

Paving the Way to Post-Secondary Success:

Student participation in the Milwaukee Team GEAR UP Initiative

In this report, we summarize student participation in Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant across all seven years of the initiative in the Milwaukee Public Schools. 6,888 students participated in at least one GEAR UP activity. Over 90% of participants were either African American or Latinx and were from low-income families.

Transition Programs, designed to help the transition to high school, and College Visits were the most common activities students participated in, but GEAR UP provided a wide array of opportunities including Credit Recovery, mentoring, tutoring, and college preparation.

Although, the graduation rate of GEAR UP schools improved 4.7 percentage points from 2016 to 2017 with the GEAR UP cohort, non-GEAR UP schools also improved, but to a lesser degree. However, the improvement in graduation rates for Latinx students, improving 5.5 percentage points in GEAR UP schools, which was considerably greater than the rest of the district (1.5 percentage points). Latinx students were 9.2% more likely to graduate on time in the GEAR UP cohort than they were in the same schools prior to GEAR UP.

Graduating students were more likely to participate in GEAR UP activities than non-graduates (91% versus 73%). The average graduate in GEAR UP participated in many more activities than non-graduates who participated in GEAR UP (8.8 versus 4.3).

The improvement in graduation rates realized by specific GEAR UP schools is likely associated with how well they implemented the initiative. The two schools that demonstrated the greatest improvement in graduation rates, also demonstrated more intensive GEAR UP participation (students participated across more years and in more activities). This suggests that the impact of GEAR UP on graduation is locally determined by the effectiveness of a school's implementation of the initiative.

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What is TEAM GEAR UP?

In 2011, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) was awarded a 7-year, \$14.87 million federal GEAR UP grant to promote college awareness and readiness. The grant provided supports to students from the high school graduating classes of 2017 and 2018. The GEAR UP initiative employed a school-family-community partnership strategy¹ to bring culturally relevant and effective supports to students, and to empower families and schools to better support students as they progress through school and into college and careers. The initiative was also informed by the work of the Chicago Consortium of School Research that identified factors that can both promote or inhibit students progressing through high school and into college.²

MPS applied for the grant to develop services that could address a historically low on-time/four-year graduation rate. At the time of the grant application in 2011 only 62.8% of students graduated on time. Even fewer economically disadvantaged students (61.5%), African American (61.1%), and Hispanic (58.9%) students graduated MPS on time.³ After receiving funding, MPS TEAM GEAR UP started supporting the 2017 and 2018 graduating classes when students were still in 6th and 7th grade respectively, during the 2011-2012 school year. Each year, the initiative provided these students, their parents, and their schools with a variety of supports designed to meet two objectives:

Objective 1 was to increase educational expectations for participating students and family knowledge of postsecondary education, options, preparation, and financing.

Objective 2 was to increase academic performance, high school graduation, and post-secondary readiness and enrollment.

To achieve these objectives, six design principles were followed:

- 1) high academic standards and rigorous course content,
- 2) tutoring and targeted supports for underperforming students and those at risk of dropout,

¹ Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., & Van Voorhis, F. L. (2002). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action, 2nd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

² Roderick, M., Coca, V., & Nagaoka, J. (2011). Potholes on the road to college: High school effects in shaping urban students' participation in college application, four-year college enrollment, and college match. *Sociology of Education, 84*(3), 178-211.

³ <https://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>

- 3) supports for transitions to high school,
- 4) parent involvement,
- 5) access to post-secondary education, and
- 6) accountability at the student, school, and systems levels.

In this report we summarize the activities provided to MPS students in the service of these objectives and design principles and explore their impact on high school graduation.

Part 1: Participation

How many and what types of students participated in TEAM GEAR UP?

Across all seven years of GEAR UP programming, 6,888 students participated in at least one GEAR UP activity. Table 1 and Figure 1 present the number of students who participated in GEAR UP activities within each programming year. Year 3 and 4 participation numbers were considerably higher because, during those two years, GEAR UP was working both with the participating middle and high schools. As the two cohorts progressed into high school, GEAR UP worked to prepare students for the transition before they entered high school and while they were freshman students. GEAR UP recognized this transition was critical for the success of students and organized their programming accordingly.

