PD events and trainings at times that cause minimal disruption.** Personnel survey respondents and site visit participants explained that the times at which PD events were conducted were not always conducive to teacher schedules and availability. Many TXOC Academy participants reported similar challenges with the time they were asked to complete the online modules. Most participants reported that they were required to complete the modules at the beginning of the school year. They added that the start of the school year, which is a very busy time in the academic year, did not allow for enough time to complete the modules in a timely manner. It was suggested that during the summer or before the school year would be more convenient for participants. Those at TXOC and in schools that schedule such PD events may consider times that align with the workflow of school staff to ensure participants have adequate availability and time to participate fully.

▶ **Build awareness of GEAR UP-supported services and activities with a sustainability lens.** There were findings demonstrating limited awareness of GEAR UP among some students, parents, and personnel. Given that the program has completed its third of seven years, this might suggest the need to increase awareness of GEAR UP. That said, districts are encouraged to think strategically and intentionally about how to name and brand their GEAR UP-supported college and career readiness programming with a sustainability lens in mind. That is, districts should consider how they want students, parents, and school personnel to recognize college and career programming after the grant ends and build out their naming/branding strategy accordingly. It is recommended that districts strategically embed GEAR UP-supported services into structures that exist within their districts. Ultimately, the external evaluation team will also need to adjust site visit and survey instruments to ensure that the team is asking questions about awareness of GEAR UP and/or college and career programming that reflect the intended naming/branding strategy (i.e., the evaluation team may wish to revise questions asking about awareness of GEAR UP to instead asking about awareness of college and career services).

REFERENCES

Justin, R. (2020, June 19). Texas universities are shelving SAT and ACT requirements as coronavirus scrambles admissions process. *Texas Tribune.* Retrieved July 2021 from https://www.texastribune.org/2020/06/19/texas-universities-shelve-sat-and-act-tests-coronavirus-scrambles-admi/

Spinney, S., Shelley, B., McKinney, M., Kennedy, L., Michalski, B., Sun, J., Rovzar, D.,& Horwood, T. (2021). *Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad: Annual implementation report: Evaluation of years 1 and 2.* Retrieved June 2021 from https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/program-evaluations/program-evaluations-middle-school-high-school-and-college-preparation/program-evaluation-middle-school-high-school-and-college-preparation-initiatives

APPENDIX A: GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Strategies and Project Goals and Objectives

A.1. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Strategies

The core strategies conceptualized in the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad program to close the college achievement gap are as follows:

1) Increasing academic rigor by facilitating an increase in access to, perceived value of, and student success in academically rigorous courses through extensive professional development for teachers, counselors, and administrators and targeted tutoring for students;

2) Preparing middle school students by empowering them with pathway information early on, through individualized college and career advising in middle school and adoption of a high-quality, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)-aligned career exploration course;

3) Expanding college and career advising and resources for high school students by mitigating the effects of high student-to-counselor ratios and providing robust, individualized college and career advising through the adoption of a college and career readiness advising model in GEAR UP: Beyond Grad;

4) Leveraging technology by expanding advisor capacity and amplifying high-quality resources through the adoption of targeted, user-centered technology tools for advisors, counselors, administrators, students, and parents; and

5) Developing local alliances by establishing or expanding existing alliances with business, higher education, and community partners that support student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.

A.2. Project Goals and Objectives

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) established the following goals and objectives for GEAR UP:

Project Goal 1: Increase access to rigorous courses in order to reduce the need for remediation

▸ Objective 1.1: By the end of the class of 2024's second year (Grade 8), 30% of class of 2024 students will complete Algebra I. By the end of the class of 2024's third year (Grade 9), 85% of class of 2024 students will complete Algebra I. [28]

---

[28] The goals and objectives originally referred to the class of 2024 as the "primary cohort." These have been edited here to use "class of 2024" for consistency with the rest of the report and to clearly distinguish this cohort from the priority cohort.

▶ Objective 1.2: By the end of the class of 2024's fifth year (Grade 11), 60% of class of 2024 students will complete a Pre-Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-International Baccalaureate (IB), AP, or IB course.

▶ Objective 1.3: Each year, 90% of class of 2024 students who receive a failing grade on a progress report will receive targeted academic tutoring.

Project Goal 2: Graduating prepared for college and career

▶ Objective 2.1: By the end of the project's sixth year, 60% of class of 2024 students will be eligible to earn college credit through achievement of a passing score on the AP exam, IB exam, or completion of a rigorous dual credit course.

▶ Objective 2.2: By the end of the project's sixth year, the percentage of class of 2024 students graduating on the Foundation High School Program with an endorsement and/or receiving the Distinguished Level of Achievement will meet or exceed the baseline state average.

Project Goal 3: Provide educator training and professional development for rigorous academic programs

▶ Objective 3.1: Each year, 50% of high school core content teachers will participate in professional development that supports a rigorous curriculum (e.g., project-based learning, advanced instructional strategies, teacher externships, student engagement, etc.).

▶ Objective 3.2: Each year, teams of educators and administrators (middle school, high school, and institutions of higher education) will complete at least five days of vertical teaming in order to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level.

▶ Objective 3.3: Each year, 20% of high school class of 2024 core content teachers will participate in at least three individualized educator coaching and/or mentoring sessions.

▶ Objective 3.4: By the end of the project's second year, all high school counselors will complete training in college and career advising.

Project Goal 4: Increase high school graduation

▶ Objective 4.1: The class of 2024 completion rate will meet or exceed the baseline state average completion rate.

▶ Objective 4.2: At the end of the class of 2024's second year (Grade 8), the on-time promotion rate will exceed the baseline state average promotion rate.

Project Goal 5: Support participation in postsecondary education and career preparation

▶ Objective 5.1: Each year, 85% of tenth graders will take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) or ACT Aspire exam. Each year, 85% of eleventh graders will take the SAT or ACT exam.

▶ Objective 5.2: By the end of the class of 2024's sixth year (Grade 12), 50% of class of 2024 students will meet the college readiness criterion on the SAT, ACT, or the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA).

- Objective 5.3: At least 60% of class of 2024 students will enroll in postsecondary education in the fall after high school graduation.

- Objective 5.4: At least 60% of class of 2024 students who enroll in postsecondary education will place into college-level courses without the need for remediation.

- Objective 5.5: The number of class of 2024 students who complete the first year of college will meet or exceed the baseline district average.

Project Goal 6: Provide postsecondary and career preparation information to students and families

- Objective 6.1: Each year in ninth grade, students will receive information about the school's high-quality pathways and programs of study that align to postsecondary programs and high-demand careers available to them.

- Objective 6.2: Each year, students and parents will receive information about postsecondary and career options, preparation, and financing.

- Objective 6.3: Each year, 90% of class of 2024 students will receive at least one comprehensive, individualized college and career counseling session.

- Objective 6.4: By the end of the third year, 50% of class of 2024 parents will receive at least one individualized college and career counseling session.

- Objective 6.5: Each year, class of 2024 parent attendance at Texas GEAR UP events and services will increase.

Project Goal 7: Increase educational expectations for and awareness about postsecondary and career options

- Objective 7.1: Each year, 75% of class of 2024 students will attend at least one college visit.

- Objective 7.2: By the end of the class of 2024's sixth year (Grade 12), 85% of class of 2024 students will complete the Federal Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- Objective 7.3: By the end of the class of 2024's sixth year (Grade 12), 85% of class of 2024 students will complete at least two college applications.

- Objective 7.4: Each year, 30% of class of 2024 students will attend a summer program (academic acceleration, enrichment, college exploration, etc.).

- Objective 7.5: Each year, 30% of class of 2024 and priority cohort students will participate in a work-based learning opportunity.

Project Goal 8: Build and expand community partnerships

- Objective 8.1: All participating districts will form business alliances that support higher student achievement and offer opportunities for career exploration.

- Objective 8.2: All participating districts will form alliances with governmental entities and community groups to enhance the information available to students regarding high school pathways, scholarships, financial aid, and college awareness.

Project Goal 9: Enhance statewide college and career readiness

▶ Objective 9.1: Each year, tri-agency partners (TEA, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas Workforce Commission) will convene quarterly to ensure alignment of statewide initiatives around college and career readiness.

▶ Objective 9.2: By the end of the project's fourth year, class of 2024 and priority cohort students will have access to a student-focused online resource to assist them in making informed decisions about their education and career pathway options.

▶ Objective 9.3: Annually increase the number of educators, counselors, and community members that complete specialized college and career readiness training.

APPENDIX B: Evaluation Design, Methods, and Analytics

The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad evaluation is designed to produce credible, timely, and actionable information to support successful implementation, inform project personnel and stakeholders of the program's outcomes and impact, identify potential best/promising practices, and support program sustainability. Evaluation findings will support program improvement in the six districts participating in GEAR UP and also help the Texas Education Agency (TEA) scale initiatives across the state.

This appendix describes the evaluation design, methodology, and analytic approach used for the implementation study component of the evaluation—the findings of which are shared in this report.

B.1. GEAR UP Logic Model

Figure B.1 presents the GEAR UP logic model. This logic model depicts the ICF team's conceptualization about how change is likely to occur as a result of the GEAR UP program.

Figure B.1. Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad Logic Model

Mission: Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad seeks to accomplish the three main goals of the Federal GEAR UP program: (1) increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of participating students; (2) increase the rate of high school graduation and participation in postsecondary education; and (3) increase the educational expectations and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes		
	Resources	**Participants & Activities**	**Middle School**	**High School**	**Postsecondary**

SITUATION
Many low-income students throughout Texas are not prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education

STRATEGIES
1) increasing academic rigor
2) preparing middle school students
3) expanding college and career advising and resources for high school students
4) leveraging technology
5) developing local alliances

Resources

Federal GEAR UP grant funding of $24.5M

Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Texas Workforce Commission staff

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad program staff

Community partners

College and Career Readiness advising organizations

TNTP technical assistance provider

High-quality tools and resources for advisors

High-quality tools and resources for students

Participants & Activities

Students (class of 2024 and priority cohort)
➢ Targeted academic tutoring
➢ Preliminary SAT, ACT Aspire, SAT, ACT completion
➢ Information about options/preparation/financing
➢ Information about pathways/programs (Grade 9)
➢ Individualized college & career counseling
➢ College visits
➢ Financial assistance for postsecondary enrollment and Free Application for Federal Student Aid /Texas Application for State Financial Aid) completion
➢ College application completion
➢ Summer programs
➢ Work-based learning opportunities

Parents/families
➢ Postsecondary education and career information
➢ Individualized college and career counseling
➢ Texas GEAR UP event attendance

School staff
➢ Teacher professional development (PD)
➢ Vertical teaming
➢ Individualized educator coaching/mentoring
➢ Counselor training in college and career advising
➢ College and career readiness training

Districts
➢ Business, government, and community alliances

State
➢ Quarterly convenings to align statewide college and career readiness initiatives
➢ Statewide expansion of college and career readiness PD
➢ Statewide access to a student-focused online resources

Middle School

Grade 8 Algebra I completion (target = 30% class of 2024)

Grade 8 on-time promotion

High School

Grade 9 Algebra I completion (target = 85% class of 2024)

Pre-Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-International Baccalaureate (IB), AP, & IB course completion

College credits earned for AP/IB/dual credit courses

Graduation on Foundation High School Program or Distinguished Level of Achievement

High school completion

College-ready on SAT/ACT/Texas Success Initiative Assessment

Financial aid literacy for postsecondary enrollment

Postsecondary

Postsecondary enrollment

Placement into college-level courses

Completion of first year of college

Assumptions
Targeted and statewide activities can benefit students and families to improve academic and economic futures

External Factors
Schools/districts may offer and students may participate in other college and career readiness activities or programs

Feedback Loop
The evaluation will provide feedback to program leaders about impact implementation, best and high-impact practices, practices related to sustainability within, and use of statewide resources to understand the perceived impact and explore strategies for improving statewide reach.

ICF

B.2. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions addressed in this report are listed in Table B.1. [29]

Table B.1. Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad Evaluation Questions

Research Questions
Q1.2. What is the impact of GEAR UP: Beyond Grad on families?
▪ How do the perceptions and knowledge of class of 2024 parents compare to perceptions of priority cohort parents?
Q1.3. What is the impact of GEAR UP: Beyond Grad on school communities?
▪ What is core content teachers' perceived impact of professional development and training on instructional strategies and improved academic rigor?
▪ What is counselors' perceived impact of professional development and training on student access to information about college and career pathways?
Q3.1. What are the potential best or promising practices of the GEAR UP: Beyond Grad program?
▪ What are the contextual factors that contributed to the best or promising practice?
▪ Which stakeholders identified the practice as contributing to a positive outcome?
▪ What positive outcomes occurred as a result of the practice?
▪ In what ways does the best or promising practice apply to different sites?
▪ Which best or promising practices are recommended for scaling across the state? Why?
Q4.1. How is the GEAR UP: Beyond Grad program being sustained?
▪ In what ways are grantee districts sustaining GEAR UP: Beyond Grad activities and strategies?
▪ How do school personnel perceive the feasibility of sustaining GEAR UP: Beyond Grad activities and strategies?
▪ What facilitators/barriers do grantees face to sustaining implementation?
▪ Which strategies/activities had increased stakeholder engagement over time? Why?
▪ Which strategies/activities had reduced stakeholder engagement over time? Why?
Q4.2. What strategies or practices should be sustained?
▪ How does the strategy or practice contribute to positive outcomes?
▪ In what ways is the strategy or practice sustainable beyond the life of the grant?
Q4.3. What strategies or practices should not be sustained?
▪   In what ways is the strategy or practice inefficient?
Q5.1. How has GEAR UP: Beyond Grad affected non-GEAR UP: Beyond Grad schools and districts regarding college and career readiness?
▪ To what extent do Texas public school districts other than GEAR UP: Beyond Grad grantees utilize GEAR UP: Beyond Grad resources and strategies?
▪ What is the perceived impact of the GEAR UP: Beyond Grad resources and strategies implemented on a statewide basis?
▪ What statewide resources and strategies are most effective?

B.3. Evaluation Methods

The ICF team used a mixed-method evaluation approach that reflects the diversity of the evaluation objectives and research questions. Mixed-method studies are preferable in evaluations of complex programs such as GEAR UP because they employ a variety of data collection and analysis strategies that capitalize on the strengths and account for the weaknesses inherent in individual methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Tashakkori &

---

[29] Note that there are additional evaluation questions guiding other aspects of the evaluation which is why the question numbers in Table B.1 are not listed sequentially. Additional evaluation questions will be presented in other reports, as applicable.

Teddlie, 1998). This approach has allowed the ICF team to reach study conclusions by triangulating findings across multiple data sources.

The ICF team used an array of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analytic methods to describe the implementation and sustainability of GEAR UP and to identify best/promising practices. Details regarding specific data collection and analytic methods are described in the following subsections.

B.3.1. Data Collection

To address the evaluation questions in Table B.1, the evaluation team collected a range of quantitative and qualitative data from surveys, site visits, and phone interviews. Details regarding each type of data collection are described below.

Surveys. The evaluation team conducted online surveys with class of 2024 and priority cohort students (via a student survey), class of 2024 and priority cohort parents (via a parent survey), school personnel serving class of 2024 and priority cohort students (via a personnel survey), and personnel from Texas public school districts not participating in the TEA GEAR UP grant who were scaling GEAR UP strategies (via a scaling survey for districts). The surveys were designed to ask stakeholders about perspectives on grant implementation during the 2020–21 academic year. The evaluation team initially opened the online surveys on April 12, 2021 and surveys remained open through April 30, 2021. Surveys were provided in English and Spanish for students and parents and were provided in English for other stakeholders. School and district personnel obtained passive parent consent through a survey opt-out form prior to surveying students. Appendix C includes copies of all survey instruments.

Overall, ICF received 1,363 surveys from students, representing 18.4% of the total number of eligible student participants; 315 surveys from parents, representing 4.2% of the total number of eligible parent participants; and 170 surveys from personnel, representing 28.8% of the total number of eligible full-time employees (FTEs) at the participating schools.[30] In addition, ICF received nine personnel survey responses from the scaling survey for districts (out of 50 possible respondents spread across six districts). Additional details about survey respondents may be found in Appendices D–G.

Site Visits. The evaluation team conducted virtual site visits via the Zoom virtual meeting platform with each of the six participating grantee districts in March and April 2021 to conduct interviews and focus groups with a variety of GEAR UP stakeholders to understand program implementation during Year 3. Final copies of all protocols used for the site visits may be found in Appendix C.

Overall, the evaluation team:

---

[30] Denominators used in calculating personnel survey response rates at each school were determined using the number of full time equivalent (FTEs) reported in 2019–20 Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) data found at https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2020/index.html. The number of FTEs does not represent the number of individual staff members in the schools and so is not a precise denominator; however, it serves as a reasonable approximation.

▶ Interviewed five Texas GEAR UP coordinators and conducted one focus group with a Texas GEAR UP coordinator and director (representing each participating district);

▶ Interviewed six high school principals (representing each participating high school from each district);

▶ Conducted five focus groups with school/district-based staff who participated in the Texas OnCourse Academy Counselor and Advisory Program (TXOC Academy) (representing five participating districts) with a total of 14 participants;

▶ Conducted 12 student focus groups with a total of 82 students from the class of 2024 and the priority cohort (Grade 10–12);

▶ Conducted six focus groups with teachers implementing the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness (TXOC CCR) curriculum with a total of 11 participants; and

▶ Conducted six parent focus groups with a total of 22 parents of students from the class of 2024.

In total, 142 individuals participated in interviews and focus groups across the six districts. At one district the only school/district-based staff to participate in the TXOC Academy had other school and district roles and so participated in interviews/focus groups for those roles accordingly.

Phone/Virtual Interviews and Focus Groups

In practice, the evaluation team conducted virtual interviews/focus groups using the Zoom virtual meeting platform in March and April 2021. The virtual interviews/focus groups took place with the following stakeholders:

▶ College for Every Student (CFES) Brilliant Pathways Advisors (two participants)
▶ CFES Brilliant Pathways Leadership (two participants)
▶ Advise TX Leadership (two participants)
▶ Advise TX Advisors (three participants)
▶ College Advising Corps (CAC) Leadership (two participants)
▶ CAC Advisors (four participants)
▶ TNTP (four participants)
▶ TEA (two participants)

In total, 21 individuals participated in the virtual interviews/focus groups. Final copies of all protocols used for the virtual interviews/focus groups may be found in Appendix C.

B.3.2. Data Analytics

To analyze quantitative survey data, the evaluation team primarily conducted descriptive analysis, including means, standard deviations, and percentages. Results were provided at the program level and broken down by relevant groups (e.g., districts, grade levels, personnel job categories, grade levels taught). Results are presented in tables in Appendices D–G as well as in the main body of this report.

In addition to descriptive analysis, the evaluation team examined significant differences between relevant groups (e.g., districts, grade levels, personnel job categories) using statistical tests.

Throughout this report, "significance" refers to findings that were determined to be statistically significant through the use of these types of statistical tests. Nonparametric tests, such as Chi square, were used for comparisons of categorical variables. T-test/Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used for comparisons of continuous variables. For additional details on statistical tests used for specific comparisons, please refer to table and figure notes. Note that there are only details about statistical tests presented when those results indicated a statistically significant difference.

The evaluation team coded all qualitative data from site visits and phone interviews according to a list of codes articulated in a codebook. The evaluation team developed the codebook based on etic codes (from the perspective of the evaluation team) aligned with the evaluation questions, program goals and objectives, and other key constructs from the interview/focus group protocols. As the team began coding, the team revised the codebook to include emic codes (from the perspective of the research participants), or themes that emerged based on the perceptions of participations. Two members of the evaluation team conducted the coding and had frequent check-ins to discuss new emic codes and other revisions to the codebook and to align interpretations of codes. Members of the evaluation team who led the interviews and focus groups conducted oversight of the coded data to ensure that the coding aligned with their interpretations and notes as well. Findings from the qualitative analysis are presented in the body of the report.

B.4. References

Creswell, J., & Plano Clark, V. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Applied social research methods series, Vol. 46. Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA, US: Sage Publications, Inc.

APPENDIX C: Evaluation Instruments

C.1. Consent and Assent Forms

C.1.1. Adult Interview/Focus Group Consent Form
Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Adult Interview/Focus Group Consent Form, 2021

Your school/district/organization is participating in the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program, led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). TEA has contracted with ICF and Agile Analytics to conduct a study of the GEAR UP program to understand how the program is working, successful strategies that are being used to meet program goals, and the impact of the program on students, parents, and schools. As part of this important research, you are being asked to participate in an interview/focus group which should take approximately 30–60 minutes. The discussion will include questions about your opinions and experiences with the GEAR UP program during the 2020–21 school year. Please consider the details below prior to deciding to participate in this interview/focus group:

• **Confidentiality**: Your individual answers during the interview/focus group will be kept in confidence from anyone outside of the research team to the extent permitted by law. The interview/focus group discussion will be recorded either by audio file or written notes after obtaining your verbal consent (and for focus groups, the consent of all participants). The recordings of what you share will only be used by the ICF and Agile Analytics research team. Transcripts of audio recordings will be provided to TEA at the conclusion of the study; however, these transcripts will be deidentified prior to being shared. In other words, all names of persons, schools, districts, organizations, locations, job titles, or any other identifying details of what you share will be removed prior to sharing the transcript with TEA. In written reports, the data collected by researchers will be reported in a manner that summarizes across participants. We will not include participant names or any other personally identifiable information about you in written reports. If you are participating in a focus group, please keep in mind that what individuals talk about during the focus group is private and you should not discuss it with anyone after the session is finished.

• **Risks**: The study presents minimal risk to you. Participants will not be identified. Interview notes and/or recordings will be stored in a secure area accessible only to ICF and Agile Analytics. Please note that if you participate in a focus group, while we will ask all individuals who participate to not discuss any of the information after the session is finished, we cannot guarantee that all participants will keep information private.

• **Benefits**: The information provided by participants will help the GEAR UP program improve and provide better services to students and their families in the future.

• **Voluntary Participation**: Your participation in this interview/focus group is voluntary, meaning that you do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate then change your mind, you can stop participating at any time. We hope you will participate in the conversation, but you do not have to share information that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your decision to participate or withdraw from the study at any time will not affect your involvement with TEA, the GEAR UP program, or your school/district/organization.

By signing below, you are consenting to participate. If you have any questions about the interview/focus group, you can contact Samantha Spinney at ICF at samantha.spinney@icf.com or 703-272-6681. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

To indicate your consent to participate in this interview/focus group, please sign your name below in black/blue ink pen.

_____   _____

Sign your name here   **Date**

_____

Clearly print your name here

C.1.2. Parent Consent Form

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Parent Consent Form, 2021

Date: Month X, 2021

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child's school is participating in the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program this year, which aims to improve the college and career readiness of middle school and high school students. This program is being led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). To better understand how GEAR UP is working, TEA has contracted with ICF and Agile Analytics to interview students. Your child has been invited to participate in a focus group with about 5 to 10 other students. The focus group will be like a class discussion with other students in the school and the ICF/Agile Analytics representative(s) will focus on students' opinions and experiences with college and career activities at school. The school has worked with ICF and Agile Analytics to set an appropriate time and virtual communication platform for the focus group, which will last about 30–45 minutes and will take place during the school day. The information provided by the students will be used to improve the college and career activities at your child's school in the future. Please consider the details below prior to deciding to participate in this focus group:

• Confidentiality: ICF and Agile Analytics will not collect your child's full name but will collect your child's first name. All information about your child (first name, grade level, etc.) will remain confidential to the extent permitted by law. Student names or other personal information will not be included in the final reports. If the focus group is recorded, the recording will not be shared with the school or other students. It will be kept securely by ICF and Agile Analytics. Transcripts of audio recordings will be provided to TEA at the conclusion of the study; however, these transcripts will be deidentified prior to being shared. In other words, all names of persons, schools, districts, organizations, locations, job titles, or any other identifying details of what your student shares will be deleted from the transcripts before sharing the transcript with TEA.

• Risks: The study presents minimal risk to your child. Individual students will not be identified. Focus group notes and/or recordings will be stored in a secure area accessible only to ICF and Agile Analytics. While we will ask all students who participate to not discuss any of the information after the session is finished, we cannot guarantee that all participants will keep information private.

• Benefits: The information provided by participants will help the GEAR UP Beyond Grad program improve and provide better services to students and their families in the future.

• Voluntary Participation: Participation in the focus group is voluntary. If a student does not participate in the focus group, he or she can still participate in GEAR UP program activities. You may withdraw your child from participating in the focus group at any time without any consequences. If you agree that your child may participate in the focus group, your child will still

have the chance to decide if they want to participate. Your child can choose not to answer any question that he or she does not wish to or they can choose to not participate at all.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Samantha Spinney, ICF, at samantha.spinney@icf.com or (703) 272-6681. If you have questions about your students' rights as a research subject, please contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211. Please complete the form on the following page and turn in the completed form to [coordinator/site contact] by _date_. Your student will not be able to participate in the focus group without your signed consent to do so.

Sincerely,

[Insert appropriate signatory]

To indicate your consent to have your child participate in this GEAR UP focus group in spring 2021, please sign your name below in black/blue ink pen.

YES, I will allow my child, _____,

[Please Print Full Student Name]

to participate in this student focus group.

NO, I do not want my child, _____,

[Please Print Full Student Name]

to participate in this student focus group.

Your name (Please Print): _____

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

C.1.3. Student Focus Group Assent Form

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Student Focus Group Assent Form, 2021

Welcome!

Your school is participating in Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program this year. This program is being led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This program tries to prepare middle school and high school students for college and career. TEA hired ICF and Agile Analytics to interview students to learn more about how the GEAR UP grant program is working. The information that you share in this group interview, called a focus group, will be used to improve the college and career activities for future students and families. In today's focus group, we will be asking about your experiences this school year, 2020–21.

Please read the following information before agreeing to participate in this student focus group.

• Confidentiality: Your answers during the focus group will be kept confidential from anyone outside of the evaluation team to the extent permitted by law. The focus group discussion will be recorded either by an audio recording or written notes after all participants agree. The information that you share will only be used by our research team. Written transcripts of audio recordings will be provided to TEA at the end of the study, but these transcripts will have all identifying details removed before they are shared. In other words, all names of people, schools, districts, organizations, locations, job titles, or any other identifying details that you share will be deleted from the transcript before it is given to TEA. Information shared during the focus group will be summarized across students when it is shared in written reports. We will not include any student names or personal details about you (that could suggest who you are) in written reports. Please keep in mind that what other students talk about during the focus group is private and you should not discuss it with anyone after the discussion is over.

• Risks: The study presents very little risk to you. Individual students will not be identified. Interview notes and/or recordings will be stored in a secure area that only ICF and Agile Analytics can access. We will ask all students who participate in the focus group to not discuss any of the information shared in the focus group. But, we cannot guarantee that all students will keep information private.

• Benefits: The information provided by you and other students will be used to provide better college and career activities to students and their families in the future.

• Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this focus group is voluntary. This means that you do not have to participate in this focus group if you do not want to. If you decide to participate then change your mind, you can stop participating at any time. We hope you will participate in the conversation, but you do not have to share information that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your decision to participate will not affect you at school or your participation in any college or career activities at your school.

By signing below, you are consenting to participate (this means you are agreeing to join the focus group discussion). If you have any questions about the focus group, you can contact Samantha Spinney at ICF at samantha.spinney@icf.com or 703-272-6681. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

To indicate your consent to participate in this focus group, please sign your name below in black/blue ink pen and return the form to the focus group leader.

_____   _____

Sign your name here   Date

_____

Clearly print your name here

C.1.4. Parent Notification for Student Survey

<Date>, 2021

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child's school is participating in the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program this year, which aims to improve the postsecondary education and career readiness of middle school and high school students. This program is being led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). To better understand how the GEAR UP grant program is working, TEA has contracted with a research company, ICF, to survey students. This spring, your child will be given the opportunity to complete a survey which should take approximately 10 minutes. This survey asks your child questions about his or her school experiences and postsecondary education and career goals. All students in your child's grade level at this school are being asked to participate in this study. We encourage students to take the voluntary survey since students' experiences will be important to understanding the program.

Please consider the details below prior to deciding to allow your child to participate in the survey:

- **Confidentiality**: Data collected by researchers will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Neither your name nor your child's name is collected on the survey so the researchers will not be able to identify your child in written reports. All findings related to short-answer or multiple-choice questions will be summarized across respondents in study reports. Your child's individual answers to open-ended questions could be shared anonymously in study reports. We will not share individual survey responses with your child's school. Data from this survey will be stored in a secure area accessible only to the researchers during the study.
- **Risks/Benefits**: The study presents minimal risk to your child. Researchers will not identify specific children in order to maintain confidentiality. Your child's participation helps build knowledge in the state and nationally about how to support students to prepare for postsecondary education and career. Where appropriate, GEAR UP schools can use the information learned from the study to adjust their GEAR UP activities, events, and/or resources.
- **Voluntary Participation**: Participation in this study is voluntary. If a student does not participate in the study, he or she will still receive the academic and non-academic supports offered at his or her school. Additionally, you may withdraw your child from the study at any time with no consequences. Even if you consent for your child to participate, your child will also have an opportunity to decide if she/he wants to complete the survey. Your child will be able to skip any survey item that she/he does not wish to answer and withdraw at any time.

If you have any questions about the study, you can contact Samantha Spinney at samantha.spinney@icf.com or (703) 272-6681. She is the project manager for the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

If you agree with your child participating in the survey, you do not have to do anything in response to this letter. If you **do not** want your child to complete the survey for research purposes, even if this information is confidential, please complete the form on the following page and return to *<School Designee>* by *<Date, 2021>*. Our team will work with the school to ensure that your child does not complete the survey if you do not want them to do so.

Sincerely,

Samantha Spinney

If you agree with your child participating in the survey, you do not have to do anything in response to this letter. If you **do not** want your child to complete the survey, even if this information is confidential, please complete and return to *<School Designee>* by *<date>*.

 I **do not** want my child, _____,

[Please Print Full Student Name]

to participate in the Texas GEAR UP survey in spring 2021.

Your name (Please Print): _____

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

<Fecha>, 2021

Estimado Padre o Tutor:

La escuela de su hijo(a) está participando este año en el programa de subsidio Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP por sus siglas en inglés): Beyond Grad, el cuál tiene como meta mejorar la preparación para la universidad y carrera de los estudiantes de secundaria y preparatoria. Este programa lo está llevando a cabo la Agencia de Educación de Texas (TEA por sus siglas en inglés). Para entender mejor cómo está funcionando, TEA ha contratado a una compañía de investigación, ICF, para hacerles una encuesta a los estudiantes. Esta primavera, se le dará a su hijo(a) la oportunidad de completar una encuesta que tomará aproximadamente 10 minutos. La encuesta le hará preguntas a su hijo(a) acerca de sus experiencias en la escuela, educación postsecundaria y metas de carrera. Se les pedirá su participación en este estudio a todos los estudiantes del grado de su hijo(a). Estamos motivando a los estudiantes a tomar esta encuesta voluntaria ya que sus experiencias serán importantes para entender el programa.

Favor de considerar los detalles que abajo se enlistan antes de decidir si permite a su hijo(a) participar en la encuesta:

- **Confidencialidad:** La información recopilada por medio de los investigadores se mantendrá en privado en la medida que lo permite la ley. Ni su nombre ni el de su hijo serán capturados en la encuesta, así es que los investigadores no serán capaces de identificar a su hijo en los reportes escritos. Todos los resultados relacionados a respuestas cortas o de opciones múltiples de todos los participantes serán resumidos en los reportes del estudio. Las respuestas individuales de su hijo(a) a preguntas abiertas pueden ser compartidas anónimamente en los reportes del estudio. No compartiremos respuestas individuales con la escuela de su hijo(a). La información de esta encuesta será guardada en un lugar seguro accesible solamente por los investigadores durante el estudio.
- **Riesgos/Beneficios:** Este estudio presenta un riesgo mínimo para su hijo(a). Los investigadores no identificarán estudiantes en específico para mantener la confidencialidad. La participación de su hijo(a) nos ayuda a obtener conocimiento a nivel estatal y nacional acerca de cómo apoyar a los estudiantes para que se preparen mejor para la educación postsecundaria y carrera. Las escuelas GEAR UP donde sea apropiado pueden usar esta información del estudio para ajustar las actividades, eventos y/o recursos.
- **Participación Voluntaria:** La participación en el estudio es voluntaria. Si un estudiante no participa en el estudio, él/ella seguirá recibiendo el apoyo académico y no-académico que ofrece su escuela. Adicionalmente, usted puede retirar a su hijo(a) del estudio en cualquier momento sin ninguna consecuencia. Aunque usted haya consentido la participación de su hijo(a), su hijo(a) también tendrá la oportunidad de decidir si él/ella quiere completar la encuesta. Su hijo(a) va a poder saltarse cualquier elemento de la encuesta que él/ella no quiera contestar y retirarse en cualquier momento.