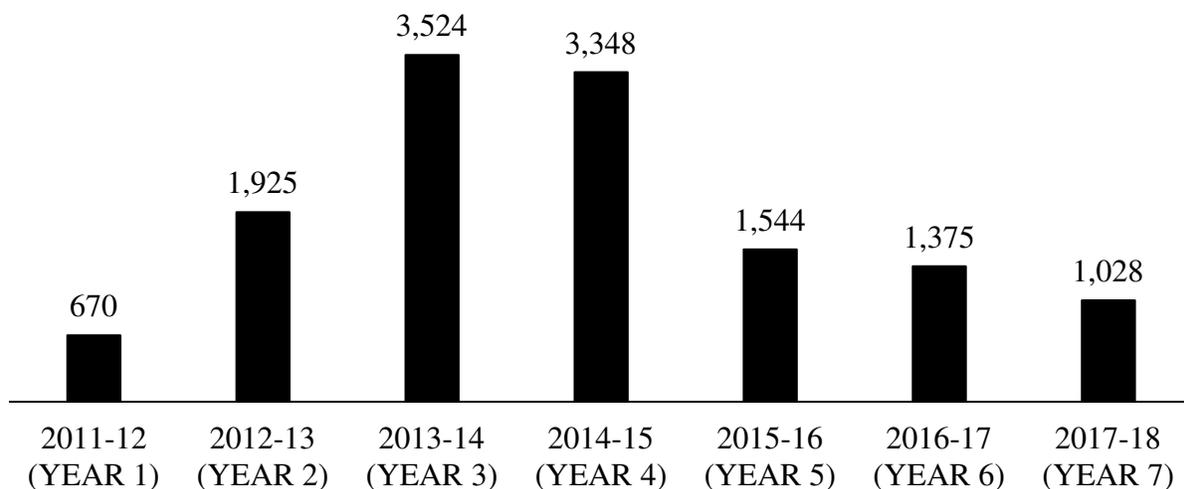


Figure 1: Number of students who participated in GEAR UP each year

Demographic information on the 6,888 GEAR UP participants are presented in in Table 1. Generally, GEAR UP worked with low-income students of color. Within this group though,

GEAR UP also provided programming to a significant number of students with an IEP or who were English Language Learners.

Table 1: Demographics characteristics of students who participated in GEAR UP

		Students	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	Female	3,228	47.0%
	Male	3,640	53.0%
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	African American	4,341	69.0%
	Asian	217	3.4%
	HI/PI ⁴	-	-
	Latinx	1,359	21.6%
	Multi-racial	253	4.0%
	Native American	66	1.0%
	White	56	0.9%
<i>Free/Reduced Lunch</i>	Free	6,144	89.6%
	Not eligible	493	7.2%
	Reduced	217	3.2%
<i>Special Education Participation (IEP)</i>	No	5,315	77.2%
	Yes	1,566	22.8%
<i>English Language Learners</i>	No	5,936	89.5%
	Yes	699	10.5%

What types of activities did students participate in?

Table 2 presents the number and percentage of students who participated in each type of GEAR UP activity across all seven years of GEAR UP. GEAR UP provided an array of activities to students.⁵ Transition Programs and College Visits were the most common, with 3,827 and 3,149 students respectively. Each type of activity took a variety of forms at different schools and across different years. As mentioned previously, transition programming focused on helping students successfully transition into high school. Obviously, college visits provided students the opportunity to experience a college campus, which helped them decide which colleges to apply

⁴ Information not presented since fewer than 5 students were this demographic category.

⁵ Activity definitions are included in Appendix C

for. In addition to these, other activities helped clear a path for students to take toward graduating high school and attending college. Programming helped students become more academically ready for college (Tutoring and Credit Recovery), apply for college (College Advising, Senior Bridge, FAFSA, and College Preparation), and ultimately become more knowledgeable about their college options (College Visits and Pre-College Programs). Taken together, these activities align well with the two objectives of the MPS TEAM GEAR UP initiative.

Table 2: Total number and percentage of all 6,888 GEAR UP participants participating in each type of activity across all seven years of GEAR UP programming

Type of GEAR UP activity	Participants	Percent of GEAR UP participants in activity
<i>Transition Program</i>	3,827	55.6%
<i>College Visits</i>	3,149	45.7%
<i>Social and Cultural</i>	2,082	30.2%
<i>College Preparation</i>	1,933	28.1%
<i>Credit Recovery</i>	1,699	24.7%
<i>Comprehensive Mentoring</i>	1,653	24.0%
<i>College Advising</i>	1,075	15.6%
<i>Tutoring</i>	992	14.4%
<i>Senior Bridge</i>	826	12.0%
<i>Financial Literacy</i>	671	9.7%
<i>FAFSA</i>	508	7.4%
<i>Pre-College Programs</i>	501	7.3%
<i>ACT prep</i>	250	3.6%
<i>Workshops</i>	185	2.7%
<i>Academic Enrichment</i>	81	1.2%
<i>AVID</i>	59	0.9%

Part 2: Impact on Graduation

In this analysis we first analyze overall graduation rates for students in GEAR UP schools to explore the possibility that GEAR UP schools graduated more students with the GEAR UP cohort than they had previously. Then we focus on the 2017 graduating class to determine how

many participated in GEAR UP, the types of activities they engaged in during their school career, and what aspects of participation are the most associated with high school graduation. Finally, we analyze school graduation rates to explore the possibility that GEAR UP had an impact on the graduation rates of schools.

Graduation rates before and after GEAR UP

Students in the graduating cohort before GEAR UP would have graduated after the 2015-16 school year while graduating cohort associated with GEAR UP students would have at the end of the 2016-17 school year. Thus, any graduation rate changes between these two groups may be attributable to the impact of GEAR UP. Table 3 presents the graduation rates across GEAR UP schools, disaggregated by racial groups. The overall graduation rate improved from 61.5% to 66.2% within the GEAR UP cohort. This 4.7 percentage point improvement represents a 7.6% increase in the likelihood of students graduating on time ($4.7\%/61.5\% = 7.6\%$). Further, the graduation rate improvement for Latinx (10.8%) and African American (8.2%) students, who represented over 90% of all GEAR UP participants, was even larger. Based on these results, it is clear that **GEAR UP schools graduated more students in the GEAR UP cohort than they had the previous year. The increase in graduation rates was larger in the racial groups that participated more in GEAR UP.**

Another possibility that may explain the improvement of graduation rates in GEAR UP schools is there are other, unmeasured factors that affected schools across the entire district. This would result in improvement regardless of GEAR UP participation. To explore this possibility we compared graduation rate changes in GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP schools from 2016 to 2017 (Figure 2). This figure shows that the graduation rates in non-GEAR UP schools also improved, with a 3.8 percentage point improvement from 2016 (59%) to 2017 (62.8%). This improvement is somewhat smaller however, than the 4.7 percentage point improvement seen in GEAR UP schools. The graduation rates for African American students also suggests a similar rate of improvement between non-GEAR UP students (5.2 percentage points) and GEAR UP students (5 percentage points). However, **the improvement demonstrated for Latinx students in GEAR UP schools was considerably greater (5.5 percentage points) than was the case in non-GEAR UP schools (1.5 percentage points).**

Table 3: Four-year graduation rate change from 2016 to 2017 in GEAR UP schools by race/ethnicity

	2015-16	2016-17	Percentage change
Asian	84.1%	82.4%	-2.1%
African American	60.9%	65.9%	8.2%
Latinx	60.1%	66.6%	10.8%
White	63.1%	67.8%	7.4%
Total	61.5%	66.2%	7.6%

Although the graduate rate improvement demonstrated in GEAR UP schools is compelling, the degree that this improvement is attributable to GEAR UP remains unclear. Since similar improvement rates were found in non-GEAR UP schools, the performance of GEAR UP schools may be attributable to general district trends. However, it is noteworthy that the improvement was somewhat greater in GEAR UP schools across demographic groups and that it was considerably greater with Latinx students.