Si tiene cualquier pregunta acerca del estudio, favor de contactar a Samantha Spinney, ICF, a samantha.spinney@icf.com o al (703) 272-6681. Ella es la coordinadora de este estudio. Si tiene preguntas acerca de los derechos de su estudiante como participante en el estudio, favor de contactar a Carole Harris a carole.harris@icf.com o al (404) 321-3211.

Si usted está de acuerdo con la participación de su hijo(a) en la encuesta, no tiene que hacer nada en respuesta a esta carta. Si usted **no quiere** que su hijo(a) complete esta encuesta para propósitos de investigación, aún cuando esta información es confidencial, favor de completar el formato en la siguiente página y regréselo a la <Persona Designada> el <Fecha, 2021>. Nuestro equipo trabajará con su escuela para asegurarse que su hijo(a) no complete la encuesta si usted no quiere que lo haga.

Atentamente,

Samantha Spinney

Si usted está de acuerdo con la participación de su hijo(a) en la encuesta, no tiene que hacer nada en respuesta a esta carta. Si usted **no quiere** que su hijo(a) complete la encuesta, aunque esta información es confidencial, favor de completar y regresar a <Persona Designada> el <fecha>.

        No quiero que mi hijo(a), _____

                [Favor de escribir con letra de molde el nombre completo del estudiante]

        participe en la encuesta de Texas GEAR UP de la primavera del 2021.

Nombre del Padre: -

_____

                    (Favor de escribir con letra de molde):

Firma del Padre: _____ Fecha: _____

C.2. Focus Group Protocols

C.2.1. TEA

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Interview/Focus Group Protocol: TEA 2020–21

Setup:

➢ Introduce yourself: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview: *The Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad program, led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), aims to improve postsecondary education and career readiness in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, TEA has contracted with ICF to conduct a focus group/interview with TEA program staff/advising organization leadership/TNTP/UT-Austin who are involved in program implementation this year. The purpose of this focus group/interview is to better understand your role in the grant and perceptions about grant implementation. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. [IF FOCUS GROUP] The goal of this focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This focus group/interview will take approximately 35–45 minutes.*

➢ Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group/interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group/interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence by members of the ICF team,* to the extent permitted by law, *who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; [IF FOCUS GROUP ONLY] and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ Ask permission to participate in the focus group/interview: *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group/interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➢ Ask permission to record the focus group/interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses/if you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.

➢ **Start the recording.**

Note to facilitator: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introduction (~5 mins)

1. Please tell me about your role related to the GEAR UP grant program.

     a. *What role do you have in supporting GEAR UP programming, objectives, and activities at TEA?*
     b. *Who else at TEA is involved in coordinating GEAR UP activities? What are their roles? Are any of these individuals/roles new in Year 3?*

General Background Questions (~10 mins)

2. Who, within and outside of your organization (e.g., TEA, TNTP, coordinators, advisors), do you primarily work or collaborate with for Texas GEAR UP tasks or activities?
     a. *What is your level of satisfaction with these collaborative relationships? Why?*
     b. *How could these collaborative relationships be strengthened or improved?*

3. What are your goals and expectations for your work on the grant in Year 3? What outcomes do you expect to achieve by the end of the year?
     a. *What were expected outcomes for different stakeholders with whom you work (e.g., Districts, grant coordinators, non-profit advising organizations, students, school staff, and parents/guardians)?*
     b. *How satisfied are you with the progress towards meeting these goals this year?*
     c. *What goals have been the most challenging to attain? Why?*

Year 3 Implementation (~15 mins)

4. Please provide an overview of how the grant/services have changed since year 2.
     a. *How satisfied are you with the current program model? In what ways would you like to adjust the model, if at all?*

5. Describe how implementation of the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness class has been going this year. How is it going at each of the GEAR UP middle schools? How is it going at the non-GEAR UP middle schools?
     a. *How satisfied are you with implementation?*
     b. *How has the TX OnCourse curriculum scaled during the first 3 years of the grant?*
     c. *What feedback about the curriculum have you received from district and/or school staff?*
     d. *What have been the effects of the curriculum on key groups (i.e., teachers, students, families and the school)?*
     e. *How have you engaged with UT-Austin to oversee the implementation of this curriculum?*

6. Please provide an overview of the new statewide advising training and assessment.
     a. *How satisfied are you with this training/assessment? In what ways would you like to adjust the program, if at all?*
     b. *What feedback have you received from stakeholders about this curriculum so far?*
     c. *What are TEA's plans to scale this training?*

7. Please describe progress that you have made in Year 3 to convene quarterly with Tri-agency partners (TEA, THECB, and TWC) to ensure alignment of statewide initiatives around college and career readiness.

       a. Has this progress been interrupted at all by the COVID-19 pandemic? How so?

8. What role have you played in sustaining (or planning to sustain) GEAR UP initiatives (e.g., district-level sustainability planning, program wide sustainability planning) across GEAR UP middle and high schools?
   a. How satisfied are you with the progress made so far?

9. What initiatives do you hope to see strengthened, enhanced, and/or scaled in Year 4?
   a. What initiatives, if any, would you like to alter in Year 4?

10. What has been the impact of COVID-19 on activities/services planned for year 3?
    a. What challenges/barriers have you faced due to COVID-19?
    b. What types of strategies have you used to address these challenges?

Final Reflections (~5 mins)

11. What do you think is the most promising component of the GEAR UP program to improve postsecondary education and career readiness for students?
    a. What aspect or activity of GEAR UP will have the greatest impact for students, schools, and/or districts? How has this changed from Year 2?

12. Is there anything else about GEAR UP grant implementation that you think is important for me to know?

Thank you for your time!

ICF

C.2.2. TNTP

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Interview/Focus Group Protocol: TNTP 2020–21

Setup:

➢ <u>Introduce yourself</u>: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➢ <u>Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview</u>: *The Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad program, led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), aims to improve postsecondary education and career readiness in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, TEA has contracted with ICF to conduct a focus group/interview with TNTP to understanding program implementation this year. The purpose of this focus group/interview is to better understand your role in the grant and perceptions about grant implementation. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. [IF FOCUS GROUP] The goal of this focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This focus group/interview will take approximately 35–50 minutes.*

➢ <u>Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy:</u> *(1) the focus group/interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group/interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence by members of the ICF team,* to the extent permitted by law, *who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; [IF FOCUS GROUP ONLY] and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ <u>Ask permission to participate in the focus group/interview:</u> *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group/interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➢ <u>Ask permission to record the focus group/interview:</u> *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses/if you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

➢ <u>Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.</u>

➢ **Start the recording.**

<u>Note to facilitator:</u> Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introduction (~5 mins)

13. Please tell me about your role related to the GEAR UP grant program.
    a. *What role do you have in supporting GEAR UP programming, objectives, and activities at your organization?*
    b. *Who else at your organization is involved in coordinating GEAR UP activities? What are their roles?*

General Background Questions (~10 mins)

14. Who, within and outside of your organization (e.g., TEA, TNTP, coordinators, advisors), do you primarily work or collaborate with for Texas GEAR UP tasks or activities?
    a. *What is your level of satisfaction with these collaborative relationships?*
    b. *How could these collaborative relationships be strengthened or improved?*

15. What are your goals and expectations for your work on the grant in Year 3?
    a. *What outcomes do you expect to achieve by the end of the year for:*
        i. *Teacher Professional Development and Vertical Teaming*
        ii. *Curriculum Development for the Middle School College and Career Readiness Course*
        iii. *Pilot Facilitation for the Middle School College and Career Readiness Course*
        iv. *Performance Management for District Implementation of GEAR UP Objectives*
        v. *Pilot Facilitation of the Effective Advising Framework for GEAR UP districts and other participating schools*
    b. *What are expected outcomes for different stakeholders with whom you work (e.g., school and district staff)?*
    c. *How satisfied are you with the progress towards meeting these goals this year?*
    d. *What goals have been the most challenging to attain? Why?*

Professional Development (~20 mins)

16. What professional development activities have you conducted so far this year?
    a. *What types of professional development have you trained staff on? Which stakeholders (e.g., teachers, counselors/advisors, administrators) have you trained?*
        i. *Training topics for core content teachers (e.g., project-based learning, advanced instructional strategies, student engagement, teacher externships)?*
        ii. *Individualized educator coaching and/or mentoring sessions for HS core content teachers?*
        iii. *Support for vertical teaming?*
        iv. *Support for virtual instruction in a remote learning environment?*
        v. *Training topics for high school counselors?*
        vi. *Format of delivery?*
    b. *How have various stakeholders received the professional development you have delivered?*
    c. *In what ways are the professional development services designed to increase student academic achievement?*
    d. *Who at the district have you collaborated with to deliver PD in Year 3? How satisfied are you with this collaboration?*
    e. *What have been your biggest challenges so far in Year 3? Biggest successes?*

17. What impact has COVID-19 had on the implementation of this year's professional development?
    a. *How has the delivery of PD changed/adapted to accommodate?*
    b. *Has the design/format of PD been altered?*

c. *Has enrollment in PD/attendance at PD trainings been impacted?*
d. *Have you seen any changes in the effects of the PD as a result?*

Progress Monitoring (~10 mins)

18. How effective have the progress monitoring meetings been with districts?
    a. *Please describe the vision and goals of these meetings.*
    b. *Who usually participates in this meeting?*
    c. *What are some of the areas of strengths that were identified that stand out to you?*
    d. *What kinds of strategies were identified to address challenges? How satisfied are you with the implementation of these strategies?*
    e. *Have there been any other changes in implementation as a result of these meetings? If so, please describe these changes.*

Final Reflections (~5 mins)

19. What do you think is the most promising component of the GEAR UP program to improve postsecondary education and career readiness for students?
    a. *What aspect or activity of GEAR UP will have the greatest impact for students, schools, and/or districts?*
20. Is there anything else about GEAR UP grant implementation that you think is important for me to know?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.3. Coordinator Interview

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Interview Protocol: Year 3 Coordinator Interview, 2020–21

- ➢ <u>Introduce yourself</u>: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e., Facilitator).

- ➢ <u>Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview</u>: *Your district is participating in the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program this year, led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). To better understand how the GEAR UP program is working, TEA hired ICF to conduct an interview with grant coordinators knowledgeable about their district's implementation of the program. The purpose of this interview is to learn about grant implementation in Year 3 of the grant—the 2020–21 school year. This interview will differ from any questions answered in fall 2020 as those were focused on grant implementation during the previous year, Year 2. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. This interview will take approximately 60 minutes.*

- ➢ <u>Convey to the participant our confidentiality policy:</u> *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence by members of the ICF team to the extent permitted by law who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; and (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

- ➢ <u>Ask permission to participate in the interview:</u> *Now that you have heard about the content of this interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you agree to participate?*

- ➢ <u>Ask permission to record the interview:</u> *In order to accurately capture your responses, I would like to record the interview. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you do not want the interview to be audio recorded, we will not record the interview but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify you will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

- ➢ <u>Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.</u>

- ➢ **Start the recording.**

<u>Notes to facilitator:</u>

- ➢ Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introduction (~3 mins)

1. How, if at all, has your role in your district related to the GEAR UP program differed this academic year (2020–21), Year 3, compared to the previous years?
    a. *What role do you have in supporting GEAR UP programming, objectives, and activities this school year?*
    b. *Who else is involved in coordinating GEAR UP activities this year? What are their roles?*

GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Experiences in Year 3 (~40 mins)

Next, I'd like to learn more about your experiences implementing GEAR UP in Year 3 (the 2020–21 school year).

2. Tell me how implementing the GEAR UP program has been going in your district this year.
    a. *What challenges have you experienced in carrying out GEAR UP initiatives and activities? What successes have you experienced?*
    b. *How have GEAR UP initiatives supported the postsecondary education and career preparation needs of the participating students?*
    c. *How has COVID-19, school closures, and virtual learning (if applicable) impacted implementation?*
    d. *In what ways have you been able to continue delivering GEAR UP services during the pandemic?*
    e. *Have any of your program goals and objectives shifted as a result of COVID-19? How so?*

3. Describe the modifications you made in Year 3, compared to previous years, to initiatives, activities, and/or strategies to help students and parents prepare for postsecondary education and career (e.g., virtual college visits, virtual tutoring, virtual advising, etc.)
    a. *How, if at all, did these modifications impact the quality of the services?*

4. How has working with TNTP on professional development been going for your district this year?
    a. *Who at the district has TNTP primarily been working with regarding professional development initiatives?*
    b. *Do you believe their work this year has been effective? Why or why not?*
    c. *What feedback have you received from teachers and administrators about their experience with TNTP and the strategies TNTP has recommended?*
        i. *Do you perceive there to be support among teachers and administrators to TNTP's work? Why or why not?*
    d. *Have you participated in a TNTP Coordinator professional learning community (PLC)?*
        i. *What topics did you cover? What information was shared?*

5. How have TEA staff supported your needs in Year 3? [Probe for support from TEA GEAR UP staff and non-GEAR UP staff, as applicable]
    a. *[If returning coordinator] In what ways was this support different from Year 2?*
    b. *What supports from TEA have been the most helpful? What needs were not met by TEA?*

    c. What types of support, if any, did you receive from TEA or other GEAR UP partners on grant implementation following the school closures?

6. How effective have the progress monitoring meetings with TNTP been for your district?
   a. *Who usually participates in this meeting?*
   b. *What areas of strength were identified for your district? What do you think helped to contribute to those strengths?*
   c. *What strategies were identified to address challenges? How effective have those strategies been to address the challenges?*
   d. *Have there been any other changes in implementation as a result of these meetings? If so, please describe these changes.*

7. How have you engaged educators and administrators to meet the goals and objectives of the GEAR UP program (e.g., increasing academic rigor, expanding advising) during Year 3?
   a. *Describe the ways that educators and administrators have been engaged with implementation.*
   b. *[If returning coordinator] How have these efforts evolved from last year?*
      i. *[If returning coordinator] What new strategies have you used to meet the goals and objectives of the GEAR UP program?*
      ii. *[If returning coordinator] How have educators' and administrators' level or type of engagement in grant implementation changed this year?*
   c. *What successes have you experienced this year?*
   d. *What challenges have you faced this year?*
   e. *How knowledgeable have educators and administrators been about GEAR UP goals and services?*

8. Describe your outreach strategies for student and parent events this year.
   a. *[If returning coordinator] How have your outreach strategies evolved to build on the successes and address the challenges experienced in previous years?*
   b. *What successes have you had using this approach?*
      i. *Why do you believe these events have been successful?*
   c. *What challenges have you faced in Year 3? How have you planned to modify your approach for Year 4 to address these challenges?*
   d. *In what ways, if any, have you used non-face-to-face communication to conduct student and parent outreach during the pandemic? (e.g., virtual communication platforms, phone, mail, email, social media, text)?*
   e. *Have you engaged high school alumni, who are currently enrolled in college, in any activities/events for parents and/or students? If so, how did this work? What was the role of the alumni in the activity/event?*

9. What businesses have your district engaged with in Year 3 to support GEAR UP goals and strategies?
   a. *What have you communicated to businesses about GEAR UP goals and strategies? How have you communicated this information?*
   b. *How have they supported grant implementation?*
   c. *Have you faced any challenges sustaining these partnerships/alliances during the pandemic? How has COVID-19 impacted how these have/have not been sustained?*

10. What government entities and community groups have your district engaged with in Year 3 to support GEAR UP goals and strategies?
    a. *What have you communicated to government entities and community groups about GEAR UP goals and strategies? How have you communicated this information?*
    b. *How have these alliances provided information to students regarding high school pathways, scholarships, financial aid, and postsecondary education awareness?*
    c. *In what other ways, if any, have they supported grant implementation?*

11. How did the new Texas OnCourse Advisor training curriculum go in your district in Year 3?
    a. *What was the reception among staff regarding this new training?*
    b. *How has the new training supported or not supported the postsecondary education and career advising needs of the students and parents in your districts?*

12. What outcomes related to postsecondary education and career readiness and awareness have you seen for students, school staff, and parents/guardians this year?
    a. *How have these outcomes differed from those of previous years?*
    b. *How have you adapted to achieve these outcomes?*
    c. *What outcomes have been the hardest to achieve? The easiest?*
    d. *What outcomes have you been unable to obtain this year? Has the inability to obtain these outcomes been related to the COVID-19 pandemic? How so?*

13. What middle school GEAR UP initiatives from Years 1 and 2 have been sustained in Year 3?
    a. *Have you been involved in the planning to sustain those initiatives?*
    b. *Has the middle school's approach to preparing students for high school, changed after having GEAR UP at their schools in Years 1 and 2? How about their about their approach to preparing students for postsecondary education and career?*

14. Have you thought about how GEAR UP initiatives from this year might be sustained at the high school in the future?
    a. *How do you think GEAR UP initiatives will be sustained in the next year or two? What do you hope is still sustained in the next 5 to 10 years?*
    b. *Do you have concerns about the sustainability of the GEAR UP initiatives?*
    c. *What role do you envision for school and district staff in sustainability planning?*
    d. *What role do you envision for community and government alliances in sustainability planning?*

Wrap Up (~6 mins)

15. In your opinion, what were the most promising components of GEAR UP in Year 3 to improve postsecondary education preparation for the primary cohort (students in grade 9, the class of 2024) and the priority cohorts (students in grades 10–12)?
    a. *Would you recommend GEAR UP to others? Why or why not?*
    b. *In what ways would you change GEAR UP? Why?*
    c. *What aspect or activity of GEAR UP will have the greatest impact for students, schools, and/or districts?*

16. Is there anything else that can help us understand more about your district's GEAR UP program in Year 3?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.4. High School Principal

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Year 3 High School Principal, 2020–21

Setup:

➢ <u>Introduce yourself</u>: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➢ <u>Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview</u>: *The district/school(s) you serve is/are participating in Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad this year, a grant program which aims to improve postsecondary education and career readiness in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct an interview with principals. The purpose of this interview is to learn about how the grant aligns with the college and career priorities of your school and to better understand the context of teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. This interview will take approximately 30–40 minutes.*

➢ <u>Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy:</u> *(1) the interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group/interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence by members of the ICF team, to the extent permitted by law, who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) interview data will be maintained in secure areas.*

➢ <u>Ask permission to participate in the focus group/interview</u>: *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group/interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➢ <u>Ask permission to record the focus group/interview</u>: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses/if you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

➢ <u>Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.</u>

➢ **Start the recording.**

<u>Note to facilitator:</u>
- Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Background (~8)

17. Briefly tell me about your role in your school.
    a. *How long have you been at your school? In this role?*

18. Before we get into questions about GEAR UP, I'm hoping to first understand the context of schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

      a. How has teaching and learning been taking place so far at your school? In-person? Virtual? Hybrid?
            i. How has this format been impacting students? In what ways do you expect that this format may impact educational outcomes?
      b. How has the pandemic impacted extracurricular activities at your school—athletics, field trips, parent events, etc.
      c. What do you believe are the greatest challenges facing your school community as a result of the pandemic? (Probe for challenges facing students, families, and faculty/staff).
      d. Do you think there is any other contextual information about the operations of your school during the pandemic that may be helpful for me to understand?

19. What types of information do you believe the students and families at your school need to receive to successfully access high-quality postsecondary education opportunities and be prepared for a career?

GEAR UP (~20)

20. How familiar are you with the GEAR UP program at your school?
      a. How familiar are you with the goals of the program at your school?
      b. How familiar are you with the strategies and initiatives implemented to help your school reach these goals?
      c. Are there any GEAR UP topics about which you wish you had more information from the GEAR UP coordinator in your district? What topics?

21. What are your perceptions of GEAR UP?
      a. Do you believe it has been/will be an effective program for increasing awareness and access to postsecondary education and career?
      b. Do you think the type of information and support offered by GEAR UP is the right fit for the students and families at your school? What about during the pandemic?

22. Tell me how implementing the GEAR UP program in your school/district is going so far.
      a. How have GEAR UP initiatives supported or not supported the postsecondary education preparation needs of the students participating in grant programming and services?
      b. Have you observed any promising practices that have emerged in the implementation of GEAR UP activities and services?
      c. Have you observed any challenges in implementing GEAR UP activities and services?
            i. What about in the context of the pandemic?

23. Tell me about the alignment between GEAR UP and any school and/or district strategic plans.
      a. How does GEAR UP support the initiatives and goals of this plan, if at all?
      b. How does the strategic plan support the implementation of GEAR UP at your school?
      c. Who in your school and/or district was involved in aligning GEAR UP with the strategic plan?
      d. What suggestions would you make it help them align even more?
      e. Do you believe the existing alignment will support a successful implementation of GEAR UP?

24. Are you familiar with the TNTP-driven professional development (PD) your school is receiving as a GEAR UP grantee?

      a. If yes: How successful has the PD been this year? What feedback have you received from teachers about the PD? How as the PD effected academic rigor?

      b. If no: What would you like to know about the PD?

25. Do you have anything else to add regarding your engagement or satisfaction with GEAR UP?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.5. Nonprofit Advising Leadership

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Interview/Focus Group Protocol: Nonprofit Advising Leadership 2020–21

Setup:

➢ Introduce yourself: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview: *The Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad program, led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), aims to improve postsecondary education and career readiness in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, TEA has contracted with ICF to conduct a focus group/interview with advising organization leadership who are involved in program implementation this year. The purpose of this focus group/interview is to better understand your role in the grant and perceptions about grant implementation. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. [IF FOCUS GROUP] The goal of this focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This focus group/interview will take approximately 35–45 minutes.*

➢ Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group/interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group/interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence by members of the ICF team,* to the extent permitted by law, *who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; [IF FOCUS GROUP ONLY] and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ Ask permission to participate in the focus group/interview: *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group/interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➢ Ask permission to record the focus group/interview: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses/if you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.

➢ **Start the recording.**

Note to facilitator: Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introduction (~5 mins)

21. Please tell me about your role related to the GEAR UP grant program.
    a. *What role do you have in supporting GEAR UP programming, objectives, and activities at your organization?*
    b. *Who else at your organization is involved in coordinating GEAR UP activities? What are their roles?*

General Background Questions (~10 mins)

22. Who, within and outside of your organization, do you primarily work or collaborate with for Texas GEAR UP tasks or activities?
    a. *What is your level of satisfaction with these collaborative relationships?*
    b. *How could these collaborative relationships be strengthened or improved?*

23. What were your goals and expectations for your work on the grant this school year? What outcomes do you expect to achieve by the end of the year?
    a. *What were expected outcomes for different stakeholders with whom you work (advisors, school staff, students, parents)?*
    b. *How satisfied are you with the progress towards meeting these goals this year?*
    c. *What goals have been the most challenging to attain? Why?*

Year 3 Implementation (~15 mins)

24. Describe the services the advisors from your organization are providing this school year.
    a. *How, if at all, was your advising model modified this year to accommodate virtual learning? What was the impact of those modifications?*
    b. *Has COVID-19 impacted your advising strategies/model/implementation? If so, how?*

25. What insights do you have on the impact of your organization's advising model on GEAR UP students' and parent/guardians' knowledge about postsecondary education and careers?
    a. *How do these impacts align with the advising metrics used by your organization? What about the metrics needed to measure the federal GEAR UP project objectives?*
    b. *How does your organization help advisors at the GEAR UP schools to meet their goals and objectives this year?*
    c. *In what ways, if any, have you seen the impacts of the advising model change over time?*

26. What is the relationship between the district/high school and the advisors?
    a. *How has the district/high school utilized the advisors?*
    b. *What have been the positive aspects of the relationship between the school and the advisor?*
    c. *What have been the challenges in integrating the advising services with the school?*

27. What role has your organization played in districts' efforts to plan for sustaining advising activities?
    a. *From what you have seen, what progress has been made so far in sustaining GEAR UP advising services/activities? Are you satisfied with this level of progress?*

28. What is your overall satisfaction with the new Texas OnCourse Academy Advisor Training that the GEAR UP advisors received this year?
    a. *Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the training?*
    b. *What are some effects of the TEA advising training on the advisors who received the training?*

29. What is your overall strategy for providing college and career advising to students this year?
    a. *What components of the strategy have shown positive results?*
    b. *What components of the strategy have been challenging to implement?*
    c. *What modifications, if any, have been made in the implementation of the strategies?*

Final Reflections (~5 mins)

30. What do you think is the most promising component of the GEAR UP program to improve postsecondary education and career readiness for students?
    a. *What aspect or activity of GEAR UP will have the greatest impact for students, schools, and/or districts?*

31. Is there anything else about GEAR UP grant implementation that you think is important for me to know?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.6. Nonprofit Advising Staff

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Focus Group/Interview Protocol: Nonprofit Advising Staff, 2020–21

Setup:

➢ <u>Introduce yourself</u>: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➢ <u>Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview</u>: *At least one of the school(s) you serve is/are participating in Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad, which aims to improve college and career readiness in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a focus group/interview with advisors. The purpose of this focus group/interview is to learn about the college and career counseling/advising services that you are delivering this year. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. [IF FOCUS GROUP] The goal of this focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This focus group/interview will take approximately 35–45 minutes.*

➢ <u>Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy:</u> *(1) the focus group/interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group/interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by members of the ICF team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; [IF FOCUS GROUP ONLY] and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ <u>Ask permission to participate in the focus group/interview</u>: *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group/interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➢ <u>Ask permission to record the focus group/interview</u>: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses/if you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

➢ <u>Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.</u>

➢ **Start the recording.**

> ➢ <u>Notes to facilitator:</u>
> > o Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introduction (~5 mins)

26. Briefly tell me about the role you serve in your organization related to the GEAR UP program.

     a. What grade levels are you currently serving?
     b. What role did you have last year in supporting GEAR UP at your organization?

Goals and Outcomes (~5–10 mins)

27. Please describe your primary goals for advising this year through the GEAR UP program.

     a. Were there any changes in these goals between last year and this year?

     b. What outcomes do you expect the students you are advising to achieve this year (e.g., knowledge of postsecondary options, high school education plan/course sequencing, increased knowledge of career options, etc.)?

     c. What outcomes do you expect the parents/guardians you are advising to achieve this year (e.g., knowledge of postsecondary options, high school education plan/course sequencing, increased knowledge of career options, etc.)?

28. Please describe the progress you made in achieving these goals and helping students and parent/guardians achieve the outcomes this year.
     a. Which objectives were the easiest to meet? Which were the most challenging? Why?

Postsecondary Education and Career Advising (~15–20 mins)

29. How have the individualized advising sessions for <u>students</u> been going this year?
     a. Please describe students' interest and motivation for these sessions.
     b. What topics have you been addressing with students in their one-on-one sessions?

30. How have the individualized advising sessions for <u>parents/guardians</u> been going this year?
     a. Please describe parents'/guardians' interest and motivation for these sessions.
     b. What topics have you been covering with parents in their one-on-one sessions?

31. What impact, if any, have this year's advising sessions had on students' or parents'/guardians':
     a. Knowledge of postsecondary options?
     b. Knowledge of financial aid?
     c. Knowledge of career options and pathways?
     d. Academic readiness?
     e. Understanding how to successfully prepare for the transition to postsecondary education or career?

32. How has COVID-19 impacted the individualized advising sessions with students and parents?
     a. What technologies have you used to support individualized advising sessions during the pandemic? What has worked well about these technologies? What has been challenging about these technologies?
     b. Have you discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on college and career planning during your advising sessions? How have those discussions gone?

33. Other than the individualized advising sessions, what other types of advising services have you been providing this year?
     a. How have these services been going?
     b. What impacts have these services had on students and parents/guardians?

34. Who from the school, district, and/or community have you collaborated with this year to conduct postsecondary education and career advising for students and/or parents/guardians?
    a. *Describe your collaboration.*
    b. *How effective has this collaboration been in meeting your counseling/advising goals?*

35. How does the advising framework used by your organization align with your school and school staff?
    a. How have your organization's *program goals* aligned with the goals of the school in terms of advising?
    b. How have your organization's *strategies for meeting program goals* aligned with the strategies used at your school?

36. Describe the space at the school(s) you work in which you usually conduct postsecondary and career activities this year (e.g., individual advising sessions, family meetings, group meetings). Are these physical spaces? Virtual spaces?
    a. *Is there a difference between this year and last year in terms of where advising is taking place?*
        i. <u>If there is a difference:</u> *How have the changes this year impacted your ability to provide relevant and timely information to students and their families? Have you been able to fully support students and their families with the space you have available?*

Advising Training

For the next few questions, we want to ask about your experience with the new Texas OnCourse Academy Advisor Training.

37. Did you participate in the Advisor Training this year?
    a. *What topics were covered in the training?*
    b. *What new information did you learn as a result of the training?*

38. What impacts has the Advisor Training had on your advising strategies?
    a. *How have students and parents been affected by any changes you've made to your advising?*

39. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Advisor Training?

Closing (~3 mins)

40. Do you have anything else to add regarding postsecondary education and career advising services at the school(s) you serve this year?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.7. Middle School Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Course Teachers

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation

Interview/Focus Group Protocol: Middle School Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Course Teachers, 2020–21

Setup:

➢ Introduce yourself: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➢ Briefly discuss the purpose of the interview/focus group: *Your school is participating in the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program this year, which aims to improve college and career counseling in middle school, high school, and community college. To better understand how the GEAR UP grant program is working, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct an interview/focus group with educators who may be part of your school's GEAR UP grant program. The purpose of this focus group is to learn about educator perceptions of the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness course delivered at your school this school year (2020–21). Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. The goal of this interview/focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This interview/focus group will take approximately 35–45 minutes.*

➢ Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the interview/focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the interview/focus group at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by members of the ICF team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) interview/focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; [IF FOCUS GROUP] and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➢ Ask permission to participate in the interview/focus group: *Now that you have heard about the content of this interview/focus group and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➢ Ask permission to record the interview/focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If you/at least one person choose(s) not to have the interview/focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview/focus group?*

➢ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.

➢ **Start the recording.**

➢ Notes to facilitator:

  o Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

  o Only participants who were at the district and/or school in Year 3 of the grant should be interviewed.

Introduction (~5 mins)

32. Please introduce yourself, including your first name, the subject(s) you are teaching this year, and how long you have been an educator.

33. When did you teach the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness course this year—the fall and/or spring semester?

34. Did you also teach the course last year?

Texas OnCourse Middle School Curriculum Implementation (~10 mins)

35. How have you implemented this course this year? Was it offered as a standalone course or did you implement it with AVID or another class?
    a. *Why did your school choose to implement the course this way?*
    b. *For those of you who taught the course last year, how did implementation change this year compared to last year?*

36. What do you think are the most valuable components of the course?
    a. *In what ways are they valuable?*
       Are there any components that you have supplemented with other curriculum? Please describe.