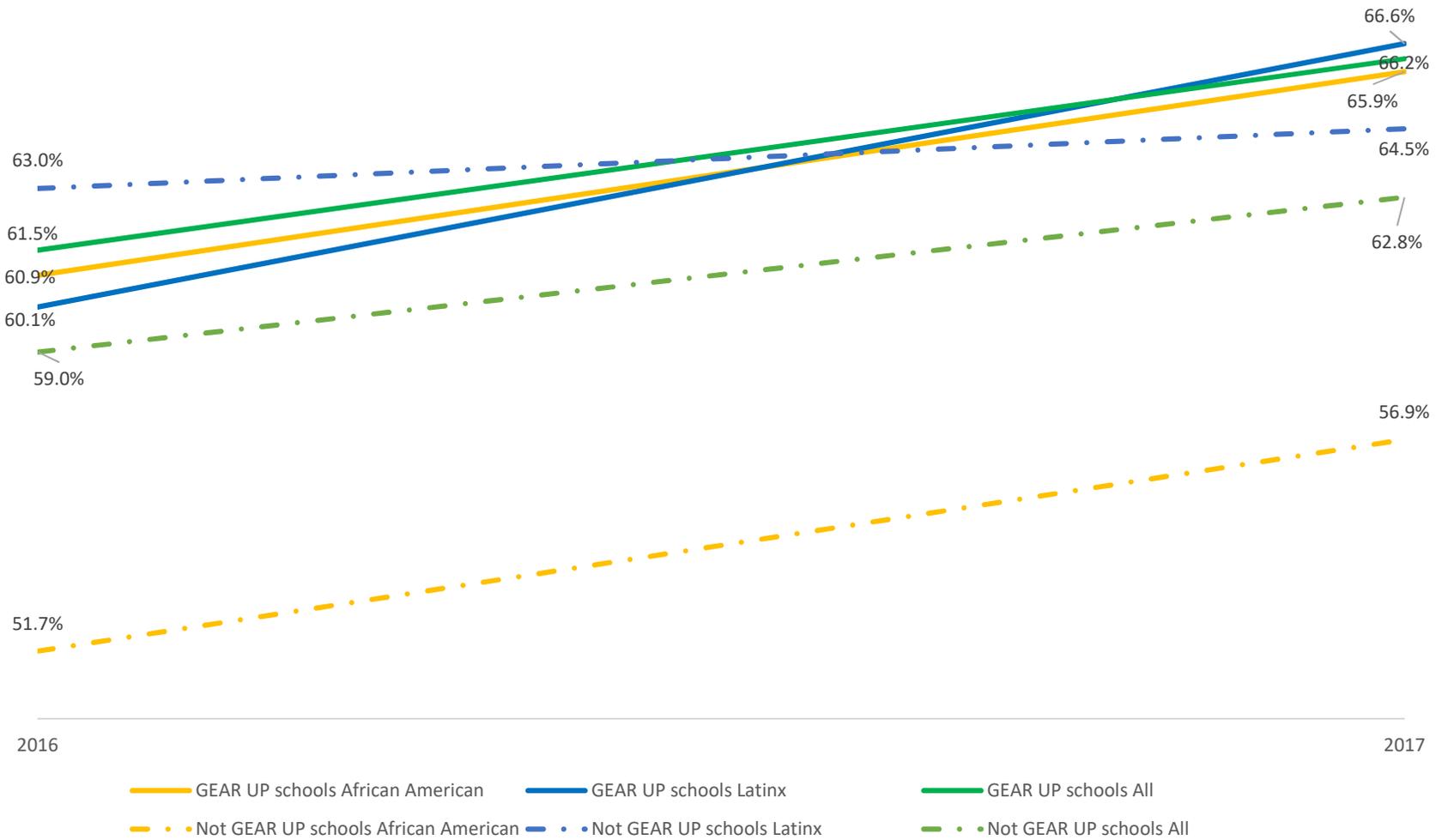


Figure 2: Comparison of graduation rate changes for GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP schools by race/ethnicity

Graduate and non-graduate participation in GEAR UP

Of the 2,684 seniors in GEAR UP schools in the 2017 and 2018 senior classes, 2,193 (82%) participated in at least one GEAR UP activity during their school career. Focusing specifically at the 2017 graduating class, there were 1,723 students who entered 9th grade in a GEAR UP high school during the 2013-14 school year and were expected to graduate in 2016-17. Of these, 1,150 (67%) graduated on time in 2016-17 and 573 (33%) did not (Table 4). Students who graduated on time with their cohort were significantly more likely to have participated in GEAR UP programming than students who did not graduate on time (91% compared to 73%; *Chi-squared* = 259, *p* < .001).⁶

Table 4: Cross tabulation of participation in GEAR UP and graduation status for the 2016-17 graduation cohort

	GEAR UP participants	Non-participants	Total	Percent participating in GEAR UP
Non Graduates	418	155	573	73%
Graduates	1047	103	1,150	91%
Total	1,465	258	1,723	85%

Although both graduates and non-graduates who participated in GEAR UP attended a number of activities across multiple school years, graduates participated in over twice as many activities on average (*X* = 8.8) than non-graduates (*X* = 4.3). Figure 3 presents the compounding percentage of graduates and non-graduates who participated in different numbers of activities. Graduating GEAR UP students participated in as many as 30 activities. Focusing just on graduates, most students participated in GEAR UP across multiple years (Figure 4).

⁶ Although being held back may result in students not being part of the GEAR UP cohort, which could partially explain the lower participation numbers, students in the 2016-17 cohort could be held back a year and continue to participate in the 2017-18 GEAR UP cohort.