37. Please describe any training you have received to date regarding the course and/or how to teach it.
    a. *How and when did you have this training?*
    b. *What topics were addressed at these events?*
    c. *How effective was the training in helping you to teach the course?*
    d. *How might future trainings on this course be improved?*

38. Please describe any components of the Texas OnCourse curriculum that have been implemented differently this year (2020–21) because of any learning environment changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
    a. *What are some of the impacts of these curriculum/component changes?*

Perceived Effectiveness of Student Competencies on Postsecondary Education and Career Information (~12 mins)

39. Please describe some of the key successes and major challenges in teaching this course this year.
    a. *Please describe students' level of engagement in the course—how has it compared to any other courses you have taught?*
    b. *What topics have resonated with students the most? Least?*
    c. *In what ways have you observed students learning and retaining the postsecondary education and career information provided in the course?*
    d. *What are some challenges that you have encountered while teaching the course?*
    e. *What have you done to overcome these challenges?*
    f. *What would you do to improve the course and how it can help students understand postsecondary education and career information?*

40. How well have the assessments for this class aligned with the curriculum?
    a. *Have the assessments appropriately measured student competencies in postsecondary education and career exploration?*
    b. *For those of you who taught the course last year, how has the alignment between the assessments and the curriculum differed from last year, if at all?*
    c. *How have your students performed on the assessments? Has performance improved compared to Year 2?*

41. In what ways do you think this course has affected students' overall academic achievement?
    a. *For those of you who taught the course last year, do you believe this has changed at all compared to Year 2? How so?*

42. How has the course improved students' high school readiness? Postsecondary readiness?
    a. *For those of you who taught the course last year, how do students' improvements in these areas compare to their improvements observed in Year 2?*

Perceived Scalability of the Texas OnCourse Middle School Curriculum (~5 mins)

43. The Texas Education Agency has been working to develop and refine this curriculum with the goal of making it available to school districts across the state. Based on your experience teaching the course this year, do you believe this curriculum is ready to be rolled out statewide? Why or why not?
    a. *What necessary changes need to be made to this curriculum before it should be made available across the state?*
    b. *What kind of support should TEA be prepared to provide to districts to support using this new curriculum?*

Additional Comments (~3 mins)

44. Is there anything else that you would like to add about the course that we have not yet discussed?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.8. High School Counselors Who Completed New Advisor Training

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Focus Group/Interview Protocol: HS Counselors who Completed New Advisor Training, 2020–21

Setup:

➤ <u>Introduce yourself</u>: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e. Facilitator).

➤ <u>Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group/interview</u>: *The school(s) you serve is/are participating in Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad, which aims to improve college and career readiness in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to conduct a focus group/interview with those who participated in the new Texas OnCourse Academy's Advisor Training this school year, 2020–21. The purpose of this focus group/interview is to learn about this training and gather your feedback on this training. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. [IF FOCUS GROUP] The goal of this focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This focus group/interview will take approximately 35–45 minutes.*

➤ <u>Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy:</u> *(1) the focus group/interview is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group/interview at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by members of the ICF team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group/interview data will be maintained in secure areas; [IF FOCUS GROUP ONLY] and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➤ <u>Ask permission to participate in the focus group/interview:</u> *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group/interview and the confidentiality provisions, do you consent to participate?*

➤ <u>Ask permission to record the focus group/interview:</u> *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses/if you choose not to have the focus group/interview recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the interview?*

➤ <u>Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.</u>

➤ **Start the recording.**

➤ <u>Notes to facilitator:</u>

     o Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses.

Introduction (~5 minutes)
41. Briefly tell me about the role you serve in your school/district/organization this school year.

     a. *Please describe your experience at your high school providing college and career advising and/or counseling to high school students.*

Training Participation (~6 minutes)

42. We would now like to discuss your participation in the Texas OnCourse Academy Advisor Training received this school year on college and career advising. Tell me how that is going.
     a. *What topics did you cover in the training?*
     b. *What is something new you learned that you did not know before participating in the training?*

43. What was the format of the training? How effective was that format for delivery of the curriculum?

Training Effectiveness (~10 minutes)

44. Was the information you received in the training well aligned with the needs of the students and families at your school/in your district?
     a. *If yes: In what ways was the training aligned with the needs of students and families?*
     b. *If no: In what ways could the training have been better aligned to the needs of students and families?*

45. What changes, if any, have you made in the way you counsel/advise students as a result of what you learned in the training?
     a. *How have these changes impacted students? (Probe for student understanding of college and career options, student understanding of financial aid options, student motivation and engagement around college and career.)*

46. What changes, if any, have you made in the way you counsel/advise parents and families as a result of what you learned in the training?
     a. *How have those changes impacted parents? (Probe for parent understanding of college and career options and financial aid options for their children.)*

47. Have you shared what you learned in the training with other staff at your school/in your district? Why or why not?
     a. *Who did you share it with?*
     b. *Is your school/district making any changes in the college and career information it shares with students and their families or in the way the information is provided?*

Satisfaction with the Training (~6 minutes)

48. Overall, what is your level of satisfaction with the training?
     a. *Are you satisfied with the effects of the training on your students? On your school/district? Why or why not?*
     b. *Would you recommend this training to others in your role? Why or why not?*

49. What recommendations do you have to improve the training?

Closing (~2 minutes)

50. Do you have anything else to add regarding the advising training that you received?

Thank you for your time!

C.2.9. Primary Cohort Student & Parents, Priority Cohort Students
Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Focus Group Protocol: Primary Cohort Student & Parents, Priority Cohort Students, 2021

➤ Introduce yourself: Introduce yourself as a representative of the ICF evaluation team and explain your role (i.e., Facilitator).

➤ Student Assent and Parent Consent: Only students with signed parent consent can participate in the focus group. Confirm that you have collected signed consent forms for each participating student and walk student through their assent to participate.

➤ Briefly discuss the purpose of the focus group: *Your school/your child's school is participating in the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant program this year. The program is run by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). To better understand how the GEAR UP program is working, TEA hired ICF to conduct a focus group interview (i.e., a group interview) with students/parents who may have participated in college and career awareness activities and services that were part of the program this school year (2020–21). The purpose of this focus group is to learn about student/parent opinions of those activities and services. Please know that there are no right or wrong answers. The goal of this focus group is to hear as many different viewpoints as possible. This focus group will take approximately 30–45 minutes.*

➤ Convey to each participant our confidentiality policy: *(1) the focus group is voluntary; (2) you can decline to answer any questions, or you can stop participating in the focus group at any time without any consequences; (3) the information will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law by members of the ICF team who have signed confidentiality agreements ensuring the protection of data; (4) focus group data will be maintained in secure areas; and (5) please respect others' privacy by not sharing any information outside of the focus group.*

➤ Ask permission to participate in the focus group: *Now that you have heard about the content of this focus group and the confidentiality provisions, do you agree to participate?*

➤ Ask permission to record the focus group: *In order to capture the discussion, I would like to record the session. Only evaluation team members will have access to the recording. If at least one person chooses not to have the focus group recorded, we will not record the session but will take notes. We will not include your name(s) in these notes. Any information that can be used to identify specific people will be removed from transcripts prior to being shared. Do I have permission to record the session?*

➤ Ask if they have any questions for you before you begin.

➤ **Start the recording.**

➤ Notes to facilitator: This year, primary cohort students are in Grade 9 and priority cohort students are in Grades 10–12. Italicized questions are to be used as probes to encourage respondents to expand upon their responses. Also, when conducting focus groups with Grade 9 participants, be sure to check for understanding and define, as needed, key terms like "postsecondary education," "financial aid," etc. Please consult the list of staff names and roles for each school—students may need prompting to

understand who their GEAR UP advisors are versus other staff (and may not be familiar with job titles).

All Respondents

Introduction (~3 mins)
2. Let's start with introductions. Please tell me your first name and your grade/child's grade.

We all know that this has been a challenging year with many changes in school attendance, in-person school days, and virtual school days. As we discuss the GEAR UP program, we are interested in all services provided either in-person or virtually (for example by phone, video call, text, social media etc.).

3. How familiar are you with the GEAR UP program at your/your child's school?
    a. *What are some of the goals associated with GEAR UP that you may know of?*

Postsecondary Education, Career, and Financial Aid Understanding (~10 mins)
4. During this school year (2020–21), what have you learned about your/your child's postsecondary education (i.e., 2-year college, 4-year college, and/or technical school), career, and financial aid (i.e., how you will pay for postsecondary education) options?
    a. *What have you learned about the preparation needed for postsecondary education? (grades, exams, types of courses)*
    b. *What types of postsecondary education options have you learned about and what have you learned? (2-year, 4-year, technical school; public vs. private)*
    c. *What have you learned about education needed for different types of careers?*
    d. *What have you learned about financial aid resources?*
    e. For participants who have not learned about postsecondary education: *Is this something you would like to receive information about?*

5. How have you learned information about pursuing a postsecondary education degree and receiving financial aid this school year?
    a. *What types of resources have you received about these topics? (web-based or print communication)*
    b. *What types of events have you attended? (community events, GEAR UP events, webinars, phone conference calls)*
    c. *Who has provided you with this information? (counselor, advisor, GEAR UP staff, others)*
    d. For participants who have not received this information: *What modes would you prefer to receive this type of information?*

6. How have you learned information about exploring career options this school year?
    a. *What types of resources have you received about exploring potential careers (web-based or print communication)?*
    b. *What types of events have you attended to learn about this information? (community events, GEAR UP events, webinars, phone conference calls)*
    c. *Who has provided you with this information? (counselor, advisor, GEAR UP staff, others)*
    d. For participants who have not received this information: *Is this something you would like to receive information about?*

Primary Cohort Parents

Parent Engagement (~15 mins)

7. **[Ask only of those who indicated they participated in events or received web-based or print communication in questions 4 and 5]** For those of you who mentioned participating in events or receiving resources to learn about postsecondary education, careers, or financial aid information this school year, what was your impression of these events and/or resources?
    a. *What information was provided that was new to you? What types of information did you already know?*
    b. *Did the information learned from the event and/or resource cause you to think differently about your child's future plans? How so?*
    c. *Were there opportunities to follow-up or ask questions? For those of you who attended events, did you feel comfortable asking questions at the event? Did you get the sense that other parents felt comfortable asking questions? Why or why not?*
    d. *For the events conducted virtually—via webinar, over the phone, surveys, etc.—how effective were they in conveying information? In person?*
    e. *Did any of the events include time to hear from former students from the district or students who are currently enrolled in college? If so, did you find these speakers helpful?*
    f. *What could be improved about future parent events and/or resources?*

8. For those of you who have not participated in a parent event about postsecondary education, career, or financial aid information this school year, what were the main reasons for not participating?
    a. *What would make it easier for you to attend future events?*

9. A goal of GEAR UP is to engage parents in discussions about postsecondary education and career planning for their children. In what ways have your child's school tried to engage you in these types of discussions this school year?
    a. *In your opinion, what are the best ways to engage parents in your community in discussions about college and career planning for their children? (events, emails/text/social media communications, one-on-one meetings, other)*
    b. *What types of topics do you wish you had more information on?*
    c. *How can your school improve the way they engage parents in discussions about student postsecondary education/career planning?*

IF PARENT/GUARDIAN FOCUS GROUP, SKIP TO QUESTION 18

Primary Cohort and Priority Cohort Students

Postsecondary Education and Career Advising (~15 mins)

NOTE to interviewer: Van Horn & San Elizario have college and career readiness advisors (nonprofit) from CFES Brilliant Pathways, Mathis & Sinton have advisors from College Advising Corps, Sheldon & Cleveland have advisors from Advise Texas. Reference list of advisor names if students do not recognize organization name.

10. The next questions are about interactions with your college and career readiness advisor, from (*<mention advisor group>)*. Have you interacted with your advisor this year, in person or virtually (text, video/Zoom, social media [Instagram, Twitter, etc.], Google classroom/Canvas)?
    a. *In what ways have you interacted (e.g., one-on-one, groups, on the phone, virtual)?*
    b. *How was the relationship with your advisor established? Did he or she reach out to you?*
    c. *How is the relationship with your advisor different than your relationship with your high school counselor?*

11. For those of you that had an in-person or virtual one-on-one college and career advising session with your advisor this school year (2020–21), what postsecondary education and career topics did you discuss?
    a. *What did you learn in your advising session that you found the most helpful? The least?*
    b. *What did you tell your parents/family about your advising session?*
    c. *What topics do you still want more information on?*
    d. *In what ways would you have changed your one-on-one advising session?*
    e. *How often have you met to discuss college- and career-related topics with your advisor?*
        i. *Is this schedule consistent? How do you work with the advisor to determine best times?*
        ii. *How long are your meetings usually?*

12. For those of you that have not had a one-on-one college and career advising session with your advisor this school year, is that something you would be interested in?
    a. *Were you aware of these types of advising sessions?*
    b. *Is there any reason why you have not participated in these advising sessions?*

13. Overall, in what ways has your advisor supported you in your postsecondary education and career planning?
    a. *How do you think you could be better supported by your advisor?*

14. Have you used any web-based tools—like websites with resources, Google Classroom, etc.—to receive information about postsecondary education and career from your advisor?
    a. *If yes: Describe your experience using these tools. How did you like these tools/experience?*

GEAR UP Activities (~7 mins)
15. If you attended a virtual or in-person college visit this school year, please describe your experience.
    a. *Was the college visit conducted in person or virtually? How effective was the in-person/virtual format of the college visit?*
    b. *What did you learn from the college visit?*
    c. *Can you imagine yourself attending this campus—why or why not?*
    d. *How can your school improve college visits for students?*

16. If you participated in a college and/or career fair this year, please describe your experience.
    a. *Was the fair conducted in person or virtually? How effective was this format for the event?*
    b. *What did you learn from the college and/or career fair? Is there anything you wish you had learned but did not learn?*
    c. *What would improve this activity?*

17. If you participated in any work-based learning activities (e.g., job site visit, job shadowing, career day, presentations about different career options, online/virtual discussions with professionals in a field of your interest) this school year, please describe your experience.
    a. *Was this an in-person or virtual experience? How effective was the format?*
    b. *What did you learn?*
    c. *What would improve this activity?*

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE FOR 10th, 11th AND 12th GRADE STUDENTS ONLY. IF NOT APPLICABLE, SKIP TO QUESTION 18.

18. This year, in what ways, if any, have you prepared for postsecondary education entrance exams—PSAT/SAT, ACT Aspire/ACT, TSIA? (online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books? Prep in your math and/or English/language arts classes?)
    a. *Have you taken any of these exams this year? Which ones? How prepared did you feel to take the exams?*
    b. *What types of information, if any, has your advisor, school counselor, and/or teachers provided you about these exams? (test prep, discussion about scores, strategies for improvement) How did this information compare to similar information you received in previous years? Was it different? Was it more helpful?*
    c. *If you have taken any of these exams, how do you think your school could have helped you better prepare for these exams?*
    d. If any students suggest that they have not prepared for exams: *Were you offered any opportunities to prepare for exams? What were the reasons you did not participate in these test prep opportunities? Would you be interested in participating in test preparation activities in the future?*

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE FOR 11th and 12th GRADE STUDENTS ONLY. IF NOT APPLICABLE, SKIP TO QUESTION 17

19. In what ways has your CCR advisor (CAC, CFES, Advise TX) worked with you this year to support planning for your future?
    a. *How has your advisor helped you plan for postsecondary education and financial aid applications? (FAFSA/TASFA submission, scholarship or grant applications, finalizing your postsecondary education list and/or helping with postsecondary education applications, helping with personal essays)*
    b. *How have they helped you plan for and explore career options?*

All Respondents

Conclusion (~5 mins)

20. Do you have any additional comments about postsecondary education and career awareness/preparation activities and services provided by your school/your child's school or college and career readiness advisor this year?

Thank you for your time!

C.3. Survey Instruments

C.3.1. Student Survey

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation

Student Survey (Grades 9–12), 2021

Your school is a recipient of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant. The program is run by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). TEA hired a company named ICF to study how the GEAR UP grant program is working.

This survey asks you questions about your current school year experiences (2020–21) and any plan you have after graduating from high school. Your plans could include attending college (two-year or four-year college, attaining a career certification [for example: nursing, welding, computer programming certificate), starting your career, or enlisting in the military. It takes about 10 minutes to complete. Your parent or guardian has been informed that you will be asked to complete this survey and your school has not received an objection to your participation from your parent or guardian. Filling out this survey is voluntary—you do not have to do it if you do not want to. You can skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. There are no consequences if you do not take the survey or finish the survey. Your answers to the survey questions will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. We will only summarize answers to questions across groups of students. Your individual answers will not be shared. Your name will not be on the survey and your individual answers will not be shared with anyone at your school or your parents/guardians. Completing the survey presents very little risk to you. Completing the survey will help to improve college and career programs at your school and other schools in Texas.

If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Samantha Spinney at samantha.spinney@icf.com or (703) 272-6681. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

By selecting "I agree to take this survey," you are indicating that you agree to the terms as described and agree to take the survey.

- ○ I agree to take this survey.

- ○ I do not agree to take this survey *(Skip to end of survey).*

Section I: Background

1. **What was your grade level this school year (2020–21)?**
    a. Grade 9
    b. Grade 10
    c. Grade 11
    d. Grade 12

2. **Please select the school you attend this school year (2020–21).**
    a. San Elizario High School
    b. Mathis High School
    c. C.E. King High School
    d. Sinton High School
    e. Cleveland High School
    f. Van Horn School
    g. None of the above *(Skip to end of survey)*

Section II: College and Career
The following set of questions ask about your planning for college and career. Many careers require some type of education after high school, like nursing, welding, accounting, etc. College refers to *any education after high school* (certificate program, two-year college, four-year college). Think about that type of education when answering the questions in this section.

3. **Please rate your level of agreement on the following statements about college (i.e., 2-year college, 4-year college, and/or technical school), career, and financial aid.**

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*I don't know/ Not Applicable*
I would like to continue my education after high school (at a 2-year college, 4-year college, or technical school).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of what grades I need to earn in high school so that I can enroll in college after high school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know what subject area I would like to study in college after high school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I am aware of the opportunities that a college degree can provide for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the education path necessary for the career I plan to pursue.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know where to find Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) test preparation resources.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the scholarship opportunities available to help pay for college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the Pell Grant.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the FAFSA.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the TASFA.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of federal student loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, PLUS loans).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. **Have you met one-on-one (in person or virtually/online/on the phone) with a school counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff about planning for college and/or career this school year (2020–21)?**

      a. Yes
      b. No

5. **[If respondent selected 'b' in Q4] Please select the most accurate explanation why you have not participated in a one-on-one meeting with your counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff member.**
      a. I did not know meetings were being offered.
      b. I was not interested because my grades are not good enough to get into college.
      c. I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.
      d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
      e. Other: _____

6. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q4] Was your one-on-one meeting(s) with a school counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff member conducted virtually (online/on the phone) or in-person?**
      a. Virtually (online/on the phone)
      b. In-person
      c. Both

7. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q4] Please select the topics you have discussed during your one-on-one counseling/advising session(s) this school year (2020–21). *(Select all that apply.)***
      a. My grades
      b. Course selection/scheduling
      c. Personal Graduation Plan
      d. PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT
      e. Dual credit opportunities
      f. Career and technical education (CTE) programs of study
      g. Changing/dropping an endorsement
      h. College plans or interests
      i. College applications
      j. Career plans or interests
      k. Enlisting in the military
      l. Job/internship/shadowing applications
      m. Financial aid for college
      n. Other (please explain): _____

8. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q4] Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about your one-on-one counseling/advising session(s) this school year (2020–21).**

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*I don't know/ Not Applicable*

The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to select the best classes to take to achieve my goals for my education and career.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information on what grades and testing scores are needed to achieve my goals for my education and career.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information that was specific to my individual needs/interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I spoke with my family about some of the topics that were covered in my counseling/advising session(s).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. **[If respondent selected a in Q4] Overall, how satisfied have you been with your individual counseling/advising session(s) this school year (2020–21)?**
   a. Strongly Dissatisfied
   b. Dissatisfied
   c. Satisfied
   d. Strongly Satisfied
   e. I don't know/Not applicable

10. **Have you participated in an in-person or virtual (online) college visit(s) this school year (2020–21)?**
    a. Yes
    b. No

11. **[If respondent selected 'b' in Q10] Please select the most accurate explanation why you have not participated in an in-person or virtual (online) college visit this year.**
    a. I did not know college visits were being offered.
    b. I was not interested in any college visits.
    c. I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.

d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
e. Other: _____

12. **[If respondent selected a in Q10] Was your participation in a college visit this school year (2020–21) conducted virtually (online) or on campus?**
   a. Virtually (online)
   b. In-person

13. **[If respondent selected a in Q10] Please select each of the activities you have participated in during your virtual or on campus college visit(s) this school year (2020–21).** *(Select all that apply.)*
   a. Campus tour (in-person)
   b. Campus tour (virtual)
   c. College class observation (in-person)
   d. College class observation (virtual)
   e. Listened to a speaker (e.g., admissions officer, professor, student) (in-person)
   f. Listened to a speaker (e.g., admissions officer, professor, student) (virtual)
   g. Other: _____

14. **[If respondent selected a in Q10] Please select the types of information you have learned about on your college visit(s) this school year (2020–21).** *(Select all that apply.)*
   a. Layout/environment of the campus
   b. Various academic programs or areas of study
   c. Rigor of college classes
   d. Student academic services
   e. Campus diversity
   f. Firsthand experiences from college students
   g. Student clubs/organizations
   h. Financial aid/resources
   i. Other: _____

15. **[If respondent selected a in Q10] Please rate your level of satisfaction with the college visit(s) that you have participated in this school year (2020–21).**
   a. Strongly Dissatisfied
   b. Dissatisfied
   c. Satisfied
   d. Strongly Satisfied
   e. I don't know/Not applicable

16. **Have you participated in one or more virtual or in-person (on site) work-based learning activities (e.g., job site visit, job shadowing, career day/fair, presentations about different career options, online discussions with professionals in a field of your interest) this school year (2020–21)?**
   a. Yes
   b. No

17. **[If respondent selected 'b' in Q16] Please select the most accurate explanation why you have not participated in a work-based learning activity this year.**
   a. I did not know work-based learning activities were being offered.
   b. I was not interested in any work-based learning activities.

   c. I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.
   d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
   e. Other: _____

18. **[If respondent selected a in Q16] Was your participation in a work-based learning activity during the 2020–21 school year conducted virtually (online) or in person?**
   a. Virtually (online)
   b. In-person
   c. Both

19. **If respondent selected a in Q16] Please select the types of information you have learned about during the work-based learning activity/activities this school year (2020–21). *(Select all that apply.)***
   a. Various career options
   b. What it is like to work a certain job
   c. Companies in my region
   d. Education required for certain careers
   e. Technical skills required for certain careers
   f. Salaries of certain careers
   g. Other:_____

20. **If respondent selected a in Q16] Please rate your level of satisfaction with the work-based learning activity/activities that you have participated in this school year (2020–21).**
   a. Strongly Dissatisfied
   b. Dissatisfied
   c. Satisfied
   d. Strongly Satisfied
   e. I don't know/Not applicable

21. **Have you participated in one or more virtual or in-person (on site) college and/or career fairs this school year (2020–21)?**
   c. Yes
   d. No

22. **[If respondent selected 'b' in Q21] Please select the most accurate explanation why you have not participated in a college and/or career fair this year.**
   a. I did not know college and/or career fairs were being offered.
   b. I was not interested in college and/or career fairs.
   c. I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.
   d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
   e. Other: _____

23. **[If respondent selected a in Q21] Was your participation in a college and/or career fair during the 2020–21 school year conducted virtually (online) or in person?**
   a. Virtually (online)
   b. In-person
   c. Both

24. **If respondent selected a in Q21] Please select the types of information you have learned about during the college and/or career fairs this school year (2020–21).** *(Select all that apply.)*
    a. Information about one or more colleges
    b. Various academic programs or areas of study at one or more colleges
    c. Rigor of college classes
    d. Student academic services
    e. Campus diversity
    f. Firsthand experiences from college students
    g. Student clubs/organizations
    h. Financial aid/resources
    i. Various career options
    j. What it is like to work a certain job
    k. Companies in my region
    l. Education required for certain careers
    m. Technical skills required for certain careers
    n. Salaries of certain careers
    o. Other:_____

25. **If respondent selected a in Q21] Please rate your level of satisfaction with the college and/or career fairs that you have participated in this school year (2020–21).**
    a. Strongly Dissatisfied
    b. Dissatisfied
    c. Satisfied
    d. Strongly Satisfied
    e. I don't know/Not applicable

Grade 9 ONLY
(Only students who selected Grade 9 in Q1 will see questions in this section.)

26. **[If respondents selected a in Q1] Are you enrolled in Algebra I this school year (2020–21)?**
    a. Yes
    b. No

27. **[If respondent selected a in Q26] Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about Algebra I this school year (2020–21).**

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*I don't know/Not Applicable*
I felt prepared to take Algebra I.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Algebra I class is challenging.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am getting enough support to succeed in Algebra I.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

28. **[If respondents selected Grade 9 in Q1] Have you participated in tutoring for any of your classes this school year (2020–21)?**
    a. Yes
    b. No

29. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q28] Was the tutoring this school year (2020–21) conducted virtually (online) or in person?**
    a. Virtually (online)
    b. In-person
    c. Both

30. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q28] What type(s) of tutoring have you participated in this school year (2020–21)?** *(Select all that apply.)*

		Type of Tutoring				
	In-class	After school	One-on-one with a teacher	With a high school or college student	Virtual	Other:_ _____
Mathematics course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Studies course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Science course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English Language Arts course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

31. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q28] Has the tutoring you received this year helped you succeed in your classes?**
    a. Yes
    b. No

32. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q28] Please rate your level of satisfaction with the tutoring that you participated in this school year (2020–21).**
    a. Strongly Dissatisfied
    b. Dissatisfied
    c. Satisfied
    d. Strongly Satisfied
    e. I don't know/Not applicable

Grades 10–12 ONLY
(Only students who selected this as the grade they are currently in will see questions in this section.)

33. **[If respondent selected b–d in Q1] Have you completed any type of PSAT/ACT Aspire/TSIA test prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep**

books, prep in your math and/or English/language arts classes) this school year (2020–21)?
   a. Yes
   b. No

34. **[If respondent selected b–d in Q1] Have you completed any type of SAT/ACT/TSIA test prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books, prep in your math and/or English/language arts classes) this school year (2020–21)?**
   a. Yes
   b. No

35. **[If respondent selected a in Q33 or Q34] Do you believe the test prep you have completed this school year (2020–21) has prepared you/will prepare for the test?**
   a. Yes
   b. No

Grades 9–12: Final question

36. **What suggestions do you have for improving college and career activities/services at your school?**

[ ]

Thank you for your time!

C.3.2. Parent Survey

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
Parent Survey (Grades 9–12), 2021

Your child's school is a recipient of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant. The program is run by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). TEA hired a company named ICF to study how the GEAR UP grant program is working.

This survey includes questions about your interactions with your child's school during the current school year (2020–21) regarding college and career information as well as your perspectives on your child's plans for after high school. These plans could include attending college (two-year or four-year college, attaining a career certification [for example: nursing, welding, computer programming certificate), starting a career, or enlisting in the military. It takes about 5–10 minutes to complete. Filling out this survey is voluntary—you do not have to do it if you do not want to. You can skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. There are no consequences if you do not take the survey or finish the survey. Your answers to the survey questions will be kept private, to the extent permitted by law. Your name will not be collected with the survey. We will summarize answers to short-answer or multiple-choice questions across respondents in study reports. Your individual answers to open-ended questions could be shared anonymously in study reports. We will not share individual survey responses with your child's school. Completing the survey presents very little risk to you. Completing the survey will help to improve college and career programs at your school and other schools in Texas.

If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Samantha Spinney at samantha.spinney@icf.com or (703) 272-6681. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

By selecting "I agree to take this survey," you **are indicating that you agree to the terms as described** and agree to take the survey.

- o   I agree to take this survey.
- o   I do not agree to take this survey (skip to end)

Section I: Background

1. **How many children do you have attending Grades 9–12 in this school district?**
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. More than 2

[If respondent selected b–c in Q1, display following message] *Choose one of your children to answer this survey about (if you have a Grade 9 student, please complete the survey for that student). Then, if you want to, complete the survey again for another one of your children.*

2. **What is your child's grade level this school year (2020–21)?**
   e. Grade 9
   f. Grade 10
   g. Grade 11
   h. Grade 12

3. **Please select the school your child attends this school year (2020–21).**
   a. San Elizario High School
   b. Mathis High School
   c. C.E. King High School
   d. Sinton High School
   e. Cleveland High School
   f. Van Horn School
   g. None of the above *(Skip to end of survey)*

Section II: College and Career
The following set of questions ask about your child's planning for college and career. Many careers require some type of education after high school, like nursing, welding, accounting, etc. In this survey "college" refers to *any education after high school* (certificate program, two-year college, four-year college). Think about that type of education when answering the questions in this section.

4. **Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about college and financial aid options for your child.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't know/Not applicable
My child will receive/is receiving a high school education that will adequately prepare him/her for college and career.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of what grades my child will need to earn in high school so that he/she could enroll in college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I am aware of the opportunities to earn dual credit available to my child in our school district.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the opportunities that a college degree can provide for my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the education path necessary for the career my child plans to pursue.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I will be able to guide my child through the college application process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am familiar with examinations needed to get into college (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSI Assessment).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know where to find SAT or PSAT test preparation resources for my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know where to find ACT or ACT Aspire test preparation resources for my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know where to find TSI Assessment test preparation resources for my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of scholarship opportunities available to help pay for college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the FAFSA.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the TASFA.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the Pell Grant.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of federal student loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, PLUS loans).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. **Have you met one-on-one (in person or virtually/online/on the phone) with your child's counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP coordinator about your child's college and/or career options or plans this school year (2020–21)?**
   c. Yes
   d. No

6. **[If respondent selected 'b' in Q5] Please select the most accurate explanation why you have not participated in a one-on-one meeting with your child's counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff member.**
   a. I did not know meetings were being offered.
   b. I was not interested because my child is in good academic standing.
   c. I was busy with family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.
   d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
   e. Other: _____

7. **[Only display question if respondent selected option 'a' in question 5] Was your one-on-one meeting with a school counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff member conducted virtually (online/on the phone) or in-person?**
   d. Virtually (online/on the phone)
   e. In-person
   f. Both

8. **[For parents who selected option 'a' in Q5] Please select the topics you have discussed during the one-on-one counseling/advising session(s) that you have received this school year (2020–21).** *(Select all that apply.)*
   a. Your child's grades
   b. Course selection/scheduling for your child
   c. Your child's Personal Graduation Plan
   d. PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT
   e. Dual credit opportunities
   f. Career and technical education (CTE) programs of study
   g. Changing/dropping an endorsement
   h. Your child's college plans or interests
   i. College applications
   j. Enlisting in the military
   k. Your child's career plans or interests
   l. Job/internship/shadowing applications
   m. Financial aid for college, including FAFSA, TAFSA, Pell Grant, etc.
   n. Other (please explain): _____

9. **[If respondent selected a in Q5] Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about the one-on-one counseling/advising session(s) that you have received this school year (2020–21).**

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*I don't know/Not Applicable*
The counseling/advising session…					

…helped me and my child think about his/her college/career plans.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…helped me and my child understand the best classes my child should take to achieve his/her college/career goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…provided my child with information about his/her grades/test scores to achieve his/her college/career goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…provided me with information about how our family may pay for college.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…provided me and my child with information that was specific to our family's situation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. **[If respondent selected a in Q5] Overall, how satisfied have you been with the individual counseling/advising session(s) that you have received this school year (2020–21)?**
    a. Strongly dissatisfied
    b. Dissatisfied
    c. Satisfied
    d. Strongly Satisfied
    e. I don't know/Not applicable

11. **Have you participated in a parent/family event at your child's school this school year (2020–21) that provided college or career information for your child?**
    c. Yes
    d. No

12. **[Only display question if respondent selected option 'a' in question 11] Was the parent/family event you participated in offered virtually (online) or in-person?**
    a. Virtually (online)
    b. In-person
    c. Both

13. **[If respondent selected option 'a' in Q11] Please select the types of information you have learned about at the parent/family event(s) that you attended this school year (2020–21).** *(Select all that apply.)*
    j. Availability of college and career advising

     k. Different types of college options (e.g., 2-year, 4-year and technical school options; public vs. private colleges)
     l. Options for paying for college (e.g., Pell Grant, scholarships, federal loans)
     m. Academic requirements for college (e.g., grades, test scores, courses)
     n. In-demand careers in your region
     o. Training and educational requirements for certain careers
     p. Options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers
     q. Other: _____

14. [If respondent selected a in Q11] Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about the parent/family event(s) that you have participated in this school year (2020–21).

	Strongly Disagree	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*I don't know/Not applicable*
I felt comfortable asking questions at the parent/family event.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The staff who led the parent/family event provided information that was helpful for our family.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I plan to attend future parent/family events about college and/or career options at my child's school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

15. [If respondent selected option 'a' in Q11] Please rate your level of satisfaction with the parent/family event(s) that you have participated in this school year (2020–21).
     f. Strongly Dissatisfied
     g. Dissatisfied
     h. Satisfied
     i. Strongly Satisfied
     j. I don't know/Not applicable

16. [If respondent selected option 'b' in Q11] Please select the most accurate reason why you have not participated in a parent/family event this school year (2020–21).
     a. I did not know about any parent/family event(s).
     b. I was not interested in the parent/family event(s) that were offered to me.
     c. I was busy with family/work.
     d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
     e. Other:_____

17. What suggestions do you have for improving college and career activities/services at your child's school?

```



```

Thank you for your time!

C.3.3. School Personnel Survey

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
School Personnel Survey (HS only), 2021

Your school is a recipient of the Texas Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP): Beyond Grad grant, which aims to improve college and career counseling in middle school and high school. To better understand how the program is working, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has contracted with ICF to survey your school's personnel. This survey asks you questions about professional development as well as postsecondary education and career advising at your school during the current school year (2020–21). It takes about 10–15 minutes to complete. Your answers to the questions will be used to help improve the GEAR UP program at your school and across Texas.

Filling out this survey is voluntary. You can skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. There are no consequences if you do not take the survey or finish the survey. Your answers to these questions will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Your name will not be collected with the survey. We will summarize answers to short-answer or multiple-choice questions across respondents in study reports. Your individual answers to open-ended questions could be shared anonymously in study reports. We will not share individual survey responses with your school/district. Completing the survey presents very little risk to you but may help to improve postsecondary education and career programming at your school and other schools in Texas.

If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Samantha Spinney at samantha.spinney@icf.com or (703) 272-6681. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

By selecting "I agree to take this survey," you are indicating that you agree to the terms as described and agree to take the survey.

- ○ I agree to take this survey.

- ○ I do not agree to take this survey *(Skip to end of survey).*

Background

1. **What is your primary position at this school this year (2020–21)? Please select the option that *best* categorizes your position, even if the option is not your *exact* position.**
   a. Administrator (e.g., principal, assistant principal)
   b. Counselor/Student Services Personnel (e.g., head of student services office, advisor, career center staff)
   c. Teacher/Instructional Support Personnel (e.g., English Language Arts teacher, literacy specialist, instructional assistant)
   d. Other: _____

2. **How many years have you worked in this position <u>at this school</u>?**

   [Numeric value]

3. **How many years have you worked in this position <u>in total</u>?**

   [Numeric value]

4. **Which Texas GEAR UP Beyond Grad school do you work at this school year (2020–21)? *(Select all that apply.)***
   a. C.E. King High School
   b. Cleveland High School
   c. Mathis High School
   d. San Elizario High School
   e. Sinton High School
   f. Van Horn School
   g. None of the above *(Skip to end)*

5. **What grades do <u>you</u> serve in your position at your school this year (2020–21)? *(Select all that apply.)***
   a. Kindergarten–8th grade (If only response selected, skip to the end of the survey.)
   b. 9th grade
   c. 10th grade
   d. 11th grade
   e. 12th grade

6. If respondent is a teacher [selected c in Q1]: **What subjects do you teach this school year (2020–21)? *(Select all that apply.)***
   a. English Language Arts
   b. Mathematics
   c. Social studies
   d. Science
   e. Arts (e.g., music, drama, fine art)
   f. Physical education
   g. Business/marketing
   h. English as a Second Language (ESL)
   i. AVID
   j. Other (please describe):

   _____

Professional Development and Vertical Teaming

The next set of questions ask about your experiences with professional development and other training experiences. When asking about professional development, specifically, we are most interested in your experiences with professional development programming facilitated by TNTP, a professional development organization that is working with your school district. We refer to this type of professional development as "TNTP-driven professional development."

7. Ask only of core content teachers [Selected 6 a-d]: **So far in the 2020–21 school year, have you participated in one or more TNTP-driven professional development sessions intended to increase the academic rigor of your curriculum?**
    a. *Yes*
    b. *No*
    c. *I'm not sure*

8. [If respondent selected 'b' in Q7] **Please select the most accurate explanation why you have not participated in TNTP-driven professional development intended to increase the academic rigor of your curriculum.**
    a. I did not know such professional development was being offered.
    b. I was not interested in the professional development.
    c. I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.
    d. I did not participate because of COVID-19.
    e. Other: _____

9. For respondents who selected a in Q7: **Please select the mode, either in person or virtual (online), in which you have received TNTP-driven professional development intended to increase the academic rigor of your curriculum?**
    a. Only in person
    b. Only online/virtual
    c. Both in person and online/virtual

10. Ask to those who selected a in Q7: **Please select the response option for each of the following statements that best describes how COVID-19 has impacted your ability to receive TNTP-driven professional development in the 2020–21 school year.**

COVID 19…

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't know/ Not applicable
a. *…has made it more difficult for me to learn about upcoming professional development activities.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. *…has prevented me from fully engaging in the professional development activities in which I participated.*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ICF

c. …has encouraged more professional development activities that focused on virtual education and learning. ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

11. If Strongly/Agree to 10b: **Please explain your answer in the space below.**

> (blank box)

12. Ask only to those who selected *a* in question 7: **Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about TNTP-driven professional development.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't know/ Not applicable
a. The professional development that I have participated in this year has provided me with strategies for increasing the rigor in my courses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. The strategies I have acquired in professional development this year have been easy to implement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I have been able to successfully implement the strategies I've learned in professional development in a virtual setting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Ask only core content teachers [Selected 6 a-d]: **Please indicate the number of teacher coaching and/or mentoring sessions that you have received so far this school year (2020–21).**
- a. None
- b. 1–2
- c. 3–4
- d. 5 or more

14. Ask only of those who participated in question 13 [selected options b-d]: **Please select the topics you have discussed or learned about in your teacher coaching/mentoring sessions this school year (2020–21). (Select all that apply)**
- a. Project-based learning
- b. Advanced instructional strategies
- c. Student engagement
- d. Student readiness for postsecondary education
- e. Academic supports for students
- f. Virtual- or distance-based learning
- g. Other: _____

15. Ask only of those who participated in question 13 [selected options b-d]: **Please rate your level of agreement regarding the following statement.**

The teacher mentoring/coaching that I have received so far this school year (2020–21) has helped me to increase academic rigor in my courses.

a. Strongly disagree
b. Disagree
c. Agree
d. Strongly agree
e. I don't know/Not applicable

16. Ask only of counselors [selected 1b]: **Have you participated in the new Texas OnCourse Academy Advisor Training this year (2020–21)?**
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I'm not sure

17. Ask only of those who participated in Q16 [selected option a]: **Please rate your level of agreement regarding the following statements about the Advisor Training.**

As a result of my participation in the Advisor Training…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't know/ Not applicable
a. I have learned new information for _postsecondary education_ advising.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I have learned new for _career_ advising.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. I feel better prepared to deliver individualized postsecondary education and career advising to _students_.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. I feel better prepared to deliver individualized postsecondary education and career advising to _parents_.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Ask only of teachers and administrators [selected 1a or 1c]: **Please select all the people with whom you have participated in vertical teaming from summer 2020 to the present.** *(Select all that apply.)*
   a. Middle school teachers
   b. High school teachers
   c. Middle school administrators
   d. High school administrators
   e. District staff
   f. Staff from postsecondary institutions
   g. None of the above
   h. I have not participated in vertical teaming since summer 2020

19. Ask only of those who selected a-f in question 18: **Rate your level of agreement regarding the following statement.**

The vertical teaming that I have participated in so far this school year (2020–21) has helped to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level for students at my school.

    a. Strongly disagree
    b. Disagree
    c. Agree
    d. Strongly agree
    e. I don't know/Does not apply

Providing Postsecondary Education and Career Information to Students

20. (For administrators, counselors, teachers [selected 1 a-c]) Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about information provided to students and/or parents on postsecondary education and career this school year (2020–21).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't know/ Not applicable
a. I regularly provide students with information about postsecondary education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I regularly provide students with information about career options.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. My school provides students with information about how to academically prepare for postsecondary education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. My school provides students with information about high school graduation requirements.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. My school provides students with information about creating a Personal Graduation Plan.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. My school provides students with information about opportunities to earn dual credit.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. My school provides students with information about the postsecondary education application process.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. My school provides students with information about paying for postsecondary education (e.g., FAFSA, loans, scholarships, grants).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

i. My school provides students with information about education requirements for certain careers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. My school provides students with information about internships, job shadowing opportunities, and/or other work-based learning opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k. My school provides students with information about postsecondary education entrance exams (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSI Assessment).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l. My school provides parents with a range of information related to postsecondary education options for their child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
m. My school provides parents with a range of information related to how to pay for postsecondary education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n. My school provides parents with a range of information related to career options for their child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. Ask only of administrators and counselors/student support services staff [selected 1 a-b] **So far during the 2020–21 school year, has your school had a dedicated <u>physical space</u> where students and parents can find information or someone to speak to regarding postsecondary education and career readiness?**
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. I'm not sure

22. For respondents who selected a in Q21: **Where is the <u>physical space</u> students and parents can find information or someone to speak to regarding postsecondary education and career readiness?** *(Select all that apply)*
   a. In an office
   b. In a classroom
   c. In the library
   d. In the Go Center
   e. Other (please describe):

   _____

23. For respondents who selected a in Q21: **When can students and parents access the <u>physical space(s)</u> that provides postsecondary education and career readiness information?** *(Select all that apply.)*

	Students	*Parents/Guardians*
a. During regular school hours	☐	☐
b. Before school	☐	☐

   c. After school   □   □

24. Ask only of administrators and counselors/student support services staff [selected 1 a-b]
So far during the 2020–21 school year, has your school offered a dedicated <u>virtual space</u> where students and parents can find information or someone to speak to regarding postsecondary education and career readiness?
  a. Yes
  b. No
  c. I'm not sure

25. For respondents who selected a in Q24: **Where is the <u>virtual space</u> students and parents can find information regarding postsecondary education and career readiness?** *(Select all that apply)*
  a. School website
  b. Social media page
  c. Blackboard or another similar virtual learning platform
  d. Virtual meeting platform (e.g., Zoom, Webex, Teams)
  e. Other (please describe):

   _____

26. For administrators, counselors, and teachers [selected 1 a-c]: **Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about the GEAR UP advisors (CFES, CAC, or Advise TX) at your school this school year (2020–21).**

The GEAR UP advisors…	*Strongly Disagree*	*Disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*I don't know/ Not applicable*
a. *…provide students at my school with grade-appropriate information regarding postsecondary education and career readiness.*	□	□	□	□	□
b. *…support students in preparing for postsecondary education.*	□	□	□	□	□
c. *…help parents/guardians prepare for their child's postsecondary education.*	□	□	□	□	□
d. *…inform students of their postsecondary education options.*	□	□	□	□	□
e. *…inform parent awareness of postsecondary education options for their child.*	□	□	□	□	□
f. *…inform student awareness and understanding of career opportunities.*	□	□	□	□	□

ICF

     g. …help our school increase the number of opportunities students of all grades have to receive postsecondary education and career advising.   □   □   □   □   □

27. For administrators, counselors, and teachers [selected 1 a-c]: **What do you like best about your Advising Partner?**

28. What are the areas of improvement that you see in working with your Advising Partner?

Thank you for your time!

C.3.4. Scaling Survey for Districts

Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Evaluation
District Survey, 2021

Your school district piloted the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness course this school year (2020–21) as part of the Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad initiative led by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). To better understand perspectives of the new course, TEA has contracted with ICF to survey personnel in your school district who are knowledgeable about implementation of the pilot course. This survey asks you questions about your district's experience piloting the course this school year. It takes about 5–10 minutes to complete. Your answers to the questions will be used to help improve the college and career curricula for middle school students across Texas.

Filling out this survey is voluntary. You can skip questions or stop taking the survey at any time. There are no consequences if you do not take the survey or finish the survey. Your answers to these questions will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. Your name will not be collected with the survey. We will summarize answers to short-answer or multiple-choice questions across respondents in study reports. Your individual answers to open-ended questions could be shared anonymously in study reports. We will not share individual survey responses with your school district. Completing the survey presents very little risk to you but may help to improve college and career programming in Texas.

If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Samantha Spinney at samantha.spinney@icf.com or (703) 272-6681. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you can contact Carole Harris at carole.harris@icf.com or (404) 321-3211.

By selecting "I agree to take this survey," you are indicating that you agree to the terms as described and agree to take the survey.

○ I agree to take this survey.

○ I do not agree to take this survey *(Skip to end of survey).*

Background

29. **What is your primary position at your school/district during the 2020–21 school year?**
    a. Administrator
    b. Counselor/Student Support Services Staff
    c. Teacher
    d. Curriculum & Instruction Coordinator
    e. Other: _____

Perceived Effectiveness of Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Course

30. **Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about the Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness course being piloted at your district in this school year (2020–21).**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	I don't know
a. Students were engaged in the course.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. The course provided students with relevant information on how to select an endorsement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. The course provided grade-appropriate information.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. The level of difficulty of the materials in the course was grade-appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. The course provided opportunities for students to learn about a variety of career options related to their interests.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. The course effectively informed students on how to achieve career goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. The course provided students with information about different types of postsecondary education options, including two-year, four-year, and technical schools.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. The course helped students understand how to pay for postsecondary education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

31. Please describe any challenges that your school experienced in offering the course this school year (2020–21).

32. Overall, how satisfied were you with the course this school year (2020–21)?

	Strongly dissatisfied	*Dissatisfied*	*Satisfied*	*Strongly satisfied*	*I don't know/Not applicable*
a. *Level of satisfaction with training offered*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. *Level of satisfaction with instructor resources*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. *Level of satisfaction with student resources*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

33. Do you plan on continuing using the course during next school year (2021–22)?

○ Yes *(complete question 6, skip question 7)*

○ No *(skip question 6, complete question 7)*

34. [If respondent selected Yes in Q5] **What are your plans for using the course next year?**

35. [If respondent selected No in Q5] **Why are you not continuing to use the Texas OnCourse college and career exploration course next year?**

36. What recommendations do you have for improving the Texas OnCourse college and career exploration course?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX D: Student Survey Analyses Technical Detail

Table D.1. Student Grade by District, Year 3 (2020–21)

Grade	District 1 (*n*=438)	District 2 (*n*=77)	District 3 (*n*=109)	District 4 (*n*=311)	District 5 (*n*=65)	District 6 (*n*=262)	Overall (*n*=1,262)
Grade 9	23.3%	44.2%	19.3%	30.5%	32.3%	31.7%	28.2%
Grade 10	26.9%	20.8%	10.1%	43.4%	20.0%	27.5%	28.9%
Grade 11	23.7%	26.0%	15.6%	7.4%	15.4%	17.2%	17.4%
Grade 12	26.0%	9.1%	55.0%	18.6%	32.3%	23.7%	25.5%
All Grades	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table D.2. Student Agreement Regarding Postsecondary Education and Awareness Levels by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*=411)	(*n*=76)	(*n*=106)	(*n*=274)	(*n*=59)	(*n*=242)	(*n*=1,168)
I would like to continue my education after high school (at a 2-year college, 4-year college, or technical school).	Strongly agree	47.4%	65.8%	69.8%	54.4%	45.8%	50.0%	52.7%
	Agree	46.2%	28.9%	23.6%	37.6%	45.8%	40.9%	39.9%
	Disagree	3.6%	2.6%	3.8%	4.7%	3.4%	6.2%	4.4%
	Strongly disagree	2.7%	2.6%	2.8%	3.3%	5.1%	2.9%	3.0%
	Mean*	3.38	3.58	3.60	3.43	3.32	3.38	3.42
		(*n*=426)	(*n*=76)	(*n*=109)	(*n*=291)	(*n*=64)	(*n*=249)	(*n*=1,215)
I am aware of what grades I need to earn in high school so that I could enroll in postsecondary education after high school.	Strongly agree	39.9%	53.9%	51.4%	43.0%	50.0%	43.4%	43.8%
	Agree	51.9%	38.2%	44.0%	51.2%	40.6%	52.6%	49.7%
	Disagree	5.4%	5.3%	3.7%	4.1%	4.7%	2.4%	4.3%
	Strongly disagree	2.8%	2.6%	0.9%	1.7%	4.7%	1.6%	2.2%
	Mean	3.29	3.43	3.46	3.35	3.36	3.38	3.35
		(*n*=391)	(*n*=69)	(*n*=102)	(*n*=268)	(*n*=54)	(*n*=222)	(*n*=1,106)
I know what subject area I would like to study in my postsecondary education after high school.	Strongly agree	32.2%	34.8%	49.0%	32.5%	38.9%	34.2%	34.7%
	Agree	45.8%	37.7%	42.2%	46.6%	42.6%	46.8%	45.2%
	Disagree	18.7%	18.8%	4.9%	16.8%	11.1%	14.9%	15.8%
	Strongly disagree	3.3%	8.7%	3.9%	4.1%	7.4%	4.1%	4.2%
	Mean*	3.07	2.99	3.36	3.07	3.13	3.11	3.10
		(*n*=424)	(*n*=73)	(*n*=108)	(*n*=294)	(*n*=61)	(*n*=250)	(*n*=1,210)
I am aware of the opportunities that a postsecondary education degree can provide for me.	Strongly agree	40.6%	45.2%	53.7%	40.8%	52.5%	40.8%	42.7%
	Agree	51.4%	46.6%	43.5%	52.7%	41.0%	51.2%	50.2%
	Disagree	5.4%	5.5%	2.8%	5.4%	1.6%	5.6%	5.0%
	Strongly disagree	2.6%	2.7%	0.0%	1.0%	4.9%	2.4%	2.1%
	Mean	3.30	3.34	3.51	3.33	3.41	3.30	3.34
		(*n*=413)	(*n*=71)	(*n*=103)	(*n*=279)	(*n*=59)	(*n*=237)	(*n*=1,162)
I am aware of the education path	Strongly agree	31.5%	25.4%	47.6%	33.7%	39.0%	29.1%	33.0%
	Agree	50.6%	52.1%	45.6%	49.5%	52.5%	58.6%	51.7%

Item	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
necessary for the career I plan to pursue.	Disagree	14.3%	16.9%	4.9%	14.3%	3.4%	8.9%	12.0%
	Strongly disagree	3.6%	5.6%	1.9%	2.5%	5.1%	3.4%	3.4%
	Mean**	3.10	2.97	3.39	3.14	3.25	3.14	3.14
		(*n*=389)	(*n*=68)	(*n*=103)	(*n*=256)	(*n*=59)	(*n*=228)	(*n*=1,103)
I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources.	Strongly agree	14.9%	20.6%	24.3%	18.0%	27.1%	24.6%	19.5%
	Agree	32.6%	41.2%	53.4%	33.2%	33.9%	40.8%	37.0%
	Disagree	40.1%	32.4%	18.4%	37.1%	30.5%	28.9%	34.1%
	Strongly disagree	12.3%	5.9%	3.9%	11.7%	8.5%	5.7%	9.4%
	Mean**	2.50	2.76	2.98	2.57	2.80	2.84	2.67
		(*n*=389)	(*n*=67)	(*n*=102)	(*n*=247)	(*n*=58)	(*n*=225)	(*n*=1,088)
I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources.	Strongly agree	13.6%	17.9%	21.6%	11.3%	25.9%	21.8%	16.5%
	Agree	30.3%	31.3%	45.1%	27.1%	27.6%	36.0%	32.1%
	Disagree	42.7%	40.3%	27.5%	46.6%	36.2%	35.1%	40.1%
	Strongly disagree	13.4%	10.4%	5.9%	15.0%	10.3%	7.1%	11.4%
	Mean**	2.44	2.57	2.82	2.35	2.69	2.72	2.54
		(*n*=386)	(*n*=70)	(*n*=100)	(*n*=250)	(*n*=53)	(*n*=222)	(*n*=1,081)
I know where to find Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) test preparation resources.	Strongly agree	12.2%	20.0%	27.0%	8.8%	18.9%	16.7%	14.5%
	Agree	30.8%	47.1%	42.0%	30.4%	28.3%	32.0%	32.9%
	Disagree	45.3%	24.3%	27.0%	43.2%	39.6%	41.0%	40.6%
	Strongly disagree	11.7%	8.6%	4.0%	17.6%	13.2%	10.4%	11.9%
	Mean**	2.44	2.79	2.92	2.30	2.53	2.55	2.50
		(*n*=416)	(*n*=75)	(*n*=104)	(*n*=284)	(*n*=60)	(*n*=245)	(*n*=1,184)
I am aware of the scholarship opportunities available to help pay for postsecondary education.	Strongly agree	29.6%	38.7%	41.3%	29.9%	38.3%	31.8%	32.2%
	Agree	53.1%	44.0%	42.3%	48.6%	48.3%	51.4%	49.9%
	Disagree	13.0%	12.0%	13.5%	16.9%	6.7%	12.7%	13.5%
	Strongly disagree	4.3%	5.3%	2.9%	4.6%	6.7%	4.1%	4.4%
	Mean	3.08	3.16	3.22	3.04	3.18	3.11	3.10
		(*n*=380)	(*n*=63)	(*n*=94)	(*n*=251)	(*n*=55)	(*n*=209)	(*n*=1,052)
I am aware of the Pell Grant.	Strongly agree	8.9%	14.3%	23.4%	10.4%	14.5%	10.5%	11.5%
	Agree	25.8%	20.6%	23.4%	18.7%	30.9%	23.0%	23.3%
	Disagree	49.2%	39.7%	39.4%	47.8%	38.2%	46.9%	46.4%
	Strongly disagree	16.1%	25.4%	13.8%	23.1%	16.4%	19.6%	18.8%
	Mean**	2.28	2.24	2.56	2.16	2.44	2.24	2.27
		(*n*=396)	(*n*=65)	(*n*=103)	(*n*=260)	(*n*=55)	(*n*=224)	(*n*=1,103)
I am aware of the FAFSA.	Strongly agree	22.0%	21.5%	41.7%	18.8%	27.3%	22.8%	23.5%
	Agree	38.1%	40.0%	31.1%	35.0%	36.4%	34.8%	36.1%
	Disagree	30.3%	23.1%	17.5%	31.5%	27.3%	32.6%	30.3%
	Strongly disagree	9.6%	15.4%	9.7%	14.6%	9.1%	9.8%	11.2%
	Mean**	2.72	2.68	3.05	2.58	2.82	2.71	2.72
		(*n*=384)	(*n*=62)	(*n*=100)	(*n*=254)	(*n*=51)	(*n*=207)	(*n*=1,058)
I am aware of the TASFA.	Strongly agree	10.7%	8.1%	25.0%	12.6%	17.6%	10.1%	12.6%
	Agree	28.4%	25.8%	29.0%	24.8%	23.5%	21.7%	25.9%
	Disagree	47.4%	46.8%	33.0%	43.7%	43.1%	49.3%	45.3%
	Strongly disagree	13.5%	19.4%	13.0%	18.9%	15.7%	18.8%	16.3%
	Mean**	2.36	2.23	2.66	2.31	2.43	2.23	2.35
		(*n*=401)	(*n*=71)	(*n*=98)	(*n*=276)	(*n*=57)	(*n*=229)	(*n*=1,132)
I am aware of Federal student	Strongly agree	19.0%	21.1%	26.5%	18.1%	21.1%	21.0%	20.1%
	Agree	49.6%	49.3%	48.0%	48.6%	49.1%	43.2%	47.9%

Item	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, PLUS loans).	Disagree	23.4%	19.7%	20.4%	25.4%	22.8%	26.6%	24.0%
	Strongly disagree	8.0%	9.9%	5.1%	8.0%	7.0%	9.2%	8.0%
	Mean	2.80	2.82	2.96	2.77	2.84	2.76	2.80
		(*n*=438)	(*n*=77)	(*n*=109)	(*n*=310)	(*n*=65)	(*n*=260)	(*n*=1,259)
Composite mean score of all items	Mean**	2.86	2.93	3.13	2.87	2.97	2.92	2.91

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or the significance testing. An additional 92, 44, 153, 49, 95, 151, 169, 176, 72, 202, 154, 195, and 119 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for the 13 items in the table, respectively. PSAT – Preliminary SAT. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

*Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across districts: I would like to continue my education after high school (at a 2-year college, 4-year college, or technical school): $F(5, 1162) = 2.8$, $p<.05$; I know what subject area I would like to study in college after high school: $F(5, 1100) = 2.6$, $p<.05$.

**Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across districts: I am aware of the education path necessary for the career I plan to pursue: $F(5, 1156) = 3.5$, $p<.01$; I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources: $F(5, 1097) = 8.2$, $p<.01$; I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources: $F(5, 1082) = 7.7$, $p<.01$; I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources: $F(5, 1075) = 9.4$, $p<.01$; I am aware of the Pell Grant: $F(5, 1046) = 3.2$, $p<.01$; I am aware of the FAFSA: $F(5, 1097) = 3.8$, $p<.01$; I am aware of the TASFA: $F(5, 1052) = 3.6$, $p<.01$; Composite Score of all Items: $F(5, 1253) = 4.4$, $p<.01$.

Table D.3. Student Agreement Regarding Postsecondary Education and Awareness Levels, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=2,272)	(*n*=1,168)
I would like to continue my education after high school (at a 2-year college, 4-year college, or technical school).	Strongly agree	54.5%	52.7%
	Agree	38.9%	39.9%
	Disagree	3.5%	4.4%
	Strongly disagree	3.1%	3.0%
	Mean	3.45	3.42
		(*n*=2,319)	(*n*=1,215)
I am aware of what grades I need to earn in high school so that I could enroll in postsecondary education after high school.	Strongly agree	39.5%	43.8%
	Agree	53.3%	49.7%
	Disagree	4.9%	4.3%
	Strongly disagree	2.3%	2.2%
	Mean*	3.30	3.35
		(*n*=2,121)	(*n*=1,106)
I know what subject area I would like to study in my postsecondary education after high school.	Strongly agree	33.0%	34.7%
	Agree	51.2%	45.2%
	Disagree	12.2%	15.8%
	Strongly disagree	3.5%	4.2%
	Mean	3.14	3.10
		(*n*=2,207)	(*n*=1,210)
I am aware of the opportunities that a postsecondary education degree can provide for me.	Strongly agree	33.8%	42.7%
	Agree	53.3%	50.2%
	Disagree	9.8%	5.0%
	Strongly disagree	3.1%	2.1%
	Mean***	3.18	3.34
		(*n*=2,214)	(*n*=1,162)
I am aware of the education path necessary for the career I plan to pursue.	Strongly agree	32.9%	33.0%
	Agree	54.7%	51.7%
	Disagree	9.5%	12.0%
	Strongly disagree	2.9%	3.4%
	Mean	3.17	3.14
		(*n*=1,944)	(*n*=1,103)
I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources.	Strongly agree	16.0%	19.5%
	Agree	36.2%	37.0%
	Disagree	37.9%	34.1%
	Strongly disagree	9.9%	9.4%
	Mean*	2.58	2.67
		(*n*=1,865)	(*n*=1,088)
I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources.	Strongly agree	12.6%	16.5%
	Agree	30.6%	32.1%
	Disagree	44.7%	40.1%
	Strongly disagree	12.1%	11.4%
	Mean**	2.44	2.54
		(*n*=1,868)	(*n*=1,081)
I know where to find Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) test preparation resources.	Strongly agree	11.6%	14.5%
	Agree	29.1%	32.9%
	Disagree	47.3%	40.6%
	Strongly disagree	12.1%	11.9%
	Mean**	2.40	2.50
		(*n*=2,238)	(*n*=1,184)
	Strongly agree	26.3%	32.2%

Item	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
I am aware of the scholarship opportunities available to help pay for postsecondary education.	Agree	52.1%	49.9%
	Disagree	16.3%	13.5%
	Strongly disagree	5.4%	4.4%
	Mean***	2.99	3.10
		(*n*=1,837)	(*n*=1,052)
I am aware of the Pell Grant.	Strongly agree	8.6%	11.5%
	Agree	19.4%	23.3%
	Disagree	50.7%	46.4%
	Strongly disagree	21.3%	18.8%
	Mean***	2.15	2.27
		(*n*=1,968)	(*n*=1,103)
I am aware of the FAFSA.	Strongly agree	18.0%	23.5%
	Agree	33.5%	36.1%
	Disagree	34.7%	30.3%
	Strongly disagree	13.9%	11.2%
	Mean***	2.56	2.72
		(*n*=1,860)	(*n*=1,058)
I am aware of the TASFA.	Strongly agree	10.4%	12.6%
	Agree	24.7%	25.9%
	Disagree	47.4%	45.3%
	Strongly disagree	17.5%	16.3%
	Mean*	2.28	2.35
		(*n*=2,116)	(*n*=1,132)
I am aware of Federal student loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, PLUS loans).	Strongly agree	17.6%	20.1%
	Agree	49.2%	47.9%
	Disagree	25.0%	24.0%
	Strongly disagree	8.1%	8.0%
	Mean	2.76	2.80
		(*n*=438)	(*n*=1,259)
Composite mean score of all items	Mean	2.88	2.91

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or the significance testing. An additional 92, 44, 153, 49, 95, 151, 169, 176, 72, 202, 154, 195, and 119 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for the 13 items in the table, respectively. PSAT – Preliminary SAT. Texas Success Initiative Assessment – TSIA. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

*Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I am aware of what grades I need to earn in high school so that I could enroll in postsecondary education after high school: $F(1, 3532) = 4.78$, *p*<.05; I know where to find PSAT or SAT test preparation resources: $F(1, 3045) = 6.12$, *p*<.05; I am aware of the TASFA: $F(1, 2916) = 4.05$, *p*<.05.

**Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I know where to find ACT Aspire or ACT test preparation resources: $F(1, 2951) = 8.69$, *p*<.01; I know where to find TSIA test preparation resources: $F(1, 2947) = 9.19$, *p*<.01.

***Students' mean level of agreement with the postsecondary education items differed significantly across years: I am aware of the opportunities that a postsecondary education degree can provide for me: $F(1, 3415) = 38.35$, *p*<.001; I am aware of the scholarship opportunities available to help pay for college: $F(1, 3420) = 13.59$, *p*<.001; I am aware of the Pell Grant: $F(1, 2887) = 12.99$, *p*<.001; I am aware of the FAFSA: $F(1, 3069) = 21.15$, *p*<.001.

Table D.4. Composite Score of Student Agreement Level Regarding Postsecondary Education Items by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
	(*n*=102)	(*n*=34)	(*n*=21)	(*n*=95)	(*n*=21)	(*n*=82)	(*n*=355)
Grade 9	2.75	2.87	2.81	2.80	2.95	2.74	2.79
	(*n*=118)	(*n*=16)	(*n*=11)	(*n*=134)	(*n*=13)	(*n*=71)	(*n*=363)
Grade 10	2.73	2.86	2.81	2.82	2.91	2.95	2.82
	(*n*=104)	(*n*=20)	(*n*=17)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=10)	(*n*=45)	(*n*=219)
Grade 11	2.82	2.93	3.18	2.85	3.19	2.99	2.92
	(*n*=114)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=60)	(*n*=58)	(*n*<30)	(*n*=62)	(*n*=322)
Grade 12	3.11	3.36	3.28	3.09	2.91	3.09	3.13
	(*n*=438)	(*n*=77)	(*n*=109)	(*n*=310)	(*n*=65)	(*n*=260)	(*n*=1,259)
Overall*	2.86	2.93	3.13	2.87	2.97	2.92	2.91

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree,* 2–*Disagree,* 3–*Agree,*4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.
*Students' composite mean agreement level across all 13 postsecondary education items differed significantly across districts: $F(5, 1253) = 4.43$, $p<.01$.