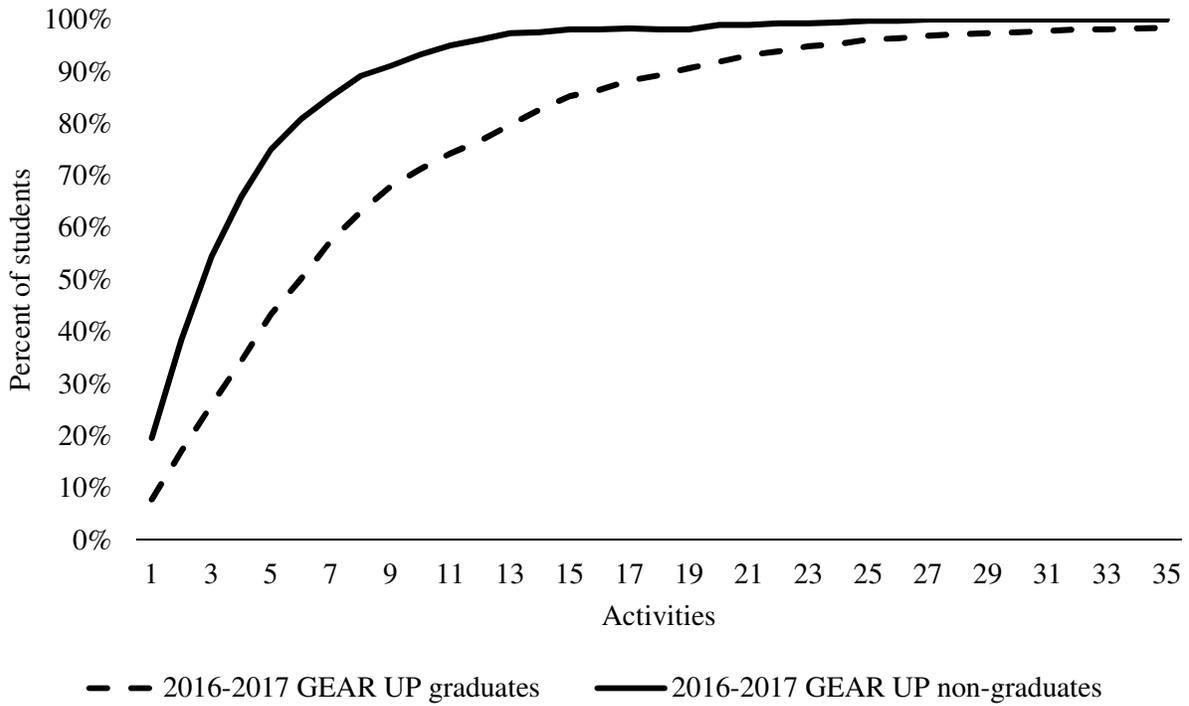


Figure 3: Number of activities for GEAR UP participants broken down by graduation status

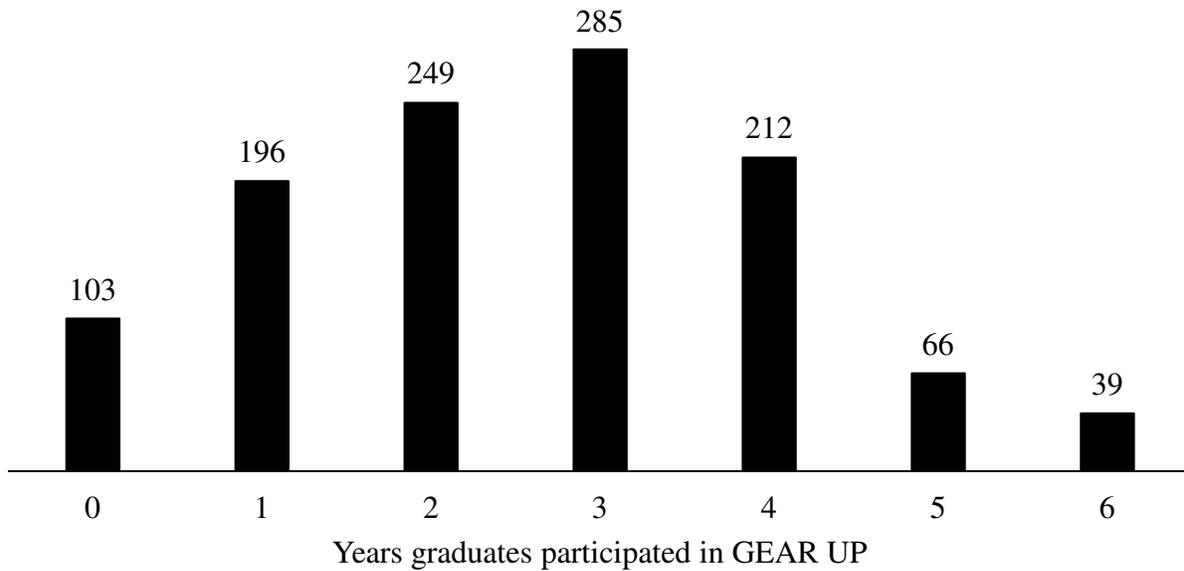


Figure 4: Years graduates participated in GEAR UP

Table 5 includes the number and percentage of GEAR UP graduates and non-graduates who participated in at least one activity within each activity type. In general, graduates were more likely than non-graduates to participate in every type of activity. The differences were more

pronounced regarding College Visits, College Preparation, and College Advising. The differences in these types of activities is reasonable considering students not likely to graduate would be less interested in participating in activities focused on college. There were smaller differences in participation rates in activities more focused more on promoting graduation, such as Credit Recovery and Transition Programming.

Table 5: The 2017 Graduation Cohort in GEAR UP schools: Graduates and non-graduates who participated in at each type of activity during their school career

	<i>GEAR UP graduates</i> (<i>n = 1,150</i>)		<i>GEAR UP non-graduates</i> (<i>n = 573</i>)		Percentage difference between graduates & non-graduates
	Students	Percent	Students	Percent	
<i>Transition Program</i>	783	68.1%	311	54.3%	13.8%
<i>College Visit</i>	667	58.0%	133	23.2%	34.8%
<i>College Advising</i>	540	47.0%	125	21.8%	25.1%
<i>College Preparation</i>	536	46.6%	78	13.6%	33.0%
<i>Social and Cultural</i>	320	27.8%	97	16.9%	10.9%
<i>Credit Recovery</i>	313	27.2%	147	25.7%	1.6%
<i>Senior Bridge</i>	308	26.8%	29	5.1%	21.7%
<i>Tutoring</i>	223	19.4%	48	8.4%	11.0%
<i>Comprehensive Mentoring</i>	189	16.4%	57	9.9%	6.5%
<i>FAFSA</i>	168	14.6%	17	3.0%	11.6%
<i>Pre-College Programs</i>	159	13.8%	11	1.9%	11.9%
<i>Workshops</i>	60	5.2%	28	4.9%	0.3%
<i>ACT Prep</i>	59	5.1%	7	1.2%	3.9%
<i>Academic Enrichment</i>	18	1.6%	2	0.3%	1.2%
<i>Financial Literacy</i>	16	1.4%	4	0.7%	0.7%

A focus on College Visits

In this section we break down graduate participation in College Visits, to show the number of times students used this resource provided by GEAR UP. Table 6 presents the number of college visits 667 GEAR UP graduates attended. It is notable that over 70% of these 667 students visited

more than one college and gained valuable exposure to multiple colleges to help them make their decision of where to go after graduation.

Table 6: Number of times a GEAR UP graduate visited a college with GEAR UP

Number of college visits	Students	Percent
1	198	29.7%
2	115	17.2%
3	77	11.5%
4	60	9.0%
5	50	7.5%
6	22	3.3%
7	17	2.5%
8	23	3.4%
9	16	2.4%
10 or more	89	13.3%
Total	667	100.0%

A focus on Credit Recovery

In Credit Recovery, students participated if they needed to make up a credit in a class they had previously failed. Prior to GEAR UP, there were no opportunities for freshmen or sophomore MPS students to recover credits. Three hundred and thirteen of the 1,150 GEAR UP graduates (27.2%) participated in Credit Recovery at least once, suggesting that some number of these students might not have graduated on-time had GEAR UP not provided them the opportunity to recover credits from failed classes. Further, graduates who participated in Credit Recovery typically did so more than once; of the 313 graduates, 232 (74.1%) attempted to recover at least two classes and 47 (15%) attempted to recover five or more classes (Table 7).

Table 7: Number of times a GEAR UP graduate participated in Credit Recovery

Number of Classes	Students	Percent
1	81	25.9%
2	87	27.8%
3	63	20.1%
4	35	11.2%
5	20	6.4%
6	11	3.5%
7	8	2.6%
8	4	1.3%
9	4	1.3%
Total	313	100.0%

Specific GEAR UP school graduation analysis

Table 8 presents historical graduation rates for all eight GEAR UP high schools from 2013 to 2017. Again, years 2013 through 2016 represent the graduation rates prior to GEAR UP, while 2017 reflects the graduation rate for the 2017 GEAR UP cohort. While GEAR UP schools realized an overall graduation rate improvement of 4.7 percentage points (Table 3), the change varied considerably between the eight GEAR UP schools. This increase in graduation rates was most notable for Bradley Tech (12.8 percentage points) and Hamilton (10.8 percentage points).