Table D.5. Composite Score of Student Agreement Level Regarding Postsecondary Education Items by Grade, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Year 2	Year 3
	(*n*=404)	(*n*=0)
Grade 7	2.90	--
	(*n*=625)	(*n*=0)
Grade 8	2.88	--
	(*n*=573)	(*n*=355)
Grade 9	2.83	2.79
	(*n*=511)	(*n*=363)
Grade 10	2.84	2.82
	(*n*=593)	(*n*=219)
Grade 11	2.91	2.92
	(*n*=168)	(*n*=322)
Grade 12	3.06	3.13
	(*n*=2,874)	(*n*=1,259)
Overall	2.88	2.91

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree,* 2–*Disagree,* 3–*Agree,*4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing. Grade 7 and Grade 8 were only surveyed in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020).

Table D.6. Composite Score of Mean Student Agreement Level of All Postsecondary Education Items Among Students Who Met with a School Counselor, Advisor, or GEAR UP Staff by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Met	Did Not Meet
	(*n*=118)	(*n*=320)
District 1*	3.00	2.80
	(*n*=38)	(*n*=39)
District 2*	3.14	2.72
	(*n*=67)	(*n*=42)
District 3*	3.26	2.92
	(*n*=109)	(*n*=201)
District 4**	3.05	2.77
	(*n*=42)	(*n*=23)
District 5	3.00	2.90
	(*n*=145)	(*n*=115)
District 6	2.98	2.85
	(*n*=519)	(*n*=740)
Overall	3.05	2.81

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.
*Students' composite mean agreement level across all 13 postsecondary education items differed significantly across students who met with a school counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff: District 1: $F(1, 436) = 11.02$, $p<.01$; District 2: $F(1, 75) = 11.33$, $p<.01$; District 3: $F(1, 107) = 11.47$, $p<.01$;
**Students' composite mean agreement level across all 13 postsecondary education items differed significantly across students who met with a school counselor, advisor, or GEAR UP staff: District 4: $F(1, 308) = 18.4$, $p<.001$;

Table D.7. Met One-On-One with School Counselor, Advisor, or GEAR UP Staff by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=438)	District 2 (*n*=77)	District 3 (*n*=109)	District 4 (*n*=311)	District 5 (*n*=65)	District 6 (*n*=262)	Overall (*n*=1,262)
Yes	26.9%	49.4%	61.5%	35.0%	64.6%	55.3%	41.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.
*Student participation in one-on-one meetings with school counselors differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (5) = 98.61$, $p<.01$.

Table D.8. Met One-On-One with School Counselor, Advisor, or GEAR UP Staff, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Year 2 (*n*=2,439)	Year 3 (*n*=1,262)
Yes	40.6%	41.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

Table D.9. Format in Which Students Participated in a One-On-One Advising Session by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=117)	District 2 (*n*=38)	District 3 (*n*=65)	District 4 (*n*=108)	District 5 (*n*=42)	District 6 (*n*=144)	Overall (*n*=514)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	75.2%	52.6%	3.1%	48.1%	26.2%	44.4%	46.1%
In person	12.8%	26.3%	87.7%	38.9%	57.1%	37.5%	39.3%
Both	12.0%	21.1%	9.2%	13.0%	16.7%	18.1%	14.6%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*The format in which students participated in a one-on-one advising session differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (10) = 120.94, *p*<.01.

Table D.10. Counseling Topics Discussed During One-On-One Advising Session by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	District 1 (*n*=118)	District 2 (*n*=38)	District 3 (*n*=67)	District 4 (*n*=109)	District 5 (*n*=42)	District 6 (*n*=145)	Overall (*n*=519)
My grades	60.2%	44.7%	64.2%	51.4%	52.4%	57.2%	56.3%
Course selection/scheduling**	49.2%	39.5%	43.3%	27.5%	33.3%	52.4%	42.8%
Changing or dropping an endorsement	14.4%	2.6%	13.4%	6.4%	2.4%	9.7%	9.4%
Personal Graduation Plan*	39.8%	28.9%	49.3%	44.0%	28.6%	53.8%	44.1%
PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT**	22.9%	15.8%	34.3%	23.9%	40.5%	40.7%	30.4%
Dual credit opportunities**	26.3%	28.9%	46.3%	25.7%	66.7%	36.6%	35.1%
Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study	21.2%	13.2%	20.9%	11.9%	11.9%	19.3%	17.3%
College plans or interests**	39.8%	52.6%	64.2%	63.3%	59.5%	66.9%	58.0%
College applications**	28.8%	26.3%	55.2%	38.5%	23.8%	29.0%	33.7%
Career plans or interests**	29.7%	50.0%	52.2%	47.7%	47.6%	58.6%	47.4%
Enlisting in the military	5.9%	5.3%	1.5%	8.3%	7.1%	6.2%	6.0%
Job, internships, or shadowing applications	11.0%	7.9%	14.9%	9.2%	4.8%	12.4%	10.8%
Financial aid for college**	27.1%	28.9%	52.2%	32.1%	26.2%	24.8%	30.8%
*Other^*	5.1%	2.6%	4.5%	0.9%	2.4%	0.7%	2.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. PSAT – Preliminary SAT.

*Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across districts: Personal Graduation Plan: χ^2 (5) = 14.77, *p*<.05.

**Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across districts: Course selection/scheduling: χ^2 (5) = 19.53, *p*<.01; PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT: χ^2 (5) = 18.94, *p*<.01; Dual credit opportunities: χ^2 (5) = 31.10, *p*<.01; College plans or interests: χ^2 (5) = 23.50, *p*<.01; College applications: χ^2 (5) = 20.51, *p*<.01; Career plans or interests: χ^2 (5) = 22.95, *p*<M.01; Financial aid for college: χ^2 (5) = 18.18, *p*<.01.

^Examples of other responses included: All of the above (1), Asking about my knowledge of Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and life after high school (1), Attendance and credit hours (1), and Vaccines (1).

Table D.11. Counseling Topics Discussed During One-On-One Advising Session, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Year 2 (*n*=978)	Year 3 (*n*=519)
My grades*	50.3%	56.3%
Course selection/scheduling***	52.0%	42.8%
Changing or dropping an endorsement***	40.3%	9.4%
Personal Graduation Plan***	33.5%	44.1%
PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT**	23.6%	30.4%
Dual credit opportunities	--	35.1%
Career and technical education (CTE) programs of study	--	17.3%
College plans or interests***	29.4%	58.0%
College applications***	12.8%	33.7%
Career plans or interests***	62.8%	47.4%
Enlisting in the military	--	6.0%
Job, internships, or shadowing applications	13.9%	10.8%
Financial aid for college***	15.8%	30.8%
*Other^*	3.4%	2.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. PSAT – Preliminary SAT.

*Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across years: My grades: χ^2 (1) = 4.82, *p*<.05.

**Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across years: PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT: χ^2 (1) = 8.21, *p*<.01.

***Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across years: Course selection/scheduling: χ^2 (1) = 11.66, *p*<.001; Changing/dropping an endorsement: χ^2 (1) = 154.83, *p*<.001; Personal Graduation Plan: χ^2 (1) = 16.26, *p*<.001; College plans or interest: χ^2 (1) = 115.79, *p*<.001; College applications: χ^2 (1) = 92.76, *p*<.001; Career plans or interests: χ^2 (1) = 32.82, *p*<.001; Financial aid for college: χ^2 (1) = 45.80, *p*<.001.

^Examples of other responses included: All of the above (1), Asking about my knowledge of Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and life after high school (1), Attendance and credit hours (1), and Vaccines (1).

Table D.12. Counseling Topics Discussed During One-On-One Advising Session by Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=409)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=159)
*My grades**	40.8%	56.0%
Course selection/scheduling	48.2%	47.8%
*Changing or dropping an endorsement***	42.1%	13.2%
Personal Graduation Plan	34.7%	40.9%
PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT	12.2%	17.6%
Dual credit opportunities	--	43.4%
Career and technical education (CTE) programs of study	--	22.0%
*College plans or interests***	33.7%	56.0%
*Postsecondary education applications**	11.5%	21.4%
*Career plans or interests***	74.8%	50.9%
Enlisting in the military	--	5.7%
Job, internships, or shadowing applications	16.9%	15.1%
*Financial aid for college**	11.5%	21.4%
*Other^*	3.7%	2.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. PSAT – Preliminary SAT.

*Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across years when looking specifically at the Class of 2024: My grades: χ^2 (1) = 10.61, *p*<.01; Postsecondary education applications: χ^2 (1) = 9.16, *p*<.01; Financial aid for college: χ^2 (1) = 9.16, *p*<.01.

**Topics discussed during one-one-one counseling sessions differed significantly across years when looking specifically at the Class of 2024: Changing/dropping an endorsement: χ^2 (1) = 42.47, *p*<.001; College plans or interests: χ^2 (1) = 23.59, *p*<.001; Career plans or interests: χ^2 (1) = 30.05, *p*<.001.

^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table D.13. Student Agreement Levels Regarding One-On-One Counseling Sessions by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*=113)	(*n*=38)	(*n*=65)	(*n*=104)	(*n*=38)	(*n*=137)	(*n*=495)
The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education.	Strongly agree	23.9%	28.9%	47.7%	31.7%	44.7%	20.4%	29.7%
	Agree	65.5%	65.8%	47.7%	57.7%	44.7%	67.9%	60.6%
	Disagree	8.0%	2.6%	4.6%	8.7%	7.9%	9.5%	7.7%
	Strongly disagree	2.7%	2.6%	0.0%	1.9%	2.6%	2.2%	2.0%
	Mean**	3.11	3.21	3.43	3.19	3.32	3.07	3.18
		(*n*=113)	(*n*=36)	(*n*=64)	(*n*=103)	(*n*=39)	(*n*=133)	(*n*=488)
The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to select the best classes to take to achieve my goals for my education and career.	Strongly agree	23.0%	25.0%	46.9%	29.1%	35.9%	19.5%	27.7%
	Agree	60.2%	52.8%	46.9%	53.4%	51.3%	63.2%	56.6%
	Disagree	14.2%	19.4%	6.3%	14.6%	10.3%	14.3%	13.3%
	Strongly disagree	2.7%	2.8%	0.0%	2.9%	2.6%	3.0%	2.5%
	Mean**	3.04	3.00	3.41	3.09	3.21	2.99	3.09
		(*n*=113)	(*n*=37)	(*n*=61)	(*n*=101)	(*n*=38)	(*n*=136)	(*n*=486)
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information on what grades and testing scores are needed to achieve my goals for my education and career.	Strongly agree	22.1%	27.0%	47.5%	33.7%	39.5%	22.8%	29.6%
	Agree	59.3%	48.6%	42.6%	49.5%	42.1%	66.9%	55.1%
	Disagree	15.0%	18.9%	9.8%	13.9%	13.2%	8.1%	12.3%
	Strongly disagree	3.5%	5.4%	0.0%	3.0%	5.3%	2.2%	2.9%
	Mean*	3.00	2.97	3.38	3.14	3.16	3.10	3.12
		(*n*=112)	(*n*=37)	(*n*=64)	(*n*=102)	(*n*=38)	(*n*=131)	(*n*=484)
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school.	Strongly agree	20.5%	24.3%	40.6%	25.5%	31.6%	13.7%	23.6%
	Agree	47.3%	51.4%	39.1%	51.0%	44.7%	55.7%	49.4%
	Disagree	27.7%	18.9%	18.8%	18.6%	18.4%	27.5%	23.1%
	Strongly disagree	4.5%	5.4%	1.6%	4.9%	5.3%	3.1%	3.9%
	Mean*	2.84	2.95	3.19	2.97	3.03	2.80	2.93
		(*n*=112)	(*n*=38)	(*n*=63)	(*n*=100)	(*n*=41)	(*n*=136)	(*n*=490)
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information that was specific to my individual needs/interests.	Strongly agree	18.8%	21.1%	47.6%	27.0%	39.0%	25.7%	28.0%
	Agree	66.1%	71.1%	44.4%	55.0%	46.3%	59.6%	58.0%
	Disagree	12.5%	5.3%	7.9%	15.0%	12.2%	12.5%	11.8%
	Strongly disagree	2.7%	2.6%	0.0%	3.0%	2.4%	2.2%	2.2%
	Mean*	3.01	3.11	3.40	3.06	3.22	3.09	3.12
		(*n*=114)	(*n*=37)	(*n*=66)	(*n*=102)	(*n*=39)	(*n*=135)	(*n*=493)
I spoke with my family about some of the topics that were covered in my counseling/advising session(s).	Strongly agree	25.4%	21.6%	40.9%	33.3%	35.9%	25.9%	29.8%
	Agree	46.5%	56.8%	53.0%	49.0%	41.0%	58.5%	51.5%
	Disagree	22.8%	13.5%	6.1%	12.7%	20.5%	10.4%	14.2%
	Strongly disagree	5.3%	8.1%	0.0%	4.9%	2.6%	5.2%	4.5%

Item	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
	Mean*	2.92	2.92	3.35	3.11	3.10	3.05	3.07

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or the significance testing. An additional 20, 28, 30, 31, 25, and 22 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for the six items in the table, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

*Students' mean level of agreement with counseling or advising session items differed significantly across districts: The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information on what grades and testing scores are needed to achieve my goals for my education and career: $F(5, 480) = 2.6$, $p<.05$; The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school: $F(5, 478) = 2.6$, $p<.05$; The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information that was specific to my individual needs/interests: $F(5, 484) = 3.1$, $p<.05$; I spoke with my family about some of the topics that were covered in my counseling/advising session(s): $F(5, 487) = 2.9$, $p<.05$.

**Students' mean level of agreement with counseling or advising session items differed significantly across districts: The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education: $F(5, 489) = 3.5$, $p<.01$; The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to select the best classes to take to achieve my goals for my education and career: $F(5, 482) = 3.6$, $p<.01$.

Table D.14. Student Agreement Levels Regarding One-On-One Counseling Sessions, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=910)	(*n*=495)
The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education.	Strongly agree	21.4%	29.7%
	Agree	66.6%	60.6%
	Disagree	8.7%	7.7%
	Strongly disagree	3.3%	2.0%
	Mean**	3.06	3.18
		(*n*=906)	(*n*=488)
The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to select the best classes to take to achieve my goals for my education and career.	Strongly agree	23.8%	27.7%
	Agree	60.6%	56.6%
	Disagree	12.5%	13.3%
	Strongly disagree	3.1%	2.5%
	Mean	3.05	3.09
		(*n*=907)	(*n*=486)
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information on what grades and testing scores are needed to achieve my goals for my education and career.	Strongly agree	23.2%	29.6%
	Agree	59.6%	55.1%
	Disagree	13.8%	12.3%
	Strongly disagree	3.4%	2.9%
	Mean*	3.03	3.12
		(*n*=857)	(*n*=484)
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school.	Strongly agree	17.4%	23.6%
	Agree	45.5%	49.4%
	Disagree	29.8%	23.1%
	Strongly disagree	7.4%	3.9%
	Mean***	2.73	2.93
		(*n*=891)	(*n*=490)
The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information that was specific to my individual needs/interests.	Strongly agree	20.9%	28.0%
	Agree	59.3%	58.0%
	Disagree	16.2%	11.8%
	Strongly disagree	3.7%	2.2%
	Mean***	2.97	3.12
		(*n*=920)	(*n*=493)
I spoke with my family about some of the topics that were covered in my counseling/advising session(s).	Strongly agree	24.1%	29.8%
	Agree	52.8%	51.5%
	Disagree	16.0%	14.2%
	Strongly disagree	7.1%	4.5%
	Mean**	2.94	3.07

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or the significance testing. An additional 20, 28, 30, 31, 25, and 22 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for the six items in the table, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.
*Students' mean level of agreement with counseling or advising session items differed significantly across years: The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information on what grades and testing scores are needed to achieve my goals for my education and career: $F(1, 1391) = 4.99$, *p*<.05.
**Students' mean level of agreement with counseling or advising session items differed significantly across years: The counseling/advising session(s) helped me to develop a plan for my education: $F(1, 1403) = 10.49$, *p*<.01; I spoke with my family about some of the topics that were covered in my counseling/advising session(s): $F(1, 1411) = 7.83$, *p*<.01.
***Students' mean level of agreement with counseling or advising session items differed significantly across years: The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information about how to pay for education after high school: $F(1, 1339) = 17.89$, *p*<.001; The counseling/advising session(s) provided me with information that was specific to my individual needs/interests: $F(1, 1379) = 12.90$, *p*<.001.

Table D.15. Student Satisfaction Levels Regarding One-On-One Counseling Sessions by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=109)	District 2 (*n*=36)	District 3 (*n*=66)	District 4 (*n*=101)	District 5 (*n*=40)	District 6 (*n*=134)	Overall (*n*=486)
Overall, how satisfied were you with the individual counseling/ advising session(s) this school year (2020–21)?	Strongly satisfied	20.2%	44.4%	57.6%	26.7%	45.0%	17.9%	29.8%
	Satisfied	66.1%	50.0%	40.9%	59.4%	55.0%	64.9%	58.8%
	Dissatisfied	8.3%	2.8%	1.5%	10.9%	0.0%	12.7%	8.0%
	Strongly dissatisfied	5.5%	2.8%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	4.5%	3.3%
	Mean*	3.01	3.36	3.56	3.10	3.45	2.96	3.15

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or the significance testing. An additional 92 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.*
*Students' overall satisfaction with one-on-one counseling or advising session items differed significantly across districts: $F_{(5, 480)} = 10.6$, $p<.01$.

Table D.16. Student Satisfaction Levels Regarding One-On-One Counseling Sessions, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=893)	Year 3 (*n*=486)
Overall, how satisfied were you with the individual counseling/ advising session(s) this school year ?	Strongly satisfied	22.6%	29.8%
	Satisfied	69.8%	58.8%
	Dissatisfied	6.3%	8.0%
	Strongly dissatisfied	1.3%	3.3%
	Mean	3.14	3.15

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or the significance testing. An additional 92 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.*

Table D.17. Reasons for Students Not Meeting for a One-On-One Advising Session by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=320)	District 2 (*n*=39)	District 3 (*n*=41)	District 4 (*n*=201)	District 5 (*n*=23)	District 6 (*n*=117)	Overall (*n*=741)
I did not know meetings were being offered.	47.2%	38.5%	73.2%	53.7%	43.5%	41.9%	49.0%
I was not interested because my grades are not good enough to get into college.	9.7%	5.1%	2.4%	5.0%	13.0%	9.4%	7.8%
I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.	20.6%	28.2%	12.2%	17.9%	21.7%	24.8%	20.5%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	16.6%	28.2%	7.3%	17.4%	8.7%	12.8%	16.1%
*Other^*	5.9%	0.0%	4.9%	6.0%	13.0%	11.1%	6.6%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
*Reasons students reported they did not meet for a one-on-one advising session differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (20) = 36.47, p<.05.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table D.18. College Visit Participation by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=438)	District 2 (*n*=77)	District 3 (*n*=109)	District 4 (*n*=311)	District 5 (*n*=65)	District 6 (*n*=262)	Overall (*n*=1,262)
*Did you participate in an in-person or virtual college visit(s) this school year (2020–21)?**	Yes	18.9%	36.4%	29.4%	23.2%	72.3%	30.2%	27.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Student participation in a college visit differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 89.45, p<.01.

Table D.19. College Visit Participation by Year, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=2,421)	Year 3 (*n*=1,262)
*Did you participate in an in-person or virtual college visit(s) this school year?**	Yes	46.9%	27.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Student participation in a college visit differed significantly across years: χ^2 (5) = 136.23, p<.001.

Table D.20. Format in Which Students Participated in a College Visit by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=78)	District 2 (*n*=28)	District 3 (*n*=30)	District 4 (*n*=71)	District 5 (*n*=47)	District 6 (*n*=77)	Overall (*n*=331)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	82.1%	46.4%	50.0%	71.8%	83.0%	76.6%	72.8%
In person	10.3%	39.3%	33.3%	16.9%	8.5%	18.2%	17.8%
Both	7.7%	14.3%	16.7%	11.3%	8.5%	5.2%	9.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Formats used for college visits differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (10) = 25.85, *p*<.01.

Table D.21. Type of Activities Students Participated in During College Visit by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	District 1 (*n*=83)	District 2 (*n*=28)	District 3 (*n*=32)	District 4 (*n*=72)	District 5 (*n*=47)	District 6 (*n*=79)	Overall (*n*=341)
In-person campus tour*	19.3%	46.4%	37.5%	18.1%	4.3%	17.7%	20.5%
Virtual campus tour*	26.5%	46.4%	37.5%	62.5%	36.2%	34.2%	39.9%
In-person observation of class	4.8%	7.1%	3.1%	5.6%	6.4%	5.1%	5.3%
Virtual observation of class	14.5%	10.7%	9.4%	13.9%	23.4%	15.2%	15.0%
In-person speaker session	8.4%	14.3%	31.3%	11.1%	12.8%	13.9%	13.5%
Virtual speaker session**	65.1%	28.6%	53.1%	31.9%	70.2%	49.4%	51.0%
*Other^*	3.6%	3.6%	6.3%	4.2%	4.3%	7.6%^	5.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Student participation across different types of college visit activities differed significantly across districts: In-person campus tour: χ^2 (5) = 25.52, *p*<.01; Virtual campus tour: χ^2 (5) = 23.48, *p*<.01.
**Student participation across different types of college visit activities differed significantly across districts: Virtual guest speaker: χ^2 (5) = 29.75, *p*<.001.
^Examples of other responses included: All of the above (1), Asking about my knowledge of Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and life after high school (1), Attendance and credit hours (1), and Vaccines (1).

Table D.22. Type of Activities Students Participated in During College Visit, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=1,135)	Year 3 (*n*=341)
*In-person campus tour**	90.1%	20.5%
*Virtual campus tour**	8.2%	39.9%
*In-person or virtual classroom observation**	6.9%	19.6%
In-person classroom observation	6.9%	5.3%
Virtual class observation	--	15.0%
*In-person or virtual speaker session**	20.8%	59.5%
In-person speaker session	20.8%	13.5%
Virtual speaker session	--	51.0%
*Other**	2.6%	5.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. In Year 2, college visit activities were only asked about for in person and did not specify the difference between in person and virtual.

*Student participation across different types of college visit activities differed significantly across years: Other: $\chi^2(1) = 5.13$, *p*<.05.

**Student participation across different types of college visit activities differed significantly across years: In-person campus tour: $\chi^2(1) = 661.13$, *p*<.001; Virtual campus tour: $\chi^2(1) = 200.89$, *p*<.001; In-person or virtual classroom observation: $\chi^2(1) = 48.31$, *p*<.001; In-person or virtual guest speaker: $\chi^2(1) = 188.31$, *p*<.001.

Table D.23. Types of Information Learned During College Visits by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	District 1 (*n*=83)	District 2 (*n*=28)	District 3 (*n*=32)	District 4 (*n*=72)	District 5 (*n*=47)	District 6 (*n*=79)	Overall (*n*=341)
*Layout/environment of the campus****	32.5%	85.7%	56.3%	63.9%	57.4%	53.2%	54.0%
Various academic programs or areas of study	57.8%	60.7%	56.3%	48.6%	68.1%	51.9%	56.0%
Rigor of college classes	15.7%	21.4%	25.0%	20.8%	23.4%	8.9%	17.6%
Student academic services	41.0%	50.0%	50.0%	41.7%	63.8%	50.6%	48.1%
*Campus diversity**	27.7%	42.9%	53.1%	52.8%	44.7%	39.2%	41.6%
Firsthand experiences from college students	24.1%	25.0%	40.6%	22.2%	29.8%	15.2%	24.0%
*Student clubs/organizations****	48.2%	60.7%	59.4%	50.0%	55.3%	26.6%	46.6%
*Financial aid/resources****	45.8%	39.3%	65.6%	33.3%	55.3%	32.9%	42.8%
*Other^*	1.2%	3.6%	3.1%	4.2%	4.3%	8.9%	4.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Types of information learned about by students on college visits differed significantly across districts: Campus diversity: χ^2 (5) = 12.42, *p*<.05.
**Types of information learned about by students on college visits differed significantly across districts: Layout/environment of the campus: χ^2 (5) = 29.88, *p*<.01; Student clubs/organizations: χ^2 (5) = 18.92, *p*<.01; Financial aid/resources: χ^2 (5) = 16.05, *p*<.01.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table D.24. Types of Information Learned During College Visits, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Year 2 (*n*=1,103)	Year 3 (*n*=341)
*Layout/environment of the campus****	78.0%	54.0%
Various academic programs or areas of study	54.2%	56.0%
*Rigor of college classes**	11.6%	17.6%
*Student academic services**	39.3%	48.1%
Campus diversity	46.4%	41.6%
Firsthand experiences from college students	23.6%	24.0%
Student clubs/organizations	--	46.6%
Financial aid/resources	--	42.8%
Other	3.9%	4.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Types of information learned about by students on college visits differed significantly across years: Rigor of college classes: χ^2 (1) = 29.88, *p*<.01; Student academic services: χ^2 (1) = 8.39, *p*<.01.
**Types of information learned about by students on college visits differed significantly across years: Layout/environment of the campus: χ^2 (1) = 74.98, *p*<.001.

Table D.25. Satisfaction Level with College Visits by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=74)	District 2 (*n*=27)	District 3 (*n*=28)	District 4 (*n*=61)	District 5 (*n*=47)	District 6 (*n*=70)	Overall (*n*=307)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the college visit(s) that you participated in this school year (2020–21).	Strongly satisfied	21.6%	33.3%	50.0%	18.0%	25.5%	14.3%	23.5%
	Satisfied	70.3%	63.0%	50.0%	70.5%	74.5%	65.7%	67.4%
	Dissatisfied	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	8.2%	0.0%	14.3%	6.2%
	Strongly dissatisfied	2.7%	3.7%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	5.7%	2.9%
	Mean*	3.11	3.26	3.50	3.03	3.26	2.89	3.11

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. An additional 24 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

*Students' overall satisfaction with college visits differed significantly across districts: $F(5, 301) = 5.2$, $p<.01$.

Table D.26. Satisfaction Level with College Visits, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=1,093)	Year 3 (*n*=307)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the college visit(s) that you participated in this school year.	Strongly satisfied	33.5%	23.5%
	Satisfied	62.5%	67.4%
	Dissatisfied	3.3%	6.2%
	Strongly dissatisfied	0.7%	2.9%
	Mean*	3.29	3.11

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. An additional 26 and 24 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item in Year 2 and Year 3, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

*Students' overall satisfaction with college visits differed significantly across years: $F(1, 1398) = 21.5$, *p*<.001.

Table D.27. Reasons for Students Not Participating in a College Visit Session by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=353)	District 2 (*n*=49)	District 3 (*n*=77)	District 4 (*n*=237)	District 5 (*n*=18)	District 6 (*n*=183)	Overall (*n*=917)
I did not know college visits were being offered.	41.6%	18.4%	44.2%	47.7%	22.2%	38.3%	41.1%
I was not interested in any college visits.	9.6%	14.3%	9.1%	11.8%	0.0%	15.8%	11.5%
I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.	23.5%	53.1%	23.4%	11.8%	38.9%	26.8%	23.0%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	18.7%	14.3%	18.2%	24.5%	27.8%	14.8%	19.3%
*Other^*	6.5%	0.0%	5.2%	4.2%	11.1%	4.4%	5.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019

*Reasons for not participating in a college visit session differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (20) = 68.16$, *p*<.001.

^Examples of other responses included: I recently moved from another state or didn't know about it (3), I didn't visit because of COVID-19 (3), I didn't know they were doing it virtually (2),and Enlisting in the military (2).

Table D.28. Work-Based Learning Participation by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=435)	District 2 (*n*=77)	District 3 (*n*=109)	District 4 (*n*=311)	District 5 (*n*=65)	District 6 (*n*=262)	Overall (*n*=1,259)
Have you participated in one or more virtual or in-person (on site) work-based learning activities (e.g., job site visit, job shadowing, career day/fair, presentations about different career options, online discussions with professionals in a field of your interest) this school year (2020–21)?*	Yes	32.6%	29.9%	34.9%	22.5%	50.8%	27.9%	30.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*Student participation in a work-based learning activity differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(5) = 24.86$, $p<.001$.

Table D.29. Work-Based Learning Participation, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=2,408)	Year 3 (*n*=1,259)
Have you participated in one or more virtual or in-person (on site) work-based learning activities (e.g., job site visit, job shadowing, career day/fair, presentations about different career options, online discussions with professionals in a field of your interest) this school year?	Yes	29.2%	30.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table D.30. Format in Which Students Participated in a Work-Based Learning Activity by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=139)	District 2 (*n*=23)	District 3 (*n*=37)	District 4 (*n*=70)	District 5 (*n*=33)	District 6 (*n*=72)	Overall (*n*=374)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	84.2%	30.4%	10.8%	51.4%	54.5%	44.4%	57.2%
In person	5.0%	60.9%	51.4%	21.4%	21.2%	30.6%	22.5%
Both	10.8%	8.7%	37.8%	27.1%	24.2%	25.0%	20.3%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*Formats used for work-based learning activities differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(10) = 108.63$, $p<.001$.

Table D.31. Types of Information Learned During Work-Based Learning Activities, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	District 1 (*n*=142)	District 2 (*n*=23)	District 3 (*n*=38)	District 4 (*n*=70)	District 5 (*n*=33)	District 6 (*n*=73)	Overall (*n*=379)
Various career options*	67.6%	65.2%	60.5%	45.7%	72.7%	72.6%	64.1%
What it is like to work a certain job	36.6%	43.5%	50.0%	41.4%	39.4%	39.7%	40.1%
Companies in my region	9.9%	26.1%	18.4%	12.9%	18.2%	17.8%	14.5%
Education required for certain careers	48.6%	56.5%	50.0%	44.3%	48.5%	53.4%	49.3%
Technical skills required for certain careers	38.7%	47.8%	44.7%	37.1%	54.5%	37.0%	40.6%
Salaries of certain careers	29.6%	39.1%	34.2%	24.3%	30.3%	34.2%	30.6%
Other	4.2%	0.0%	5.3%	7.1%	3.0%	2.7%	4.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Types of information learned about by students during work-based learning activities differed significantly across districts: Various career options: $\chi^2 (5) = 14.63$, *p*<.05.

Table D.32. Type of Information Learned During Work-Based Learning Activities, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Year 2 (*n*=688)	Year 3 (*n*=379)
Various career options	65.0%	64.1%
What it is like to work a certain job	41.7%	40.1%
Companies in my region*	10.0%	14.5%
Education required for certain careers*	43.0%	49.3%
Technical skills required for certain careers	41.3%	40.6%
Salaries of certain careers	30.5%	30.6%
Other	4.7%	4.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Types of information learned about by students during work-based learning activities differed significantly across years: Companies in my region: $\chi^2 (1) = 4.78$, *p*<.05; Education required for certain careers: $\chi^2 (1) = 3.94$, *p*<.05.

Table D.33. Work-Based Learning Activity Satisfaction Levels by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=137)	District 2 (*n*=22)	District 3 (*n*=37)	District 4 (*n*=64)	District 5 (*n*=31)	District 6 (*n*=69)	Overall (*n*=360)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the work-based learning activity/activities that you participated in this schoolyear (2020–21).	Strongly satisfied	14.6%	31.8%	40.5%	15.6%	32.3%	24.6%	21.9%
	Satisfied	73.0%	54.5%	56.8%	75.0%	64.5%	63.8%	68.1%
	Dissatisfied	7.3%	4.5%	2.7%	7.8%	3.2%	8.7%	6.7%
	Strongly dissatisfied	5.1%	9.1%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	2.9%	3.3%
	Mean	2.97	3.09	3.38	3.05	3.29	3.10	3.09

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. An additional 26 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Table D.34. Work-Based Learning Activity Satisfaction Levels, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=662)	Year 3 (*n*=360)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the work-based learning activity/activities that you participated in this school year.	Strongly satisfied	21.8%	21.9%
	Satisfied	74.5%	68.1%
	Dissatisfied	2.4%	6.7%
	Strongly dissatisfied	1.4%	3.3%
	Mean*	3.17	3.09

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. An additional 26 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.
*Student satisfaction levels with work-based learning activities differed significantly across years: $F(1, 1020) = 4.7$, $p<.05$.

Table D.35. Reasons for Students Not Participating in a Work-Based Learning Activity by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=230)	District 2 (*n*=53)	District 3 (*n*=71)	District 4 (*n*=237)	District 5 (*n*=32)	District 6 (*n*=189)	Overall (*n*=812)
I did not know work-based learning activities were being offered.	42.4%	39.6%	45.1%	55.3%	46.9%	45.0%	46.7%
I was not interested in any work-based learning activities.	7.6%	13.2%	12.7%	8.0%	3.1%	12.2%	9.3%
I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.	22.4%	20.8%	23.9%	12.7%	9.4%	20.1%	18.8%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	20.7%	20.8%	16.9%	22.8%	31.3%	15.3%	20.2%
*Other^*	6.9%	5.7%	1.4%	1.3%	9.4%	7.4%	5.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
*Student reasons for not participating in a work-based learning activity differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (20) = 40.44$, $p<.01$.
^Examples of other responses included: The school doesn't provide it (4), I'm too young or not in high enough of a grade (3), and COVID (2).

Table D.36. College and/or Career Fair Participation by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=431)	District 2 (*n*=77)	District 3 (*n*=109)	District 4 (*n*=309)	District 5 (*n*=65)	District 6 (*n*=261)	Overall (*n*=1,252)
*Have you participated in one or more virtual or in-person (on site) college and/or career fairs this school year (2020–21)?**	Yes	7.9%	41.6%	37.6%	6.8%	75.4%	33.7%	21.2%
	No	92.1%	58.4%	62.4%	93.2%	24.6%	66.3%	78.8%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*Student participation in college and/or career fair activities differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 259.79, *p*<.01.

Table D.37. Format in Which Students Participated in a College and/or Career Fair by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=33)	District 2 (*n*=32)	District 3 (*n*=40)	District 4 (*n*=18)	District 5 (*n*=49)	District 6 (*n*=87)	Overall (*n*=259)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	78.8%	21.9%	10.0%	61.1%	69.4%	78.2%	57.9%
In person	12.1%	65.6%	75.0%	16.7%	18.4%	16.1%	31.3%
Both	9.1%	12.5%	15.0%	22.2%	12.2%	5.7%	10.8%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*Formats used for college and/or career fairs differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (10) = 91.63, *p*<.001.

Table D.38. Type of Information Learned About in College and/or Career Fairs, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	District 1 (*n*=34)	District 2 (*n*=32)	District 3 (*n*=41)	District 4 (*n*=21)	District 5 (*n*=49)	District 6 (*n*=88)	Overall (*n*=265)
*Information about one or more colleges**	61.8%	68.8%	65.9%	42.9%	79.6%	76.1%	69.8%
Various academic programs or areas of study at one or more colleges	29.4%	53.1%	46.3%	28.6%	38.8%	47.7%	42.6%
Rigor of college classes	17.6%	18.8%	19.5%	14.3%	14.3%	8.0%	14.0%
Student academic services	23.5%	28.1%	34.1%	19.0%	46.9%	33.0%	32.8%
Campus diversity	14.7%	37.5%	31.7%	33.3%	38.8%	42.0%	35.1%
*Firsthand experiences from college students**	11.8%	28.1%	31.7%	4.8%	24.5%	11.4%	18.5%
*Student clubs/organizations***	29.4%	28.1%	39.0%	23.8%	57.1%	26.1%	34.3%
*Financial aid/resources**	29.4%	37.5%	56.1%	28.6%	36.7%	25.0%	34.3%
*Various career options***	41.2%	53.1%	63.4%	9.5%	42.9%	39.8%	43.4%
*What it is like to work a certain job**	23.5%	40.6%	39.0%	9.5%	32.7%	17.0%	26.4%
*Companies in my region****	17.6%	28.1%	36.6%	0.0%	14.3%	8.0%	16.6%
*Education required for certain careers***	38.2%	68.8%	36.6%	14.3%	51.0%	30.7%	39.6%
Technical skills required for certain careers	32.4%	37.5%	31.7%	4.8%	40.8%	27.3%	30.6%
Salaries of certain careers	20.6%	40.6%	34.1%	9.5%	28.6%	22.7%	26.4%
*Other^*	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	1.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Types of information learned about by students during college and/or career fairs differed significantly across districts: Information about one or more colleges: $\chi^2 (5) = 12.5$, *p*<.05; Firsthand experiences from college students: $\chi^2 (5) = 14.96$, *p*<.05; Financial aid/resources: $\chi^2 (5) = 12.96$, *p*<.05; What is it like to work a certain job: $\chi^2 (5) = 14.86$, *p*<.05.

**Types of information learned about by students during college and/or career fairs differed significantly across districts: Student clubs/organizations: $\chi^2 (5) = 16.27$, *p*<.01; Various career options: $\chi^2 (5) = 18.28$, *p*<.01; Education required for certain careers: $\chi^2 (5) = 27.77$, *p*<.01.

***Types of information learned about by students during college and/or career fairs differed significantly across districts: Companies in my region: $\chi^2 (5) = 25.64$, *p*<.001.

^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table D.39. College and/or Career Fair Satisfaction Levels by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=30)	District 2 (*n*=31)	District 3 (*n*=40)	District 4 (*n*=17)	District 5 (*n*=49)	District 6 (*n*=86)	Overall (*n*=253)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the college and/or career fair activity/activities that you participated in this schoolyear (2020–21).	Strongly satisfied	23.3%	45.2%	40.0%	17.6%	34.7%	16.3%	28.1%
	Satisfied	63.3%	48.4%	57.5%	82.4%	65.3%	69.8%	64.4%
	Dissatisfied	10.0%	6.5%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	11.6%	6.3%
	Strongly dissatisfied	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	1.2%
	Mean	3.07	3.39	3.38	3.18	3.35	3.00	3.19

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Fewer than 10 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Table D.40. Reasons for Students Not Participating in a College and/or Career Fair by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=392)	District 2 (*n*=45)	District 3 (*n*=68)	District 4 (*n*=283)	District 5 (*n*=16)	District 6 (*n*=172)	Overall (*n*=976)
I did not know college and/or career fairs were being offered.	39.8%	37.8%	50.0%	50.9%	43.8%	43.0%	44.3%
I was not interested in college and/or career fairs.	9.4%	11.1%	16.2%	10.6%	18.8%	10.5%	10.7%
I was busy with school/family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.	21.4%	22.2%	13.2%	12.0%	12.5%	19.2%	17.6%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	23.2%	26.7%	16.2%	25.4%	25.0%	20.9%	23.2%
*Other^*	6.1%	2.2%	4.4%	1.1%	0.0%	6.4%	4.3%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
*Student reasons for not participating in a college and/or career fair differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (20) = 37.99, *p*<.01.
^Examples of other responses included: Not old enough or not in high enough grade (3), I didn't know (2), and COVID (1).

Table D.41. Algebra I Enrollment Among Class of 2024 Students by District, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=100)	District 2 (*n*=34)	District 3 (*n*=21)	District 4 (*n*=94)	District 5 (*n*=21)	District 6 (*n*=83)	Overall (*n*=353)
Were you enrolled in Algebra I this school year (2020–21)?	Yes	82.0%	41.2%	57.1%	61.7%	4.8%	77.1%	65.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Algebra I enrollment differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 61.38, *p*<.001.

Table D.42. Algebra I Enrollment Among Class of 2024 Students, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)^

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=605)	Year 3 (*n*=353)
*Were you enrolled in Algebra I this school year?**	Yes	43.0%	65.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
^In Year 2, class of 2024 students were in Grade 8 and in Year 3, class of 2024 students were in Grade 9.
*Algebra I enrollment differed significantly across years: χ^2 (1) = 45.03, *p*<.001.

Table D.43. Algebra I Levels of Agreement by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*=75)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=10)	(*n*=57)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=61)	(*n*=216)
I felt prepared to take Algebra I.	Strongly agree	30.7%	25.0%	10.0%	24.6%	0.0%	29.5%	27.3%
	Agree	53.3%	50.0%	60.0%	52.6%	100.0%	52.5%	53.2%
	Disagree	10.7%	16.7%	30.0%	17.5%	0.0%	14.8%	14.8%
	Strongly disagree	5.3%	8.3%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	3.3%	4.6%
	Mean	3.09	2.92	2.80	2.96	3.00	3.08	3.03
		(*n*=78)	(*n*=13)	(*n*=12)	(*n*=56)	(*n*=0)	(*n*=63)	(*n*=222)
My Algebra I class was challenging.	Strongly agree	10.3%	30.8%	33.3%	14.3%	--	19.0%	16.2%
	Agree	37.2%	23.1%	25.0%	44.6%	--	41.3%	38.7%
	Disagree	44.9%	46.2%	33.3%	32.1%	--	34.9%	38.3%
	Strongly disagree	7.7%	0.0%	8.3%	8.9%	--	4.8%	6.8%
	Mean	2.50	2.85	2.83	2.64	--	2.75	2.64
		(*n*=75)	(*n*=12)	(*n*=12)	(*n*=54)	(*n*=0)	(*n*=63)	(*n*=216)
I am getting enough support to succeed in Algebra I.	Strongly agree	42.7%	33.3%	25.0%	37.0%	--	47.6%	41.2%
	Agree	50.7%	66.7%	66.7%	48.1%	--	42.9%	49.5%
	Disagree	4.0%	0.0%	8.3%	13.0%	--	7.9%	7.4%
	Strongly disagree	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	--	1.6%	1.9%
	Mean	3.33	3.33	3.17	3.20	--	3.37	3.30

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Fewer than 10 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each of the three items in the table. Scale used to determine mean rating: *1–Strongly Disagree, 2–Disagree, 3–Agree, 4–Strongly Agree.* All *I don't know/Not* applicable responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Table D.44. Levels of Agreement for Algebra I Items, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8	Year 3, Grade 9
		(*n*=244)	(*n*=216)
I felt prepared to take Algebra I.	Strongly agree	33.6%	27.3%
	Agree	52.5%	53.2%
	Disagree	11.5%	14.8%
	Strongly disagree	2.5%	4.6%
	Mean*	3.17	3.03
		(*n*=248)	(*n*=222)
My Algebra I class was challenging.	Strongly agree	24.6%	16.2%
	Agree	47.2%	38.7%
	Disagree	23.4%	38.3%
	Strongly disagree	4.8%	6.8%
	Mean**	2.92	2.64
		(*n*=248)	(*n*=216)
I am getting enough support to succeed in Algebra I.	Strongly agree	44.0%	41.2%
	Agree	48.8%	49.5%
	Disagree	5.6%	7.4%
	Strongly disagree	1.6%	1.9%
	Mean	3.35	3.30

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Fewer than 10 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each of the three items in the table.
*Algebra I agreement levels among students differed significantly across years: I felt prepared to take Algebra I: $F(1, 458) = 4.0$, $p<.05$.
**Algebra I agreement levels among students differed significantly across years: My Algebra I class was challenging: $F(1, 468) = 12.7$, $p<.001$.

Table D.45. Tutoring Participation by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=99)	District 2 (*n*=34)	District 3 (*n*=21)	District 4 (*n*=94)	District 5 (*n*=21)	District 6 (*n*=83)	Overall (*n*=352)
*Did you participate in tutoring for any of your classes this school year (2020–21)?**	Yes	34.3%	14.7%	14.3%	26.6%	66.7%	67.5%	38.9%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Student participation in tutoring differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (5) = 55.8$, $p<.01$.

Table D.46. Tutoring Participation, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=601)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=352)
Did you participate in tutoring for any of your classes this school year?	Yes	37.9%	38.9%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table D.47. Format in Which Class of 2024 Students Participated in Tutoring by District, Year 3 (2020–21)*

Item	District 1 (*n*=33)	District 2 (n<10)	District 3 (n<10)	District 4 (*n*=24)	District 5 (*n*=14)	District 6 (*n*=55)	Overall (*n*=134)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	90.9%	0.0%	0.0%	54.2%	7.1%	5.5%	35.1%
In person	0.0%	60.0%	100.0%	16.7%	42.9%	69.1%	40.3%
Both	9.1%	40.0%	0.0%	29.2%	50.0%	25.5%	24.6%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*The format in which students participated in tutoring differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(10) = 105.75$, *p*<.001.

Table D.48. Type of Tutoring Participated in for Mathematics by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	District 1 (*n*=34)	District 2 (n<10)	District 3 (n<10)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*=14)	District 6 (*n*=56)	Overall (*n*=137)
*Mathematics course in class**	23.5%	100.0%	66.7%	32.0%	42.9%	30.4%	33.6%
*Mathematics course after school***	17.6%	40.0%	66.7%	60.0%	85.7%	55.4%	49.6%
Mathematics course one-on-one with a teacher	2.9%	20.0%	33.3%	24.0%	7.1%	16.1%	13.9%
Mathematics course with a high school or college student	2.9%	20.0%	0.0%	8.0%	7.1%	8.9%	7.3%
*Mathematics course virtual***	52.9%	60.0%	0.0%	36.0%	14.3%	12.5%	28.5%
Mathematics course other	2.9%	20.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: Mathematics course in class: $\chi^2(5) = 14.73$, *p*<.05.

**Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: Mathematics course after school: $\chi^2(5) = 25.56$, *p*<.001; Mathematics course virtual: $\chi^2(5) = 23.57$, *p*<.001.

Table D.49. Type of Tutoring Participated in for Mathematics, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=228)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=137)
*Mathematics course in class****	9.6%	33.6%
*Mathematics course after school***	34.6%	49.6%
*Mathematics course one-on-one with a teacher****	1.8%	13.9%
*Mathematics course with a high school or college student**	2.6%	7.3%
Mathematics course virtual	--	28.5%
Mathematics course other	0.9%	2.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: With a high school or college student: $\chi^2(1) = 4.45$, *p*<.05.

**Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: Mathematics course after school: $\chi^2(1) = 7.99$, *p*<.01.

***Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: Mathematics course in class: $\chi^2(1) = 32.32$, *p*<.001; One-on-one with a teacher: $\chi^2(1) = 21.27$, *p*<.001.

Table D.50. Type of Tutoring Participated in for Social Studies by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	District 1 (*n*=34)	District 2 (n<10)	District 3 (n<10)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*=14)	District 6 (*n*=56)	Overall (*n*=137)
Social studies course in class	11.8%	60.0%	66.7%	12.0%	14.3%	16.1%	16.8%
*Social studies course after school**	17.6%	0.0%	33.3%	8.0%	0.0%	33.9%	20.4%
Social studies course one-on-one with a teacher	2.9%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	10.7%	5.8%
Social studies course with a high school or college student	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	1.8%	3.6%
*Social studies course virtual***	44.1%	40.0%	0.0%	4.0%	7.1%	12.5%	19.0%
Social studies course other	2.9%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: Social studies course after school: χ^2 (5) = 14.00, *p*<.05.

**Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: Social studies course virtual: χ^2 (5) = 21.95, *p*<.01.

Table D.51. Type of Tutoring Participated in for Social Studies, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=228)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=137)
*Social studies course in class**	9.2%	16.8%
*Social studies course after school**	28.9%	20.4%
Social studies course one-on-one with a teacher	3.5%	5.8%
Social studies course with a high school or college student	1.8%	3.6%
Social studies course virtual	--	19.0%
Social studies course other	0.0%	1.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: Social studies course in class: χ^2 (1) = 4.64, *p*<.05; Social studies course after school: χ^2 (1) = 3.24, *p*<.05

Table D.52. Type of Tutoring Participated in for Science by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	District 1 (*n*=34)	District 2 (n<10)	District 3 (n<10)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*=14)	District 6 (*n*=56)	Overall (*n*=137)
Science course in class	17.6%	60.0%	66.7%	28.0%	21.4%	30.4%	27.7%
*Science course after school***	11.8%	0.0%	66.7%	16.0%	28.6%	62.5%	35.8%
Science course one-on-one with a teacher	8.8%	0.0%	33.3%	4.0%	7.1%	12.5%	9.5%
Science course with a high school or college student	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	7.1%	8.9%	6.6%
*Science course virtual**	44.1%	40.0%	0.0%	12.0%	7.1%	16.1%	21.9%
Science course other	2.9%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	2.9%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: Science course virtual: χ^2 (5) = 15.70, *p*<.01.

**Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: Science course after school: χ^2 (5) = 37.39, *p*<.001.

Table D.53. Type of Tutoring Participated in for Science, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=228)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=137)
*Science course in class***	10.1%	27.7%
Science course after school	28.9%	35.8%
*Science course one-on-one with a teacher**	2.2%	9.5%
Science course with a high school or college student	3.9%	6.6%
Science course virtual	--	21.9%
Science course other	0.0%	2.9%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: One-on-one with a teacher: $\chi^2 (1) = 9.72$, *p*<.01.
**Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: Science course in class: $\chi^2 (1) = 19.15$, *p*<.001.

Table D.54. Type of Tutoring Participated in for English Language Arts by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	District 1 (*n*=34)	District 2 (n<10)	District 3 (n<10)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*=14)	District 6 (*n*=56)	Overall (*n*=137)
English Language Arts course in class	23.5%	60.0%	66.7%	16.0%	50.0%	28.6%	29.2%
*English Language Arts course after school**	11.8%	0.0%	66.7%	16.0%	57.1%	60.7%	38.0%
English Language Arts course one-on-one with a teacher	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	14.3%	12.5%	8.8%
English Language Arts course with a high school or college student	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%	7.1%	3.6%	5.1%
English Language Arts course virtual	29.4%	40.0%	0.0%	16.0%	7.1%	12.5%	17.5%
English Language Arts course other	2.9%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	2.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across districts: English Language Arts course after school: $\chi^2 (5) = 37.30$, *p*<.001.

Table D.55. Type of Tutoring Participated in for English Language Arts, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=228)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=137)
*English Language Arts course in class***	9.6%	29.2%
English Language Arts course after school	35.5%	38.0%
*English Language Arts course one-on-one with a teacher**	3.1%	8.8%
English Language Arts course with a high school or college student	3.1%	5.1%
English Language Arts course virtual	--	17.5%
English Language Arts course other	0.9%	2.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.

*Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: One-on-one with a teacher: $\chi^2(1) = 5.61$, *p*<.05.

**Participation in type of tutoring differed significantly across years: English Language Arts course in class: $\chi^2(1) = 23.19$, *p*<.001.

Table D.56. Tutoring Helpful in Succeeding in Classes by District, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=34)	District 2 (*n*<10)	District 3 (*n*<10)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*=14)	District 6 (*n*=54)	Overall (*n*=135)
Has the tutoring you received this year (2020–21) helped you succeed in your classes?	Yes	91.2%	60.0%	100.0%	92.0%	100.0%	88.9%	90.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table D.57. Tutoring Helpful in Succeeding in Classes, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=224)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=135)
Has the tutoring you received this year helped you succeed in your classes?	Yes	94.2%	90.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table D.58. Tutoring Activity Satisfaction Levels by Year, Class of 2024, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=30)	District 2 (*n*<10)	District 3 (*n*<10)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*=13)	District 6 (*n*=51)	Overall (*n*=127)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the tutoring that you participated in this school year (2020–21).	Strongly satisfied	26.7%	20.0%	33.3%	44.0%	38.5%	15.7%	26.8%
	Satisfied	70.0%	80.0%	66.7%	48.0%	61.5%	74.5%	66.9%
	Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	5.9%	3.9%
	Strongly dissatisfied	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	2.4%
	Mean	3.20	3.20	3.33	3.36	3.38	3.02	3.18

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Fewer than 10 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Table D.59. Tutoring Activity Satisfaction Levels, Class of 2024, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2, Grade 8 (*n*=218)	Year 3, Grade 9 (*n*=127)
Please rate your level of satisfaction with the tutoring that you participated in this school year.	Strongly satisfied	28.9%	26.8%
	Satisfied	65.1%	66.9%
	Dissatisfied	4.6%	3.9%
	Strongly dissatisfied	1.4%	2.4%
	Mean	3.22	3.18

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Fewer than 10 respondents selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for this item. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.* All *I don't know/Not applicable* responses are not included in the table or significance testing.

Table D.60. PSAT, ACT Aspire, or Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) Test Prep Completion by District, Grade 10, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=111)	District 2 (*n*=16)	District 3 (*n*=11)	District 4 (*n*=130)	District 5 (*n*=13)	District 6 (*n*=72)	Overall (*n*=353)
*Have you completed any type of PSAT/ACT Aspire/TSIA test Prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books, prep in your math and/or English/ language arts classes) this school year (2020–21)?**	Yes	23.4%	37.5%	54.5%	65.4%	69.2%	72.2%	52.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. PSAT = Preliminary SAT.

*Students who completed any type of PSAT/ACT Aspire/TSIA test prep differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (5) = 60.38$, $p<.001$.

Table D.61. PSAT, ACT Aspire, or Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) Test Prep Completion, Grade 10, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=486)	Year 3 (*n*=353)
Have you completed any type of PSAT/ACT Aspire/TSIA test prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books, prep in your math and/or English/ language arts classes) this school year?	Yes	51.6%	52.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. PSAT = Preliminary SAT

Table D.62. SAT, ACT, or Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) Test Prep Completion by District, Grade 11–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=214)	District 2 (*n*=26)	District 3 (*n*=76)	District 4 (*n*=78)	District 5 (*n*=31)	District 6 (*n*=106)	Overall (*n*=531)
*Have you completed any type of SAT/ACT/TSIA test prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books, prep in your math and/or English/language arts classes) this school year (2020–21)?**	Yes	27.6%	73.1%	63.2%	51.3%	54.8%	63.2%	47.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Students who completed any type of SAT/ACT/TSIA test prep differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 62.89, *p*<.01.

Table D.63. SAT, ACT, or Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) Test Prep Completion, Grade 11–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=740)	Year 3 (*n*=531)
*Have you completed any type of SAT/ACT/TSIA test prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books, prep in your math and/or English/language arts classes) this school year?**	Yes	55.5%	47.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment.
*Students who completed any type of SAT/ACT/TSIA test prep differed significantly across years: χ^2 (1) = 8.86, *p*<.01.

Table D.64. SAT, ACT, or Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) Test Prep Completion by Grade, Grade 10–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Grade 10 (*n*=350)	Grade 11 (*n*=216)	Grade 12 (*n*=315)	Overall (*n*=881)
Have you completed any type of SAT/ACT/TSIA test prep (e.g., online lessons, practice tests, prep courses, test prep books, prep in your math and/or English/language arts classes) this school year (2020–21)?	Yes	32.0%	39.8%	52.1%	41.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table D.65. Perceived Test Prep Helpfulness in Preparing for College Entrance Exam by District, Grade 10–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	District 1 (*n*=98)	District 2 (*n*=26)	District 3 (*n*=60)	District 4 (*n*=130)	District 5 (*n*=33)	District 6 (*n*=134)	Overall (*n*=481)
*Do you believe the test prep you have completed this school year (2020–21) prepared you/will prepare you for the test?**	Yes	59.2%	80.8%	90.0%	60.8%	69.7%	76.9%	70.3%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

*Students who perceived their test prep as being helpful in preparing them for college entrance exams differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 26.73, *p*<.01.

Table D.66. Perceived Test Prep Helpfulness, Grade 10–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Item	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=656)	Year 3 (*n*=481)
*Do you believe the test prep you have completed this school year prepared you/will prepare you for the test?**	Yes	78.5%	70.3%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Student Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

*Students who perceived their test prep as being helpful in preparing them for college entrance exams differed significantly across years: χ^2 (1) = 10.05, *p*<.01.

APPENDIX E: Parent Survey Analyses Technical Detail

Table E.1. Respondents by Grade and District, Year 3 (2020–21)

Grade	District 1 (*n*=107)	District 2 (*n*=52)	District 3 (*n*=59)	District 4 (*n*=31)	District 5 (*n*=10)	District 6 (*n*=24)	Overall (*n*=283)
Grade 9	32.7%	44.2%	30.5%	41.9%	40.0%	25.0%	35.0%
Grade 10	20.6%	26.9%	23.7%	35.5%	20.0%	29.2%	24.7%
Grade 11	25.2%	13.5%	25.4%	9.7%	20.0%	29.2%	21.6%
Grade 12	21.5%	15.4%	20.3%	12.9%	20.0%	16.7%	18.7%
Overall	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table E.2. Parents Who Met One-On-One With Their Child's Counselor, Advisor, and/or GEAR UP Coordinator About Their Child's Postsecondary Education and/or Career Options by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

	District 1 (*n*=107)	District 2 (*n*=52)	District 3 (*n*=59)	District 4 (*n*=31)	District 5 (*n*=10)	District 6 (*n*=24)	Overall (*n*=283)
Yes, met one-on-one	15.9%	34.6%	22.0%	16.1%	30.0%	58.3%	24.7%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.
*The percentage of parents who met one-on-one with their child's counselor, advisor, and/or GEAR UP coordinator differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(5) = 21.41$, $p<.01$.

Table E.3. Parents Who Met One-On-One With Their Child's Counselor, Advisor, and/or GEAR UP Coordinator About Their Child's Postsecondary Education and/or Career Options, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)*

	Year 2 (*n*=335)	Year 3 (*n*=283)
Yes, met one-on-one	16.4%	24.7%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.
*The percentage of parents who met one-on-one with their child's counselor, advisor, and/or GEAR UP coordinator significantly across years: $\chi^2(1) = 6.58$, $p<.01$.

Table E.4. Format of Parents' One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by District, Year 3 (2020–21)*

	District 1 (*n*=16)	District 2 (*n*=17)	District 3 (*n*=13)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=14)	Overall (*n*=68)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	56.3%	70.6%	30.8%	80.0%	33.3%	0.0%	44.1%
In person	25.0%	17.6%	53.8%	0.0%	66.7%	85.7%	41.2%
Both	18.8%	11.8%	15.4%	20.0%	0.0%	14.3%	14.7%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*The percentage of parents' one-on-one counseling/advising session format differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(10) = 32.42$, $p<.001$.

Table E.5. Topics High School Parents Reported They Discussed During One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by District, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*=16)	District 2 (*n*=17)	District 3 (*n*=13)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=14)	Overall (*n*=68)
Your child's grades	68.8%	41.2%	46.2%	40.0%	66.7%	50.0%	51.5%
*Course selection/scheduling for your child**	25.0%	58.8%	46.2%	40.0%	66.7%	85.7%	52.9%
*Your child's Personal Graduation Plan***	37.5%	17.6%	23.1%	20.0%	33.3%	85.7%	38.2%
PSAT, SAT, ACT Aspire, or ACT	25.0%	23.5%	30.8%	40.0%	0.0%	50.0%	30.9%
Dual credit opportunities	43.8%	35.3%	38.5%	40.0%	66.7%	78.6%	48.5%
Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study	25.0%	5.9%	7.7%	0.0%	33.3%	28.6%	16.2%
Changing/dropping an endorsement	12.5%	11.8%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	10.3%
Your child's college plans or interests	25.0%	47.1%	46.2%	60.0%	0.0%	64.3%	44.1%
College applications	18.8%	17.6%	30.8%	60.0%	0.0%	28.6%	25.0%
Enlisting in the military	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Your child's career plans or interests	25.0%	35.3%	38.5%	60.0%	0.0%	42.9%	35.3%
Job/internship/shadowing applications	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	4.4%
Financial aid for college including FAFSA, TASFA, Pell Grant, etc.	31.3%	23.5%	15.4%	40.0%	33.3%	7.1%	22.1%
*Other^*	6.3%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	4.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. PSAT – Preliminary SAT. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

*The percentage of parents who discussed course selection/scheduling for their child differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 13.03, p<.05.

**The percentage of parents who discussed their child's Personal Graduation Plan differed significantly across districts: χ^2 (5) = 19.10, p<.01.

^Examples of other responses included: Completion of Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application (1).

Table E.6. Parent Agreement and Satisfaction Regarding One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

The counseling/ advising session …	Response Options	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
…helped me and my child think about his/her college/career plans.		(*n*=15)	(*n*=17)	(*n*=10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=63)
	Strongly agree	33.3%	47.1%	50.0%	0.0%	33.3%	21.4%	34.9%
	Agree	53.3%	29.4%	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	64.3%	49.2%
	Disagree	0.0%	17.6%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%
	Strongly disagree	13.3%	5.9%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	14.3%	9.5%
	Mean	3.07	3.18	3.50	2.25	3.33	2.93	3.10
…helped me and my child understand the best classes my child should take to achieve his/her college/career goals.		(*n*=15)	(*n*=16)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=65)
	Strongly agree	33.3%	43.8%	50.0%	20.0%	33.3%	28.6%	36.9%
	Agree	53.3%	37.5%	41.7%	40.0%	66.7%	50.0%	46.2%
	Disagree	0.0%	12.5%	8.3%	20.0%	0.0%	7.1%	7.7%
	Strongly disagree	13.3%	6.3%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	14.3%	9.2%
	Mean	3.07	3.19	3.42	2.60	3.33	2.93	3.11
…provided my child with information about his/her grades/test scores to achieve his/her college/career goals.		(*n*=14)	(*n*=16)	(*n*=11)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=62)
	Strongly agree	35.7%	37.5%	54.5%	40.0%	50.0%	28.6%	38.7%
	Agree	50.0%	43.8%	36.4%	40.0%	50.0%	42.9%	43.5%
	Disagree	0.0%	12.5%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	21.4%	9.7%
	Strongly disagree	14.3%	6.3%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	7.1%	8.1%
	Mean	3.07	3.13	3.45	3.00	3.50	2.93	3.13
…provided me with information about how our family may pay for college.		(*n*=14)	(*n*=15)	(*n*=10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=11)	(*n*=58)
	Strongly agree	35.7%	40.0%	30.0%	40.0%	33.3%	9.1%	31.0%
	Agree	50.0%	33.3%	40.0%	20.0%	33.3%	36.4%	37.9%
	Disagree	0.0%	13.3%	30.0%	20.0%	33.3%	36.4%	19.0%
	Strongly disagree	14.3%	13.3%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	18.2%	12.1%
	Mean	3.07	3.00	3.00	2.80	3.00	2.36	2.88
…provided me and my child with information that was specific to our family's situation.		(*n*=12)	(*n*=15)	(*n*=10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=11)	(*n*=56)
	Strongly agree	33.3%	33.3%	30.0%	20.0%	0.0%	18.2%	26.8%
	Agree	58.3%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	66.7%	36.4%	42.9%
	Disagree	0.0%	20.0%	30.0%	40.0%	33.3%	27.3%	21.4%
	Strongly disagree	8.3%	6.7%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	18.2%	8.9%
	Mean	3.17	3.00	3.00	2.40	2.67	2.55	2.88
Overall, how satisfied have you been with the individual counseling/advising session(s) that you have received this school year (2020–21)?		(*n*=16)	(*n*=17)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=67)
	Strongly Satisfied	43.8%	47.1%	58.3%	60.0%	33.3%	21.4%	43.3%
	Satisfied	43.8%	41.2%	16.7%	40.0%	66.7%	64.3%	43.3%
	Dissatisfied	6.3%	11.8%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%
	Strongly Dissatisfied	6.3%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	6.0%
	Mean	3.25	3.35	3.25	3.60	3.33	2.93	3.24

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was <10, <10, <10, 11, 13, and <10 respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating for perception: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.*

Table E.7. Parent Agreement and Satisfaction Regarding One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

The counseling/ advising session …	Response Options	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=54)	(*n*=63)
…helped me and my child think about his/her college/career plans.	Strongly agree	48.1%	34.9%
	Agree	35.2%	49.2%
	Disagree	11.1%	6.3%
	Strongly disagree	5.6%	9.5%
	Mean	3.26	3.10
		(*n*=54)	(*n*=65)
…helped me and my child understand the best classes my child should take to achieve his/her college/career goals.	Strongly agree	50.0%	36.9%
	Agree	37.0%	46.2%
	Disagree	7.4%	7.7%
	Strongly disagree	5.6%	9.2%
	Mean	3.31	3.11
		(*n*=55)	(*n*=62)
…provided my child with information about his/her grades/test scores to achieve his/her college/career goals.	Strongly agree	45.5%	38.7%
	Agree	40.0%	43.5%
	Disagree	9.1%	9.7%
	Strongly disagree	5.5%	8.1%
	Mean	3.25	3.13
		(*n*=52)	(*n*=58)
…provided me with information about how our family may pay for college.	Strongly agree	38.5%	31.0%
	Agree	30.8%	37.9%
	Disagree	25.0%	19.0%
	Strongly disagree	5.8%	12.1%
	Mean	3.02	2.88
		(*n*=50)	(*n*=56)
…provided me and my child with information that was specific to our family's situation.	Strongly agree	40.0%	26.8%
	Agree	26.0%	42.9%
	Disagree	26.0%	21.4%
	Strongly disagree	8.0%	8.9%
	Mean	2.98	2.88
		(*n*=50)	(*n*=67)
Overall, how satisfied have you been with the individual counseling/advising session(s) that you have received this school year (2020–21)?	Strongly Satisfied	48.0%	43.3%
	Satisfied	36.0%	43.3%
	Dissatisfied	14.0%	7.5%
	Strongly Dissatisfied	2.0%	6.0%
	Mean	3.30	3.24

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* was <10, <10, <10, 13, 17, and <10, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating for perception: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. Scale used to determine mean rating for satisfaction: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.*

Table E.8. Reasons Parents Reported They Did Not Participate in One-On-One Counseling/Advising Sessions by District, Year 3 (2020–21)*

	District 1 (*n*=88)	District 2 (*n*=32)	District 3 (*n*=46)	District 4 (*n*=26)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=209)
I did not know meetings were being offered.	54.5%	43.8%	82.6%	80.8%	57.1%	50.0%	62.2%
I was not interested because my child is in good academic standing.	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
I was busy with family/work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.	18.2%	28.1%	4.3%	3.8%	28.6%	20.0%	15.3%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	19.3%	21.9%	4.3%	3.8%	14.3%	20.0%	14.4%
*Other^*	8.0%	3.1%	8.7%	11.5%	0.0%	10.0%	7.7%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
*The percentage of parents' reasons they did not participate in one-on-one counseling/advising differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (5) = 35.84$, $p<.05$.
^Examples of other responses included: School counselors/staff did not communicate with parents (4), Parents forgot about session (2), and Information was not beneficial or needed by parents/family (1).