Table 8: Historical four-year graduation rates of GEAR UP schools

	<u>Graduation Year</u>				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<i>Audubon High</i>	80.0%	89.2%	81.0%	77.8%	76.3%
<i>Bay View High</i>	57.6%	58.0%	48.6%	52.8%	53.3%
<i>Bradley Tech</i>	61.8%	56.5%	50.4%	47.7%	60.5%
<i>Hamilton High</i>	69.5%	59.9%	60.7%	56.0%	66.8%
<i>James Madison Academic Campus</i>	55.2%	53.8%	54.9%	56.2%	61.9%
<i>Milwaukee High School of the Arts</i>	88.5%	88.2%	82.5%	87.2%	90.2%
<i>Milwaukee Marshall</i>	67.4%	74.7%	67.9%	69.6%	71.8%
<i>Vincent High</i>	61.3%	60.1%	65.1%	57.2%	54.8%

To further examine the possibility that GEAR UP improved graduation rates, we related school implementation of GEAR UP with changes in graduation rates from 2016 to 2017. Schools with higher graduation rates demonstrated more consistent implementation of GEAR UP across years; there was a strong correlation between the number of years students participated in GEAR UP and a school's prior (2016) graduation rate ($r = .729, p = .04$). This suggests schools with higher graduation rates are able to retain students longer, which allows more students more opportunities to participate in more years of GEAR UP programming. Thus, comparing the intensity of GEAR UP programming should only be done between schools with similar baseline graduation rates.

A breakdown of the specific school results illustrates the possible connection between a school's implementation of GEAR UP and their graduation rate change (Table 9). Specifically, students in schools with low baseline graduation rates and with the greatest graduation rate improvement, like Bradley Tech and Hamilton, were engaged in a more intensive GEAR UP experience than in other similar schools. **This pattern suggests that providing students a more intensive GEAR UP experience could result in greater graduation rate improvements.**

Table 9: GEAR UP school implementation and graduation rate change

	Average number of activities	Average years of participation	Percentage change in graduation rate from 2016 to 17
<i>Audubon High</i>	13.7	4.0	-1.9%
<i>Bay View High</i>	5.9	1.8	0.9%
<i>Bradley Tech</i>	8.3	2.1	26.8%
<i>Hamilton High</i>	6.3	2.4	19.3%
<i>James Madison Academic Campus</i>	3.4	1.5	10.1%
<i>Milwaukee High School of the Arts</i>	7.7	3.1	3.4%
<i>Milwaukee Marshall</i>	7.3	2.1	3.2%
<i>Vincent High</i>	3.7	1.5	-4.2%

Breaking down a school’s implementation by race/ethnicity provides further evidence of the connection between school implementation of GEAR UP and graduation rate changes (Table 10). The graduation rate changes in Bradley Tech for African American students (35.5%) and in Hamilton for Latinx students (25.6%) were large and drove the improvements seen across GEAR UP schools generally (Figure 2). In both cases, the intensity of GEAR UP programming provided to these students was greater than would be expected given the baseline graduation rates for each school. As mentioned before, the more students who graduate, the more opportunities they have to engage students in GEAR UP activities. In both, their baseline graduation rates were low. **In spite of Bradley Tech and Hamilton having low baseline graduation rates, they were still able to engage their African American and Latinx students, respectively, by providing an intensive GEAR UP experience.** This may explain the greater graduation improvement demonstrated in each school.

Table 10: GEAR UP school implementation and graduation rate change for African American and Latinx students⁷

	Average number of activities		Average years of participation		Percentage change in graduation rate from 2016 to 17	
	African American	Latinx	African American	Latinx	African American	Latinx
<i>Audubon High</i>	11.1	15.1	4.2	4.5	-23.9%	2.2%
<i>Bay View High</i>	6.6	5.7	2.0	2.0	-2.1%	2.8%
<i>Bradley Tech</i>	8.6	6.4	2.2	1.5	35.5%	11.7%
<i>Hamilton High</i>	6.0	7.5	2.2	2.7	18.4%	25.6%
<i>James Madison Academic Campus</i>	3.4	N/A	1.5	N/A	6.3%	N/A
<i>Milwaukee High School of the Arts</i>	8.7	7.2	3.3	3.4	9.4%	-0.8%
<i>Milwaukee Marshall</i>	7.7	N/A	2.1	N/A	1.2%	N/A
<i>Vincent High</i>	4.0	N/A	1.6	N/A	-2.3%	N/A

⁷ N/A = Data redacted due to small number of participants.