Table E.9. Parents Who Participated in a Parent/Family Event at Their Child's School by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*=107)	District 2 (*n*=51)	District 3 (*n*=59)	District 4 (*n*=31)	District 5 (*n*=10)	District 6 (*n*=24)	Overall (*n*=282)
Yes	17.8%	23.5%	13.6%	19.4%	30.0%	45.8%	20.9%

Source. Year 3 Texas GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in spring 2021.

Table E.10. Format of Parent/Family Event at Their Child's School by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)*

	District 1 (*n*=17)	District 2 (*n*=12)	District 3 (*n*<10)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=11)	Overall (*n*=57)
Virtual (online/on the phone)	82.4%	41.7%	12.5%	66.7%	0.0%	9.1%	43.9%
In person	17.6%	41.7%	62.5%	16.7%	100.0%	63.6%	42.1%
Both	0.0%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%	0.0%	27.3%	14.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*The percentage of parent/family event formats differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2 (10) = 29.89$, $p<.01$.

Table E.11. Topics Parents Reported They Learned About at Parent/Family Events by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Topic	District 1 (*n*=15)	District 2 (*n*=12)	District 3 (*n*<10)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=11)	Overall (*n*=54)
Availability of college and career advising	20.0%	25.0%	14.3%	33.3%	0.0%	9.1%	18.5%
*Different types of college options (e.g., 2-year, 4-year, and technical school options; public vs. private colleges)**	13.3%	0.0%	14.3%	33.3%	100.0%	36.4%	22.2%
Options for paying for college (e.g., Pell Grant, scholarships, Federal loans)	13.3%	8.3%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%
*Academic requirements for college (e.g., grades, test scores, courses)**	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%	16.7%
In-demand careers in your region	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Training and educational requirements for certain careers	6.7%	16.7%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%
Options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers	20.0%	33.3%	42.9%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	20.4%
*Other^*	0.0%	8.3%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	7.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*The percentage of parents who reported learning about different types of college options in a parent/family event differed significantly across districts: Academic requirements for college: χ^2 (5) = 15.12, *p*<.05.
**The percentage of parents who reported learning about different types of college options in a parent/family event differed significantly across districts: Different types of college options: χ^2 (5) = 17.63, *p*<.01
^Examples of other responses included: Dual credit opportunities (3) and College/non-profit advisors in the school (1).

Table E.12. Topics Parents Reported They Learned About at Parent/Family Events, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Topic	Year 2 (n=64)	Year 3 (n=54)
*Availability of college and career advising***	43.8%	18.5%
*Different types of college options (e.g., 2-year, 4-year, and technical school options; public vs. private colleges)**	42.2%	22.2%
*Options for paying for college (e.g., Pell Grant, scholarships, Federal loans)**	23.4%	7.4%
*Academic requirements for college (e.g., grades, test scores, courses)****	45.3%	16.7%
In-demand careers in your region	7.8%	1.9%
*Training and educational requirements for certain careers**	21.9%	7.4%
*Options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers***	48.4%	20.4%
*Other^*	3.1%	7.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*The percentage of parents who reported learning about various topics differed significantly across years: different types of college options at parent events: χ^2 (1) = 5.28, *p*<.05, options for paying for college: χ^2 (1) = 5.57, *p*<.05, training and educational requirements for certain careers: χ^2 (1) = 4.74, *p*<.05.
**The percentage of parents who reported learning about various topics differed significantly across years: availability of college and career advising at parent events: χ^2 (1) = 8.54, *p*<.01, options to take high school courses aligned with certain careers: χ^2 (1) = 10.06, *p*<.01.
***The percentage of parents who reported learning about academic requirements for college at parent events differed significantly across years: χ^2 (1) = 11.01, *p*<.001.
^Examples of other responses included: Parents not seeing event invitations (2) and Connection/connectivity issues (2).

Table E.13. Parent Agreement of Family/Parent Events by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*=17)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=11)	(*n*=57)
I felt comfortable asking questions at the parent/family event.	Strongly agree	47.1%	33.3%	75.0%	66.7%	66.7%	18.2%	45.6%
	Agree	47.1%	50.0%	25.0%	16.7%	33.3%	63.6%	43.9%
	Disagree	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	5.3%
	Strongly disagree	5.9%	8.3%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%
	Mean	3.35	3.08	3.75	3.33	3.67	3.00	3.30
The staff who led the parent/family event provided information that was helpful for our family.		(*n*=17)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=11)	(*n*=56)
	Strongly agree	47.1%	41.7%	87.5%	50.0%	50.0%	9.1%	44.6%
	Agree	41.2%	50.0%	12.5%	33.3%	50.0%	81.8%	46.4%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	9.1%	3.6%
	Strongly disagree	11.8%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%
	Mean	3.24	3.25	3.88	3.33	3.50	3.00	3.30
I plan to attend future parent/family events about college and/or career options at my child's school.		(*n*=17)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=11)	(*n*=55)
	Strongly agree	47.1%	50.0%	87.5%	60.0%	100.0%	27.3%	52.7%
	Agree	47.1%	41.7%	12.5%	20.0%	0.0%	63.6%	40.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	3.6%
	Strongly disagree	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
	Mean	3.35	3.42	3.88	3.20	4.00	3.18	3.42

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 0, 0, and <10, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table E.14. Parent Satisfaction With Family/Parent Events by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*=17)	District 2 (*n*=11)	District 3 (*n*<10)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=11)	Overall (*n*=56)
Strongly Satisfied	41.2%	45.5%	62.5%	50.0%	66.7%	9.1%	41.1%
Satisfied	52.9%	54.5%	37.5%	50.0%	33.3%	72.7%	53.6%
Dissatisfied	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	5.4%
Strongly Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mean	3.35	3.45	3.63	3.50	3.67	2.91	3.36

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied,* 2–*Dissatisfied,* 3–*Satisfied,* 4–*Strongly Satisfied.*

Table E.15. Reasons Parents Reported They Did Not Participate in Family/Parent Events by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*=86)	District 2 (*n*=37)	District 3 (*n*=50)	District 4 (*n*=25)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<20)	Overall (*n*=217)
I did not know about any parent/family event(s).	30.2%	40.5%	66.0%	68.0%	42.9%	50.0%	46.1%
I was not interested in the parent/family event(s) that were offered to me.	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
I was busy with family/work.	27.9%	29.7%	8.0%	16.0%	28.6%	16.7%	21.7%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	33.7%	29.7%	18.0%	8.0%	28.6%	33.3%	26.3%
*Other^*	7.0%	0.0%	8.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
*The percentage of parents' who reported reasons for not participating in a parent/family event differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(20) = 38.83$, *p*<.01.
^Examples of other responses included: Parents not seeing event invitations (2) and Connection/connectivity issues (2).

Table E.16. Reasons Parents Reported They Did Not Participate in Family/Parent Events, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)*

	Year 2 (*n*=247)	Year 3 (*n*=217)
I did not know about any parent/family event(s).	65.2%	46.1%
I was not interested in the parent/family event(s) that were offered to me.	0.4%	0.9%
I was busy with family/work.	27.1%	21.7%
I did not participate because of COVID-19.	7.3%	26.3%
*Other^*	0.0%	5.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019.
*The percentage of parents who reported reasons for not participating in parent events differed significantly across years: $\chi^2(4) = 52.88$, *p*<.001.
^Examples of other responses included: Parents not seeing event invitations (2) and Connection/connectivity issues (2).

Table E.17. Parent Agreement of Postsecondary Education and Career Topics and Information by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Topic	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
My child will receive/is receiving a high school education that will adequately prepare him/her for postsecondary education and career.		(*n*=102)	(*n*=52)	(*n*=53)	(*n*=30)	(*n*=10)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=270)
	Strongly agree	29.4%	44.2%	32.1%	36.7%	30.0%	17.4%	32.6%
	Agree	48.0%	46.2%	50.9%	36.7%	70.0%	60.9%	48.9%
	Disagree	11.8%	1.9%	11.3%	16.7%	0.0%	8.7%	9.6%
	Strongly disagree	10.8%	7.7%	5.7%	10.0%	0.0%	13.0%	8.9%
	Mean	2.96	3.27	3.09	3.00	3.30	2.83	3.05
I am aware of what grades my child will need to earn in high school so that he/she could enroll in college.		(*n*=101)	(*n*=50)	(*n*=53)	(*n*=30)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=265)
	Strongly agree	34.7%	42.0%	43.4%	40.0%	44.4%	50.0%	40.0%
	Agree	50.5%	52.0%	45.3%	46.7%	33.3%	36.4%	47.5%
	Disagree	9.9%	0.0%	1.9%	6.7%	22.2%	4.5%	6.0%
	Strongly disagree	5.0%	6.0%	9.4%	6.7%	0.0%	9.1%	6.4%
	Mean	3.15	3.30	3.23	3.20	3.22	3.27	3.21
I am aware of the opportunities to earn dual credit available to my child in our school district.		(*n*=100)	(*n*=50)	(*n*=55)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=264)
	Strongly agree	28.0%	42.0%	38.2%	42.9%	44.4%	45.5%	36.4%
	Agree	53.0%	52.0%	41.8%	39.3%	33.3%	36.4%	47.0%
	Disagree	13.0%	2.0%	12.7%	10.7%	22.2%	13.6%	11.0%
	Strongly disagree	6.0%	4.0%	7.3%	7.1%	0.0%	4.5%	5.7%
	Mean	3.03	3.32	3.11	3.18	3.22	3.23	3.14
I am aware of the opportunities that a college degree can provide for my child.		(*n*=104)	(*n*=50)	(*n*=57)	(*n*=31)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=273)
	Strongly agree	50.0%	54.0%	43.9%	58.1%	44.4%	59.1%	50.9%
	Agree	37.5%	42.0%	47.4%	32.3%	33.3%	27.3%	38.8%
	Disagree	4.8%	0.0%	5.3%	3.2%	22.2%	0.0%	4.0%
	Strongly disagree	7.7%	4.0%	3.5%	6.5%	0.0%	13.6%	6.2%
	Mean	3.30	3.46	3.32	3.42	3.22	3.32	3.34
I am aware of the education path necessary for the career my child plans to pursue.		(*n*=101)	(*n*=49)	(*n*=54)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=264)
	Strongly agree	29.7%	44.9%	46.3%	42.9%	44.4%	39.1%	38.6%
	Agree	53.5%	42.9%	31.5%	39.3%	33.3%	43.5%	43.9%
	Disagree	8.9%	8.2%	14.8%	10.7%	22.2%	8.7%	10.6%
	Strongly disagree	7.9%	4.1%	7.4%	7.1%	0.0%	8.7%	6.8%
	Mean	3.05	3.29	3.17	3.18	3.22	3.13	3.14
I will be able to guide my child through the postsecondary education application process.		(*n*=97)	(*n*=47)	(*n*=52)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=256)
	Strongly agree	34.0%	42.6%	26.9%	39.3%	22.2%	30.4%	34.0%
	Agree	51.5%	34.0%	51.9%	39.3%	55.6%	34.8%	45.7%
	Disagree	10.3%	19.1%	11.5%	14.3%	22.2%	21.7%	14.1%
	Strongly disagree	4.1%	4.3%	9.6%	7.1%	0.0%	13.0%	6.3%
	Mean	3.15	3.15	2.96	3.11	3.00	2.83	3.07
I am familiar with examinations needed to get into postsecondary education (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSIA Assessment).		(*n*=97)	(*n*=48)	(*n*=53)	(*n*=29)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=259)
	Strongly agree	27.8%	37.5%	26.4%	44.8%	22.2%	30.4%	31.3%
	Agree	46.4%	43.8%	52.8%	37.9%	55.6%	43.5%	46.3%
	Disagree	13.4%	12.5%	13.2%	10.3%	22.2%	13.0%	13.1%
	Strongly disagree	12.4%	6.3%	7.5%	6.9%	0.0%	13.0%	9.3%
	Mean	2.90	3.13	2.98	3.21	3.00	2.91	3.00
I know where to find SAT or PSAT test preparation resources for my child.		(*n*=93)	(*n*=42)	(*n*=51)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=245)
	Strongly agree	19.4%	28.6%	25.5%	32.1%	11.1%	18.2%	23.3%
	Agree	32.3%	26.2%	35.3%	28.6%	55.6%	40.9%	33.1%
	Disagree	33.3%	33.3%	27.5%	32.1%	33.3%	31.8%	31.8%
	Strongly disagree	15.1%	11.9%	11.8%	7.1%	0.0%	9.1%	11.8%
	Mean	2.56	2.71	2.75	2.86	2.78	2.68	2.68
I know where to find ACT or ACT Aspire test preparation resources for my child.		(*n*=91)	(*n*=42)	(*n*=50)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=241)
	Strongly agree	18.7%	26.2%	22.0%	25.0%	11.1%	19.0%	21.2%
	Agree	29.7%	23.8%	26.0%	32.1%	44.4%	38.1%	29.5%
	Disagree	34.1%	38.1%	36.0%	32.1%	44.4%	28.6%	34.9%
	Strongly disagree	17.6%	11.9%	16.0%	10.7%	0.0%	14.3%	14.5%
	Mean	2.49	2.64	2.54	2.71	2.67	2.62	2.57
I know where to find TSI		(*n*=90)	(*n*=41)	(*n*=50)	(*n*=27)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=238)

Topic	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
Assessment test preparation resources for my child.	Strongly agree	14.4%	26.8%	24.0%	14.8%	11.1%	19.0%	18.9%
	Agree	35.6%	22.0%	26.0%	33.3%	44.4%	33.3%	31.1%
	Disagree	33.3%	39.0%	36.0%	44.4%	44.4%	38.1%	37.0%
	Strongly disagree	16.7%	12.2%	14.0%	7.4%	0.0%	9.5%	13.0%
	Mean	2.48	2.63	2.60	2.56	2.67	2.62	2.56
I am aware of scholarship opportunities available to help pay for college.		(*n*=97)	(*n*=45)	(*n*=52)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=254)
	Strongly agree	20.6%	24.4%	17.3%	17.9%	11.1%	21.7%	20.1%
	Agree	42.3%	46.7%	36.5%	32.1%	55.6%	34.8%	40.6%
	Disagree	20.6%	20.0%	26.9%	35.7%	33.3%	34.8%	25.2%
	Strongly disagree	16.5%	8.9%	19.2%	14.3%	0.0%	8.7%	14.2%
	Mean	2.67	2.87	2.52	2.54	2.78	2.70	2.67
I am aware of the FAFSA.		(*n*=95)	(*n*=48)	(*n*=52)	(*n*=28)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=255)
	Strongly agree	31.6%	43.8%	23.1%	46.4%	11.1%	39.1%	33.7%
	Agree	40.0%	35.4%	42.3%	35.7%	88.9%	43.5%	41.2%
	Disagree	16.8%	12.5%	25.0%	7.1%	0.0%	8.7%	15.3%
	Strongly disagree	11.6%	8.3%	9.6%	10.7%	0.0%	8.7%	9.8%
	Mean	2.92	3.15	2.79	3.18	3.11	3.13	2.99
I am aware of the TASFA.		(*n*=87)	(*n*=41)	(*n*=49)	(*n*=25)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=232)
	Strongly agree	14.9%	19.5%	8.2%	28.0%	11.1%	28.6%	16.8%
	Agree	25.3%	24.4%	24.5%	20.0%	44.4%	19.0%	24.6%
	Disagree	42.5%	39.0%	44.9%	40.0%	44.4%	38.1%	41.8%
	Strongly disagree	17.2%	17.1%	22.4%	12.0%	0.0%	14.3%	16.8%
	Mean	2.38	2.46	2.18	2.64	2.67	2.62	2.41
I am aware of the Pell Grant.		(*n*=84)	(*n*=44)	(*n*=50)	(*n*=29)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=238)
	Strongly agree	21.4%	36.4%	22.0%	34.5%	22.2%	54.5%	29.0%
	Agree	31.0%	40.9%	38.0%	37.9%	77.8%	27.3%	36.6%
	Disagree	28.6%	15.9%	22.0%	17.2%	0.0%	9.1%	20.6%
	Strongly disagree	19.0%	6.8%	18.0%	10.3%	0.0%	9.1%	13.9%
	Mean**	2.55	3.07	2.64	2.97	3.22	3.27	2.81
I am aware of Federal student loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, PLUS loans).		(*n*=90)	(*n*=44)	(*n*=51)	(*n*=29)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<25)	(*n*=245)
	Strongly agree	22.2%	34.1%	21.6%	37.9%	22.2%	31.8%	26.9%
	Agree	37.8%	45.5%	43.1%	44.8%	77.8%	31.8%	42.0%
	Disagree	21.1%	13.6%	23.5%	13.8%	0.0%	27.3%	19.2%
	Strongly disagree	18.9%	6.8%	11.8%	3.4%	0.0%	9.1%	11.8%
	Mean*	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 10, 16, 16, <10, 17, 24, 22, 35, 38, 41, 26, 25, 41, 38, and 29, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. PSAT – Preliminary SAT. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

*The mean for parents' awareness of the Federal student loan programs differed significantly across districts: $F(5, 239) = 2.51$, *p*<*.05.*
**The mean for parents' awareness of the Pell Grant differed significantly across districts: $F(5, 232) = 3.54$, *p*<.01.

Table E.18. Parent Agreement of Postsecondary Education and Career Topics and Information, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Topic	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
My child will receive/is receiving a high school education that will adequately prepare him/her for college and career.		(*n*=324)	(*n*=270)
	Strongly agree	38.0%	32.6%
	Agree	49.1%	48.9%
	Disagree	6.5%	9.6%
	Strongly disagree	6.5%	8.9%
	Mean	3.19	3.05
I am aware of what grades my child will need to earn in high school so that he/she could enroll in college.		(*n*=321)	(*n*=265)
	Strongly agree	41.1%	40.0%
	Agree	47.4%	47.5%

Topic	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
	Disagree	5.3%	6.0%
	Strongly disagree	6.2%	6.4%
	Mean	3.23	3.21
I am aware of the opportunities to earn dual credit available to my child in our school district.		*(n=315)*	*(n=264)*
	Strongly agree	36.2%	36.4%
	Agree	50.5%	47.0%
	Disagree	7.9%	11.0%
	Strongly disagree	5.4%	5.7%
	Mean	3.17	3.14
I am aware of the opportunities that a college degree can provide for my child.		*(n=317)*	*(n=273)*
	Strongly agree	42.0%	50.9%
	Agree	48.6%	38.8%
	Disagree	4.1%	4.0%
	Strongly disagree	5.4%	6.2%
	Mean	3.27	3.34
I am aware of the education path necessary for the career my child plans to pursue.		*(n=307)*	*(n=264)*
	Strongly agree	35.2%	38.6%
	Agree	46.9%	43.9%
	Disagree	11.7%	10.6%
	Strongly disagree	6.2%	6.8%
	Mean	3.11	3.14
I will be able to guide my child through the college application process.		*(n=309)*	*(n=256)*
	Strongly agree	35.0%	34.0%
	Agree	50.2%	45.7%
	Disagree	9.1%	14.1%
	Strongly disagree	5.8%	6.3%
	Mean	3.14	3.07
I am familiar with examinations needed to get into college (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSI Assessment).		*(n=308)*	*(n=259)*
	Strongly agree	28.2%	31.3%
	Agree	53.6%	46.3%
	Disagree	13.0%	13.1%
	Strongly disagree	5.2%	9.3%
	Mean	3.05	3.00
I know where to find SAT or PSAT test preparation resources for my child.		*(n=278)*	*(n=245)*
	Strongly agree	20.9%	23.3%
	Agree	37.4%	33.1%
	Disagree	33.5%	31.8%
	Strongly disagree	8.3%	11.8%
	Mean	2.71	2.68
I know where to find ACT or ACT Aspire test preparation resources for my child.		*(n=268)*	*(n=241)*
	Strongly agree	19.8%	21.2%
	Agree	36.6%	29.5%
	Disagree	35.1%	34.9%
	Strongly disagree	8.6%	14.5%
	Mean	2.68	2.57
I know where to find TSI Assessment test preparation resources for my child.		*(n=272)*	*(n=238)*
	Strongly agree	18.8%	18.9%
	Agree	34.9%	31.1%

Topic	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
	Disagree	36.8%	37.0%
	Strongly disagree	9.6%	13.0%
	Mean	2.63	2.56
I am aware of scholarship opportunities available to help pay for college.		*(n=282)*	*(n=254)*
	Strongly agree	17.7%	20.1%
	Agree	39.0%	40.6%
	Disagree	32.6%	25.2%
	Strongly disagree	10.6%	14.2%
	Mean	2.64	2.67
I am aware of the FAFSA.		*(n=294)*	*(n=255)*
	Strongly agree	36.1%	33.7%
	Agree	43.5%	41.2%
	Disagree	14.6%	15.3%
	Strongly disagree	5.8%	9.8%
	Mean	3.10	2.99
I am aware of the TASFA.		*(n=248)*	*(n=232)*
	Strongly agree	14.5%	16.8%
	Agree	26.6%	24.6%
	Disagree	49.2%	41.8%
	Strongly disagree	9.7%	16.8%
	Mean	2.46	2.41
I am aware of the Pell Grant.		*(n=279)*	*(n=238)*
	Strongly agree	28.7%	29.0%
	Agree	44.1%	36.6%
	Disagree	22.2%	20.6%
	Strongly disagree	5.0%	13.9%
	Mean	2.96	2.81
I am aware of Federal student loan programs (e.g., Stafford loans, Perkins loans, PLUS loans).		*(n=288)*	*(n=245)*
	Strongly agree	25.3%	26.9%
	Agree	48.3%	42.0%
	Disagree	20.1%	19.2%
	Strongly disagree	6.3%	11.8%
	Mean	2.93	2.84

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Parent Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021). *Note.* Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 10, 16, 16, 7, 17, 24, 22, 35, 38, 41, 26, 25, 41, 38, and 29*,* respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. PSAT –Preliminary SAT. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TASFA – Texas Application for State Financial Aid.

APPENDIX F: School Personnel Survey Analyses Technical Detail

Table F.1. Personnel Demographics by District, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
Primary Position*	**(n<10)**	**(n=28)**	**(n=55)**	**(n=20)**	**(n<20)**	**(n=25)**	**(n=151)**
Administrator	0.0%	0.0%	10.9%	0.0%	14.3%	16.0%	7.9%
Counselor/Student Services Personnel	11.1%	0.0%	18.2%	5.0%	21.4%	8.0%	11.3%
Teacher/Instructional Support Personnel	88.9%	100.0%	70.9%	95.0%	64.3%	76.0%	80.8%
Number of Years at School	**(n<10)**	**(n=28)**	**(n=52)**	**(n=19)**	**(n<20)**	**(n=24)**	**(n=146)**
1–2 years	33.3%	35.7%	46.2%	36.8%	50.0%	58.3%	44.5%
3–5 years	22.2%	28.6%	38.5%	31.6%	21.4%	20.8%	30.1%
6–10 years	0.0%	17.9%	11.5%	10.5%	7.1%	12.5%	11.6%
More than 10 years	44.4%	17.9%	3.8%	21.1%	21.4%	8.3%	13.7%
Number of Total Years	**(n<10)**	**(n=27)**	**(n=51)**	**(n=19)**	**(n<20)**	**(n=24)**	**(n=144)**
1–2 years	22.2%	22.2%	35.3%	21.1%	42.9%	25.0%	29.2%
3–5 years	22.2%	18.5%	23.5%	15.8%	14.3%	8.3%	18.1%
6–10 years	0.0%	22.2%	17.6%	15.8%	7.1%	25.0%	17.4%
More than 10 years	55.6%	37.0%	23.5%	47.4%	35.7%	41.7%	35.4%
Grade Level	**(n<10)**	**(n=28)**	**(n=55)**	**(n=20)**	**(n<20)**	**(n=25)**	**(n=151)**
*K–8***	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	5.0%	57.1%	0.0%	6.6%
Grade 9	55.6%	78.6%	67.3%	75.0%	78.6%	80.0%	72.8%
Grade 10	77.8%	92.9%	70.9%	75.0%	85.7%	76.0%	78.1%
Grade 11	100.0%	78.6%	81.8%	70.0%	71.4%	72.0%	78.1%
Grade 12	66.7%	75.0%	69.1%	60.0%	64.3%	76.0%	69.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Response percentages for Grade Level will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size.

*Primary positions differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(10) = 25.2$, $p<.01$.

**K–8 grade level differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(5) = 36.6$, $p<.001$.

Table F.2. Subjects Teachers Taught by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Subject	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=28)	District 3 (*n*=40)	District 4 (*n*=19)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=19)	Overall (*n*=123)
English Language Arts	0.0%	21.4%	20.0%	26.3%	22.2%	21.1%	20.3%
Mathematics	50.0%	17.9%	12.5%	21.1%	33.3%	10.5%	18.7%
Social Studies	12.5%	14.3%	7.5%	0.0%	22.2%	5.3%	8.9%
Science	50.0%	17.9%	15.0%	15.8%	22.2%	15.8%	18.7%
*AVID**	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	15.8%	33.3%	0.0%	5.7%
Arts	0.0%	10.7%	5.0%	10.5%	11.1%	5.3%	7.3%
Physical Education	0.0%	7.1%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%
English as a Second Language	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
*Other^*	0.0%	28.6%	40.0%	31.6%	22.2%	57.9%	35.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
AVID = Advancement Via Individual Determination.
*AVID differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(5) = 17.1$, *p*<.01.
^Examples of other responses included: Career and technical education (2), Spanish or Languages other than English (4), and Special education (2).

Table F.3. Advising Spaces for Students and Parents According to School Personnel by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Dedicated space for students and parents to find information or someone to speak to regarding postsecondary education and career readiness	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=0)	District 3 (*n*=16)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=27)
Dedicated physical space only	0.0%	-	12.5%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	10.3%
Dedicated virtual space only	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	3.4%
Both physical and virtual spaces	100.0%	-	87.5%	100.0%	60.0%	100.0%	86.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table F.4. Location of Advising Spaces According to School Personnel by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*=15)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=27)
Physical Space	In an office	0.0%	-	13.3%	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%	37.0%
	In a classroom	0.0%	-	33.3%	0.0%	75.0%	33.3%	37.0%
	In the library*	0.0%	-	73.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.7%
	In the GO Center	100.0%	-	26.7%	0.0%	25.0%	16.7%	25.9%
	Other [a]	0.0%	-	20.0%	100.0%	0.0%	50.0%	25.9%
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*=14)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=26)
Virtual Space	School website*	100.0%	-	85.7%	100.0%	50.0%	0.0%	61.5%
	Social media page	100.0%	-	85.7%	100.0%	50.0%	33.3%	69.2%
	Blackboard or another similar virtual learning platform	100.0%	-	14.3%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	19.2%
	Virtual meeting platform	100.0%	-	64.3%	100.0%	50.0%	83.3%	69.2%
	Other^	0.0%	-	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	11.5%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Responses differed significantly across districts: Library: $\chi^2(4) = 19.1$, *p*<.001; School website: $\chi^2(4)=17.6$, *p*<.001.
[a] Other physical spaces included college and career center/library (4), counseling center, school website, varying locations pending on need/availability/time of year.
^Other virtual spaces included College Advising Corps, college and career center, and Go Center.

Table F.5. Availability of Postsecondary Education Information According to School Personnel by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

When can students and parents access the <u>physical space</u> that provides postsecondary education and career readiness information?	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*=16)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=28)
Students	During regular school hours	100.0%	-	93.8%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	96.4%
	Before school	0.0%	-	81.3%	0.0%	75.0%	100.0%	78.6%
	After school*	0.0%	-	87.5%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	85.7%
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*=16)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=28)
Parents	During regular school hours	100.0%	-	81.3%	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%	78.6%
	Before school	0.0%	-	68.8%	0.0%	75.0%	83.3%	67.9%
	After school*	0.0%	-	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	78.6%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Availability for parents after school differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(4) = 11.1$, *p*<.05; Availability for students after school differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(4) = 11.0$, *p*<.05.

Table F.6. Times Students and Parents Could Access Advising Services According to School Personnel, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

When can students and parents access the <u>physical space</u> that provides postsecondary education and career readiness information?	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=18)	(*n*=28)
Students	During regular school hours	100.0%	96.4%
	Before school	100.0%	78.6%
	After school	88.9%	78.6%
		(*n*=18)	(*n*=28)
Parents	During regular school hours	83.3%	78.6%
	Before school	64.7%	67.9%
	After school*	100.0%	78.6%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*After school for parents differed significantly across years: $\chi^2(1) = 4.0$, $p < .05$.

Table F.7. Personnel Agreement Regarding Information Provided to Students and Parents by Their School, by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
I regularly provide students with information about postsecondary education.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=27)	(*n*=54)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=146)
	Strongly agree	33.3%	29.6%	42.6%	26.3%	35.7%	39.1%	36.3%
	Agree	55.6%	66.7%	44.4%	47.4%	57.1%	52.2%	52.1%
	Disagree	11.1%	3.7%	11.1%	26.3%	7.1%	4.3%	10.3%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	1.4%
	Mean	3.22	3.26	3.28	3.00	3.29	3.26	3.23
I regularly provide students with information about career options.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=27)	(*n*=51)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=146)
	Strongly agree	11.1%	22.2%	44.4%	31.6%	35.7%	43.5%	35.6%
	Agree	77.8%	70.4%	42.6%	36.8%	57.1%	47.8%	51.4%
	Disagree	11.1%	7.4%	11.1%	31.6%	7.1%	4.3%	11.6%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	1.4%
	Mean	3.00	3.15	3.30	3.00	3.29	3.30	3.21
My school provides students with information about how to academically prepare for postsecondary education.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=27)	(*n*=51)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=142)
	Strongly agree	22.2%	37.0%	56.9%	47.1%	53.8%	64.0%	50.7%
	Agree	77.8%	55.6%	31.4%	47.1%	38.5%	28.0%	40.8%
	Disagree	0.0%	7.4%	9.8%	0.0%	7.7%	4.0%	6.3%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	5.9%	0.0%	4.0%	2.1%
	Mean	3.22	3.30	3.43	3.35	3.46	3.52	3.40
My school provides students with information about high school graduation requirements.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=27)	(*n*=53)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=145)
	Strongly agree	33.3%	44.4%	62.3%	64.7%	71.4%	64.0%	58.6%
	Agree	66.7%	51.9%	35.8%	35.3%	28.6%	28.0%	38.6%
	Disagree	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	1.4%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	1.4%
	Mean	3.33	3.41	3.58	3.65	3.71	3.52	3.54
My school provides students with information about		(*n*<10)	(*n*=26)	(*n*=49)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=138)
	Strongly agree	11.1%	46.2%	53.1%	41.2%	69.2%	62.5%	50.7%
	Agree	77.8%	50.0%	42.9%	52.9%	23.1%	29.2%	43.5%

	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
creating a Personal Graduation Plan.	Disagree	11.1%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	4.2%	2.9%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	5.9%	0.0%	4.2%	2.9%
	Mean	3.00	3.42	3.45	3.29	3.62	3.50	3.42
My school provides students with information about opportunities to earn dual credit.		*(n<10)*	*(n=27)*	*(n=53)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=144)*
	Strongly agree	33.3%	51.9%	56.6%	50.0%	78.6%	68.0%	57.6%
	Agree	66.7%	48.1%	41.5%	50.0%	21.4%	24.0%	40.3%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.7%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	1.4%
	Mean	3.33	3.52	3.53	3.50	3.79	3.56	3.54
My school provides students with information about the postsecondary education application process.		*(n<10)*	*(n=26)*	*(n=51)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=135)*
	Strongly agree	22.2%	50.0%	56.9%	41.7%	66.7%	64.0%	54.1%
	Agree	77.8%	46.2%	35.3%	58.3%	33.3%	24.0%	40.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	3.8%	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	3.7%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	2.2%
	Mean	3.22	3.46	3.45	3.42	3.67	3.48	3.46
My school provides students with information about paying for postsecondary education (e.g., FAFSA, loans, scholarships, grants).		*(n<10)*	*(n=26)*	*(n=52)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=137)*
	Strongly agree	33.3%	46.2%	59.6%	38.5%	50.0%	56.0%	51.8%
	Agree	66.7%	50.0%	32.7%	46.2%	41.7%	36.0%	40.9%
	Disagree	0.0%	3.8%	5.8%	7.7%	8.3%	4.0%	5.1%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	7.7%	0.0%	4.0%	2.2%
	Mean	3.33	3.42	3.50	3.15	3.42	3.44	3.42
My school provides students with information about education requirements for certain careers.		*(n<10)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=47)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=132)*
	Strongly agree	11.1%	36.0%	57.4%	42.9%	41.7%	52.0%	46.2%
	Agree	77.8%	60.0%	36.2%	50.0%	58.3%	36.0%	47.0%
	Disagree	11.1%	4.0%	4.3%	7.1%	0.0%	8.0%	5.3%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	1.5%
	Mean	3.00	3.32	3.49	3.36	3.42	3.36	3.38
My school provides students with information about internships, job shadowing opportunities, and/or other work-based learning opportunities.		*(n<10)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=47)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=21)*	*(n=124)*
	Strongly agree	14.3%	28.0%	42.6%	41.7%	25.0%	33.3%	34.7%
	Agree	57.1%	52.0%	36.2%	58.3%	58.3%	42.9%	46.0%
	Disagree	28.6%	16.0%	19.1%	0.0%	16.7%	19.0%	16.9%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	2.4%
	Mean	2.86	3.04	3.19	3.42	3.08	3.05	3.13
My school provides students with information about postsecondary education entrance exams (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSI Assessment).		*(n<10)*	*(n=27)*	*(n=53)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=24)*	*(n=143)*
	Strongly agree	33.3%	48.1%	67.9%	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	58.0%
	Agree	66.7%	44.4%	28.3%	50.0%	42.9%	25.0%	37.1%
	Disagree	0.0%	7.4%	1.9%	0.0%	7.1%	4.2%	3.5%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	1.4%
	Mean	3.33	3.41	3.62	3.50	3.43	3.54	3.52
		(n<10)	*(n=24)*	*(n=45)*	*(n<20)*	*(n<20)*	*(n=25)*	*(n=129)*

	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
My school provides parents with a range of information related to postsecondary education options for their child.	Strongly agree	25.0%	29.2%	46.7%	40.0%	41.7%	52.0%	41.9%
	Agree	62.5%	54.2%	35.6%	53.3%	50.0%	36.0%	44.2%
	Disagree	12.5%	16.7%	13.3%	6.7%	8.3%	8.0%	11.6%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	2.3%
	Mean	3.13	3.13	3.24	3.33	3.33	3.36	3.26
My school provides parents with a range of information related to how to pay for postsecondary education.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=44)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=126)
	Strongly agree	25.0%	24.0%	43.2%	38.5%	36.4%	52.0%	38.9%
	Agree	50.0%	60.0%	43.2%	53.8%	54.5%	36.0%	47.6%
	Disagree	25.0%	16.0%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	4.0%	9.5%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	7.7%	0.0%	8.0%	4.0%
	Mean	3.00	3.08	3.25	3.23	3.27	3.32	3.21
My school provides parents with a range of information related to career options for their child.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=44)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=124)
	Strongly agree	25.0%	25.0%	43.2%	38.5%	33.3%	52.2%	38.7%
	Agree	50.0%	58.3%	40.9%	53.8%	50.0%	30.4%	45.2%
	Disagree	25.0%	16.7%	11.4%	7.7%	16.7%	8.7%	12.9%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8.7%	3.2%
	Mean	3.00	3.08	3.23	3.31	3.17	3.26	3.19

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was <10, <10, <10, <10, 12, <10, 15, 13, 18, 26, 7, 21, 24, and 26, respectively. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TSIA = Texas Success Initiative Assessment.

Table F.8. Personnel Agreement Regarding Information Provided to Students and Parents by Their School, Year 2 (Grade 8–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=191)	(*n*=146)
I regularly provide students with information about postsecondary education.	Strongly agree	42.4%	36.3%
	Agree	48.7%	52.1%
	Disagree	6.3%	10.3%
	Strongly disagree	2.6%	1.4%
	Mean	3.31	3.23
		(*n*=189)	(*n*=146)
I regularly provide students with information about career options.	Strongly agree	37.0%	35.6%
	Agree	51.9%	51.4%
	Disagree	8.5%	11.6%
	Strongly disagree	2.6%	1.4%
	Mean	3.23	3.21
		(*n*=189)	(*n*=142)
My school provides students with information about how to academically prepare for postsecondary education.	Strongly agree	47.2%	50.7%
	Agree	45.7%	40.8%
	Disagree	4.0%	6.3%
	Strongly disagree	3.0%	2.1%
	Mean	3.37	3.40
		(*n*=191)	(*n*=145)
	Strongly agree	57.8%	58.6%

	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
My school provides students with information about high school graduation requirements.	Agree	38.0%	38.6%
	Disagree	1.6%	1.4%
	Strongly disagree	2.6%	1.4%
	Mean	3.51	3.54
My school provides students with information about creating a Personal Graduation Plan.		(*n*=187)	(*n*=138)
	Strongly agree	47.1%	50.7%
	Agree	47.1%	43.5%
	Disagree	3.7%	2.9%
	Strongly disagree	2.1%	2.9%
	Mean	3.39	3.42
My school provides students with information about opportunities to earn dual credit.		(*n*=189)	(*n*=144)
	Strongly agree	56.6%	57.6%
	Agree	39.2%	40.3%
	Disagree	1.6%	0.7%
	Strongly disagree	2.6%	1.4%
	Mean	3.50	3.54
My school provides students with information about the postsecondary education application process.		(*n*=191)	(*n*=135)
	Strongly agree	48.9%	54.1%
	Agree	45.7%	40.0%
	Disagree	3.3%	3.7%
	Strongly disagree	2.2%	2.2%
	Mean	3.41	3.46
My school provides students with information about paying for postsecondary education (e.g., FAFSA, loans, scholarships, grants).		(*n*=182)	(*n*=137)
	Strongly agree	48.9%	51.8%
	Agree	44.5%	40.9%
	Disagree	4.4%	5.1%
	Strongly disagree	2.2%	2.2%
	Mean	3.40	3.42
My school provides students with information about education requirements for certain careers.		(*n*=182)	(*n*=132)
	Strongly agree	46.2%	46.2%
	Agree	45.6%	47.0%
	Disagree	6.0%	5.3%
	Strongly disagree	2.2%	1.5%
	Mean	3.36	3.38
My school provides students with information about internships, job shadowing opportunities, and/or other work-based learning opportunities.		(*n*=176)	(*n*=124)
	Strongly agree	35.8%	34.7%
	Agree	51.1%	46.0%
	Disagree	10.8%	16.9%
	Strongly disagree	2.3%	2.4%
	Mean	3.20	3.13
My school provides students with information about postsecondary education entrance exams (e.g., SAT, ACT, TSI Assessment).		(*n*=189)	(*n*=143)
	Strongly agree	51.9%	58.0%
	Agree	41.3%	37.1%
	Disagree	3.7%	3.5%
	Strongly disagree	3.2%	1.4%
	Mean	3.42	3.52

	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=178)	(*n*=129)
My school provides parents with a range of information related to postsecondary education options for their child.	Strongly agree	38.8%	41.9%
	Agree	48.9%	44.2%
	Disagree	9.0%	11.6%
	Strongly disagree	3.4%	2.3%
	Mean	3.23	3.26
		(*n*=174)	(*n*=126)
My school provides parents with a range of information related to how to pay for postsecondary education.	Strongly agree	36.8%	38.9%
	Agree	50.0%	47.6%
	Disagree	9.8%	9.5%
	Strongly disagree	3.4%	4.0%
	Mean	3.20	3.21
		(*n*=178)	(*n*=124)
My school provides parents with a range of information related to career options for their child.	Strongly agree	33.7%	38.7%
	Agree	54.5%	45.2%
	Disagree	8.4%	12.9%
	Strongly disagree	3.4%	3.2%
	Mean	3.19	3.19

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*. FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. TSIA – Texas Success Initiative Assessment.

Table F.9. Personnel Perceptions of GEAR UP Advisors by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

The GEAR UP advisors…	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
…provide students at my school with grade-appropriate information regarding postsecondary education and career readiness.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=43)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=125)
	Strongly agree	28.6%	36.0%	48.8%	28.6%	25.0%	45.8%	40.0%
	Agree	57.1%	56.0%	44.2%	64.3%	75.0%	41.7%	52.0%
	Disagree	14.3%	4.0%	2.3%	7.1%	0.0%	8.3%	4.8%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.0%	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	3.2%
	Mean	3.14	3.24	3.37	3.21	3.25	3.29	3.29
…support students in preparing for postsecondary education.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=46)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=129)
	Strongly agree	28.6%	40.0%	54.3%	33.3%	30.8%	56.5%	45.7%
	Agree	57.1%	56.0%	39.1%	60.0%	61.5%	34.8%	47.3%
	Disagree	14.3%	0.0%	4.3%	6.7%	7.7%	4.3%	4.7%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	2.3%
	Mean	3.14	3.32	3.46	3.27	3.23	3.43	3.36
…help parents/guardians prepare for their child's postsecondary education.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=42)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=118)
	Strongly agree	20.0%	29.2%	47.6%	33.3%	25.0%	56.5%	40.7%
	Agree	60.0%	58.3%	42.9%	58.3%	75.0%	30.4%	49.2%
	Disagree	20.0%	8.3%	7.1%	8.3%	0.0%	8.7%	7.6%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.2%	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	2.5%
	Mean	3.00	3.13	3.36	3.25	3.25	3.39	3.28
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=44)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=126)
	Strongly agree	28.6%	45.8%	47.7%	28.6%	46.2%	45.8%	43.7%

The GEAR UP advisors…	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
…inform students of their postsecondary education options.	Agree	57.1%	50.0%	43.2%	71.4%	53.8%	41.7%	49.2%
	Disagree	14.3%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	4.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.2%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	3.2%
	Mean	3.14	3.38	3.34	3.29	3.46	3.29	3.33
…inform parent awareness of postsecondary education options for their child.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=42)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=120)
	Strongly agree	20.0%	25.0%	47.6%	38.5%	25.0%	50.0%	39.2%
	Agree	60.0%	66.7%	33.3%	53.8%	66.7%	37.5%	47.5%
	Disagree	20.0%	4.2%	14.3%	7.7%	8.3%	8.3%	10.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.2%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	3.3%
	Mean	3.00	3.13	3.24	3.31	3.17	3.33	3.23
…inform student awareness and understanding of career opportunities.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=25)	(*n*=44)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=125)
	Strongly agree	28.6%	36.0%	45.5%	30.8%	41.7%	45.8%	40.8%
	Agree	57.1%	60.0%	47.7%	61.5%	58.3%	37.5%	51.2%
	Disagree	14.3%	0.0%	4.5%	7.7%	0.0%	12.5%	5.6%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	4.0%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	2.4%
	Mean	3.14	3.28	3.36	3.23	3.42	3.25	3.30
…help our school increase the number of opportunities students of all grades have to receive postsecondary education and career advising.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=24)	(*n*=46)	(*n*<20)	(*n*<20)	(*n*=23)	(*n*=128)
	Strongly agree	14.3%	37.5%	52.2%	33.3%	53.8%	52.2%	45.3%
	Agree	71.4%	54.2%	39.1%	60.0%	38.5%	34.8%	45.3%
	Disagree	14.3%	0.0%	4.3%	6.7%	7.7%	8.7%	5.5%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	8.3%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	3.9%
	Mean	3.00	3.21	3.39	3.27	3.46	3.35	3.32

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 25, 21, 32, 24, 30, 24, and 22, respectively. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.10. Personnel Perceptions of GEAR UP Advisors, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

The GEAR UP advisors…	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=126)	(*n*=125)
…provide students at my school with grade-appropriate information regarding postsecondary education and career readiness.	Strongly agree	42.9%	40.0%
	Agree	50.8%	52.0%
	Disagree	2.4%	4.8%
	Strongly disagree	4.0%	3.2%
	Mean	2.79	3.29
		(*n*=128)	(*n*=129)
…support students in preparing for postsecondary education.	Strongly agree	46.9%	45.7%
	Agree	46.1%	47.3%
	Disagree	3.1%	4.7%
	Strongly disagree	3.9%	2.3%
	Mean	3.36	3.36
		(*n*=119)	(*n*=118)
…help parents/guardians prepare for their child's postsecondary education.	Strongly agree	39.5%	40.7%
	Agree	48.7%	49.2%
	Disagree	7.6%	7.6%
	Strongly disagree	4.2%	2.5%
	Mean	2.55	3.28
		(*n*=127)	(*n*=126)
…inform students of their postsecondary education options.	Strongly agree	45.7%	43.7%
	Agree	46.5%	49.2%
	Disagree	3.9%	4.0%
	Strongly disagree	3.9%	3.2%
	Mean	3.34	3.33
		(*n*=120)	(*n*=120)
…inform parent awareness of postsecondary education options for their child.	Strongly agree	39.2%	39.2%
	Agree	51.7%	47.5%
	Disagree	5.0%	10.0%
	Strongly disagree	4.2%	3.3%
	Mean	3.26	3.23
		(*n*=125)	(*n*=125)
…inform student awareness and understanding of career opportunities.	Strongly agree	45.6%	40.8%
	Agree	47.2%	51.2%
	Disagree	3.2%	5.6%
	Strongly disagree	4.0%	2.4%
	Mean	3.34	3.30
		(*n*=123)	(*n*=128)
…help our school increase the number of opportunities students of all grades have to receive postsecondary education and career advising.	Strongly agree	45.5%	45.3%
	Agree	43.9%	45.3%
	Disagree	7.3%	5.5%
	Strongly disagree	3.3%	3.9%
	Mean	3.32	3.32

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. GEAR UP – Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.11. Personnel Participation in TNTP-Driven Professional Development by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=17)	District 3 (*n*=22)	District 4 (*n*=12)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=19)	Overall (*n*=73)
*So far in the 2020–21 school year, have you participated in one or more TNTP-driven professional development sessions intended to increase the academic rigor of your curriculum?**	62.5%	82.4%	54.5%	8.3%	16.7%	62.5%	52.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. The item included three response options: *Yes*, *No*, and *I'm not sure*.
*Responses differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(10) = 30.7$, *p*<.001.

Table F.12. Reasons Personnel Did Not Participate in TNTP-Driven Professional Development Intended to Increase Academic Rigor by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*<10)	District 3 (*n*<10)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*=0)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=11)
I did not know such professional development was being offered.	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	-	0.0%	72.7%
I was busy with school/family/ work or my schedule did not allow me to participate.	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%	9.1%
*Other^*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-	100.0%	18.2%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table F.13. Format of TNTP-Driven Professional Development Participated in by Personnel, by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Format	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=14)	District 3 (*n*=12)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=38)
Only in person	0.0%	7.1%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	80.0%	23.7%
Only online/virtual	80.0%	21.4%	33.3%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	31.6%
Both in person and online/virtual	20.0%	71.4%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%	20.0%	44.7%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Responses differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(10) = 23.1$, *p*<.01.

Table F.14. Personnel Agreement Regarding the Effects of COVID-19 on TNTP-Driven Professional Development by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

COVID-19…	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
…has made it more difficult for me to learn about upcoming professional development activities.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(n=37)
	Strongly agree	25.0%	14.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	13.5%
	Agree	0.0%	21.4%	58.3%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	32.4%
	Disagree	75.0%	64.3%	25.0%	100.0%	100.0%	40.0%	51.4%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%
	Mean	2.50	2.50	2.67	2.00	2.00	2.80	2.57
…has prevented me from fully engaging in the professional development activities in which I participated.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(n=37)
	Strongly agree	0.0%	21.4%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	21.6%
	Agree	75.0%	35.7%	33.3%	100.0%	100.0%	20.0%	40.5%
	Disagree	25.0%	28.6%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	27.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	14.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	10.8%
	Mean	2.75	2.64	2.75	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.73
…has encouraged more professional development activities that focused on virtual education and learning.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=12)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(n=37)
	Strongly agree	50.0%	35.7%	41.7%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	35.1%
	Agree	50.0%	50.0%	41.7%	100.0%	100.0%	20.0%	45.9%
	Disagree	0.0%	14.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	13.5%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	5.4%
	Mean	3.50	3.21	3.17	3.00	3.00	2.40	3.11

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was <10, <10, and <10 respectively. COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.15. Personnel Agreement Regarding TNTP-Driven Professional Development by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
The professional development that I have participated in this year has provided me with strategies for increasing the rigor in my courses.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=11)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=36)
	Strongly agree	25.0%	14.3%	27.3%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	19.4%
	Agree	50.0%	64.3%	45.5%	0.0%	100.0%	80.0%	58.3%
	Disagree	25.0%	21.4%	18.2%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.4%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
	Mean	3.00	2.93	2.91	2.00	3.00	3.20	2.94
The strategies I have acquired in professional development this year have been easy to implement.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=11)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=36)
	Strongly agree	25.0%	14.3%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	13.9%
	Agree	50.0%	50.0%	63.6%	100.0%	100.0%	80.0%	61.1%
	Disagree	25.0%	35.7%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.4%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%
	Mean	3.00	2.79	2.64	3.00	3.00	3.20	2.83
I have been able to successfully implement the strategies I've learned in professional development in a virtual setting.		(*n*<10)	(*n*=14)	(*n*=10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*=35)
	Strongly agree	25.0%	7.1%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	11.4%
	Agree	50.0%	57.1%	40.0%	100.0%	100.0%	20.0%	48.6%
	Disagree	25.0%	28.6%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%	60.0%	31.4%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	7.1%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.6%
	Mean	3.00	2.64	2.40	3.00	3.00	2.60	2.63

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was <10, <10, and <10, respectively. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.16. Personnel Agreement Regarding TNTP-Driven Professional Development, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*=76)	(*n*=36)
The professional development that I have participated in this year has provided me with strategies for increasing the rigor in my courses.	Strongly agree	38.2%	19.4%
	Agree	50.0%	58.3%
	Disagree	10.5%	19.4%
	Strongly disagree	1.3%	2.8%
	Mean*	3.25	2.94
		(*n*=76)	(*n*=36)
The strategies I have acquired in professional development this year have been easy to implement.	Strongly agree	27.6%	13.9%
	Agree	63.2%	61.1%
	Disagree	6.6%	19.4%
	Strongly disagree	2.6%	5.6%
	Mean*	3.16	2.83

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Mean responses significantly differed across years: The professional development that I have participated in this year has helped with strategies for increasing the rigor in my courses: F(1, 110) = 4.6, *p*<.05; The strategies I have acquired in professional development this year have been easy to implement: F(1, 110) = 5.5, *p*<.05.

Table F.17. Number of Coaching Sessions Teachers Participated in by Personnel, by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Number of Coaching Sessions	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=17)	District 3 (*n*=22)	District 4 (*n*=12)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=73)
None	12.5%	11.8%	54.5%	33.3%	0.0%	12.5%	27.4%
1–2	12.5%	29.4%	4.5%	8.3%	0.0%	37.5%	15.1%
3–4	37.5%	41.2%	13.6%	25.0%	33.3%	37.5%	28.8%
5 or more	37.5%	17.6%	27.3%	33.3%	66.7%	12.5%	28.8%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Responses differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(15) = 27.5$, p<.05.

Table F.18. Number of Coaching Sessions Teachers Participated in by Personnel, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Number of Coaching Sessions	Year 2 (*n*=82)	Year 3 (*n*=73)
None	19.5%	28.8%
1–2	22.0%	28.8%
3–4	26.8%	15.1%
5 or more	31.7%	27.4%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table F.19. Topics Discussed During Teacher Coaching/Mentoring Sessions by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Session Discussion Topics	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=12)	District 3 (*n*=16)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=50)
Student engagement	60.0%	66.7%	81.3%	62.5%	100.0%	71.4%	72.0%
Academic supports for students	40.0%	33.3%	75.0%	75.0%	50.0%	71.4%	60.0%
Advanced instructional strategies	0.0%	33.3%	62.5%	25.0%	0.0%	42.9%	38.0%
Student readiness for postsecondary education	20.0%	33.3%	50.0%	12.5%	50.0%	28.6%	34.0%
Virtual or distance-based learning	100.0%	50.0%	56.3%	75.0%	50.0%	42.9%	60.0%
Project-based learning	40.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	20.0%
*Other^*	0.0%	8.3%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table F.20. Topics Discussed During Teacher Coaching/Mentoring Sessions, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

Session Discussion Topics	Year 2 (*n*=67)	Year 3 (*n*=50)
Student engagement	74.6%	72.0%
Academic supports for students	64.2%	60.0%
Advanced instructional strategies	52.2%	38.0%
Student readiness for postsecondary education	49.3%	34.0%
*Project-based learning**	41.8%	20.0%
*Other^*	1.5%	4.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response options only included in both Years 2 and 3 are included in Table F.20. See Table F.21 for all response options included on the Year 3 survey.
*Responses differed significantly across years: $\chi^2(1) = 6.2$, *p*<.05.
^Although participants selected other, they did not provide additional descriptions.

Table F.21. Personnel Agreement Regarding Mentoring/Coaching Sessions by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=13)	District 3 (*n*=16)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=50)
The teacher mentoring/ coaching that I have received so far this school year has helped me to increase academic rigor in my courses.	Strongly agree	40.0%	15.4%	18.8%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	16.0%
	Agree	40.0%	46.2%	75.0%	85.7%	100.0%	100.0%	70.0%
	Disagree	20.0%	30.8%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
	Mean	3.20	2.69	3.13	3.14	3.00	3.00	3.00

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* was <10. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.22. Personnel Agreement Regarding Mentoring/Coaching Sessions, Grade 9–12, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=63)	Year 3 (*n*=50)
The teacher mentoring/ coaching that I have received so far this school year has helped me to increase academic rigor in my courses.	Strongly agree	27.0%	16.0%
	Agree	60.3%	70.0%
	Disagree	9.5%	12.0%
	Strongly disagree	3.2%	2.0%
	Mean	3.11	3.00

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.23. Personnel Participation in Texas OnCourse Academy Counselor and Advisor Program by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=0)	District 3 (*n*=10)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*<10)	Overall (*n*=17)
Have you participated in the new Texas OnCourse Academy Advisor Training this year (2020–21)?	100.0%	-	40.0%	100.0%	66.7%	50.0%	100.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table F.24. Personnel Agreement Regarding Texas OnCourse Academy Counselor and Advisor Program Experiences by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

As a result of my participation in the Advisor Training…	Response Option	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	Overall
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<20)
I have learned new information for <u>postsecondary education</u> advising.	Strongly agree	0.0%	-	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%	44.4%
	Agree	100.0%	-	50.0%	100.0%	50.0%	0.0%	55.6%
	Disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.00	-	3.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	3.44
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<20)
I have learned new information for <u>career</u> advising.	Strongly agree	0.0%	-	33.3%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%	37.5%
	Agree	100.0%	-	66.7%	100.0%	50.0%	0.0%	62.5%
	Disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.00	-	3.33	3.00	3.50	4.00	3.38
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<20)
I feel better prepared to deliver individualized postsecondary education and career advising to <u>students</u>.	Strongly agree	0.0%	-	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%	44.4%
	Agree	100.0%	-	50.0%	100.0%	50.0%	0.0%	55.6%
	Disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.00	-	3.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	3.44
		(*n*<10)	(*n*=0)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)	(*n*<20)
I feel better prepared to deliver individualized postsecondary education and career advising to <u>parents</u>.	Strongly agree	0.0%	-	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%	44.4%
	Agree	100.0%	-	50.0%	100.0%	50.0%	0.0%	55.6%
	Disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.00	-	3.50	3.00	3.50	4.00	3.44

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 0, 0, <10, and 0, respectively. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table F.25. Staff Who Participated in Vertical Teaming According to Personnel Survey Respondents by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

Participated in Vertical Teaming	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=27)	District 3 (*n*=45)	District 4 (*n*=19)	District 5 (*n*<20)	District 6 (*n*=23)	Overall (*n*=133)
High school teachers	62.5%	74.1%	64.4%	63.2%	54.5%	65.2%	65.4%
Middle school teachers	0.0%	33.3%	17.8%	10.5%	45.5%	17.4%	21.1%
*District staff**	25.0%	44.4%	28.9%	15.8%	54.5%	56.5%	36.8%
High school administrators	12.5%	29.6%	51.1%	21.1%	36.4%	47.8%	38.3%
Middle school administrators	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	5.3%	0.0%	17.4%	6.0%
Staff from postsecondary institutions	12.5%	7.4%	8.9%	0.0%	9.1%	8.7%	7.5%
None of the above	0.0%	7.4%	8.9%	5.3%	0.0%	8.7%	6.8%
I have not participated in vertical teaming since summer 2020	37.5%	11.1%	26.7%	26.3%	36.4%	21.7%	24.1%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*District staff responses differed significantly across districts: $\chi^2(5) = 11.6$, *p*<.05.

Table F.26. Staff Who Participated in Vertical Teaming According to Personnel Survey Respondents, Year 2 (Grade 7–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

Participated in Vertical Teaming	Year 2 (*n*=175)	Year 3 (*n*=133)
High school teachers	66.9%	65.4%
*Middle school teachers**	50.9%	21.1%
District staff	37.7%	36.8%
High school administrators	29.7%	38.3%
*Middle school administrators**	23.4%	6.0%
Staff from postsecondary institutions	10.9%	7.5%
None of the above	8.6%	6.8%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Response percentages will not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses.
*Responses differed significantly across years: Middle school teachers: $\chi^2(1) = 28.5$, *p*<.001; Middle school administrators: $\chi^2(1) = 17.1$, *p*<.001.

Table F.27. Personnel Agreement Regarding Vertical Teaming Experiences by District, Grade 9–12, Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	District 1 (*n*<10)	District 2 (*n*=21)	District 3 (*n*=25)	District 4 (*n*<10)	District 5 (*n*<10)	District 6 (*n*=14)	Overall (*n*=80)
The vertical teaming that I participated in so far this school year has helped to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level for students at my school.	Strongly agree	25.0%	0.0%	24.0%	33.3%	14.3%	28.6%	18.8%
	Agree	50.0%	71.4%	64.0%	44.4%	42.9%	50.0%	58.8%
	Disagree	25.0%	14.3%	12.0%	22.2%	28.6%	14.3%	16.3%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	7.1%	6.3%
	Mean	3.00	2.57	3.12	3.11	2.57	3.00	2.90

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* were not included in this analysis. The number of respondents who selected *I don't know/Not applicable* for each item listed was 15. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size.

Table F.28. Personnel Agreement Regarding Vertical Teaming Experiences, Year 2 (Grade 7–12)–Year 3 (Grade 9–12)

	Response Option	Year 2 (*n*=139)	Year 3 (*n*=80)
The vertical teaming that I participated in so far this school year has helped to align curriculum and reduce the need for remediation at the postsecondary level for students at my school.	Strongly agree	25.2%	18.8%
	Agree	62.6%	58.8%
	Disagree	10.1%	16.3%
	Strongly disagree	2.2%	6.3%
	Mean*	3.11	2.90

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Personnel Survey administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
*Mean responses differed significantly across years: $F(1, 217) = 4.5$, $p<.05$.

APPENDIX G: Scaling Survey for Districts Analyses Technical Detail

Table G.1. District Scaling Survey Respondent Primary Position, Year 3 (2020–21)

Position	(*n*<10)
Counselor	50.0%
Teacher	50.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Scaling Survey for Districts administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).

Table G.2. District Scaling Survey Respondent Agreement Regarding Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Curriculum, Year 2 (2019–20)– Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
Students were engaged in the course.	Strongly agree	0.0%	40.0%
	Agree	100.0%	60.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.00	3.40
		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
The course provided students with relevant information on how to select an endorsement.	Strongly agree	40.0%	60.0%
	Agree	60.0%	40.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.40	3.60
		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
The course provided grade-appropriate information.	Strongly agree	0.0%	60.0%
	Agree	80.0%	20.0%
	Disagree	20.0%	20.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	2.80	3.40
		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
The level of difficulty of the materials in the course was grade-appropriate.	Strongly agree	0.0%	40.0%
	Agree	60.0%	20.0%
	Disagree	40.0%	40.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	2.60	3.00
		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
The course provided opportunities for students to learn about a variety of career options related to their interests.	Strongly agree	60.0%	60.0%
	Agree	40.0%	20.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	20.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.60	3.40
		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)

		Year 2	Year 3
The course effectively informed students on how to achieve career goals.	Strongly agree	0.0%	75.0%
	Agree	100.0%	25.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean*	3.60	3.40
The course provided students with information about different types of postsecondary education options, including 2-year, 4-year, and technical schools.		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
	Strongly agree	60.0%	60.0%
	Agree	40.0%	40.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.00	3.75
The course helped students understand how to pay for postsecondary education.		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
	Strongly agree	0.0%	50.0%
	Agree	100.0%	50.0%
	Disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean	3.60	3.60

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Scaling Survey for Districts administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Disagree*, 2–*Disagree*, 3–*Agree*, 4–*Strongly Agree*.

Table G.3. District Scaling Survey Respondent Satisfaction with Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness Training, Year 2 (2019–20)–Year 3 (2020–21)

	Response Option	Year 2	Year 3
Level of satisfaction with training offered		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
	Strongly satisfied	0.0%	75.0%
	Satisfied	100.0%	25.0%
	Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean*	3.00	3.75
Level of satisfaction with instructor resources		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
	Strongly satisfied	0.0%	100.0%
	Satisfied	100.0%	0.0%
	Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean^	3.00	4.00
Level of satisfaction with student resources		(*n*<10)	(*n*<10)
	Strongly satisfied	0.0%	75.0%
	Satisfied	100.0%	25.0%
	Dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%
	Strongly dissatisfied	0.0%	0.0%
	Mean*	3.00	3.75

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Scaling Survey for Districts administered in Year 2 (spring/fall 2020) and Year 3 (spring 2021).
Note. Statistical tests were not run due to the small sample size. Scale used to determine mean rating: 1–*Strongly Dissatisfied*, 2–*Dissatisfied*, 3–*Satisfied*, 4–*Strongly Satisfied*.

Table G.4. District Scaling Survey Respondents Who Reported They Plan to Continue Texas OnCourse College and Career Readiness, Year 3 (2020–21)

Response	(*n*<10)
Yes	100.0%

Source. GEAR UP: Beyond Grad Scaling Survey for Districts administered in Year 3 (spring 2021).