Summary Findings

The TEAM GEAR UP initiative was designed in 2011 to promote high school graduation and post-secondary participation for the 2017 and 2018 graduate cohorts. In this report, we summarized the various activities the initiative provided to these students across seven years and examined evidence regarding whether the initiative impacted high school graduation rates. The results suggested the initiative provided students and families with an array of supports and experiences that were designed to help students move through high school and into post-secondary education.

- *GEAR UP provided graduation and college-focused programming to a large number of students* - Across all seven programming years, 6,888 students participating in at least one GEAR UP activity. GEAR UP participation peaked in years three and four of the initiative as students transitioned from middle to high school. Transition programming and college visits were the two most popular types of activities since 68% of graduating seniors in GEAR UP schools participated in transition programming and 58% attended college visits.
- *The more students participated in GEAR UP the more likely they were to graduate high school on time* - While 91% of students graduating on-time participated in GEAR UP programming, only 73% of non-graduating students participated. Among GEAR UP participants, graduates had participated in an average of 8.8 activities while non-graduates only participated in 4.3 activities.
- *GEAR UP helped students make progress toward graduation* - GEAR UP organized Credit Recovery to allow students to catch up on credits lost due to failed courses. Over a quarter of students graduating on time took advantage of this initiative at least once, suggesting that some number of these students might not have graduated on time had it not been for GEAR UP.
- *GEAR UP helped students select the right college to attend* – Among the 667 graduates who attended college visits, more than half visited at least three colleges. Another 540 graduates received college advising designed to help them explore their interests and find the right college fit.

- *GEAR UP may have impacted school graduation rates where it was implemented well –*
The number of GEAR UP activities students typically participated in varied considerably between schools. This difference was associated with changes in school graduation rates from 2016 to 2017. Schools providing a more intensive GEAR UP experience realized an improvement to their graduation rates.
- As a next step, it would be useful to learn more about the specific strategies employed in the schools that demonstrated the greatest graduation gains. It will also be useful to replicate these finding with the 2018 graduating cohort.

Appendix A: Data Sources and Processing

Three sources of data provided by the Research and Evaluation Team within the MPS were used for this analysis:

Student attendance in GEAR UP activities - The first source of data was GEAR UP activity participation information. Students' participation in all GEAR UP activities were documented by GEAR UP staff in a CAYEN database over the entire seven-year history of the program⁸. This file tracked what activity the student did, the type of activity, the number of days and minutes attending the activity, and other information about students.

Student enrolment and demographics - A Third Friday Enrollment file was the second source of data used. This file captures the number of students enrolled at each school in the MPS and captures demographic information for individual students.

Student graduation - The third, and last source of data used, was a Graduation file. For this file, students who enter 9th grade for the first time during the Fall of the 2013 are identified as a cohort of students set to graduate in four years in the Spring of 2017. These students are then tracked to see if they graduate high school within four years or not.

Using students' MPS Student ID as a unique identifier, we connected these three sources of data to determine the demographic information of participants and the number of graduates and non-graduates from GEAR UP schools. We were also able to utilize this connection to determine the total number of unique students that participated, the total number of years any student participated, and the total number and frequency of what types of activities any student participated in.

⁸ Parent participation in a GEAR UP activity and students going to parent events were also recorded by GEAR UP staff but were removed from this analysis.

Appendix B: Definition of Terms

GEAR UP Activity: An activity was defined as individual event or session offered by the GEAR UP program. For example, going to a single Tutoring class would have been counted as a single activity a student participated in.

Activity Type: Individual activities were initially categorized by GEAR UP staff into general types of activities. After this initial categorization, some individual activities were regrouped by the SREed team into more specific or general categories.

GEAR UP Participation: This was defined as participating in at least one activity at any point in the entire seven-year history of the program.

GEAR UP Programming Year: All programming years used the same start and end dates. These ran from August 1st through July 31st of each school year. For example, the first year of programming was defined as activities that took place between August 1st, 2011 and July 31st, 2012.

Senior Class: This was defined as the total number of 12th grade students in Fall 2016 and Fall 2017 in GEAR UP schools. The number of seniors for the 2017 and 2018 senior classes was the number of 12th grade students enrolled at the eight GEAR UP schools as of the 3rd Friday in September.

Four-year Graduation Rate: This is the percentage of students who complete high school with their cohort and earn a credential within four years of starting high school. This is calculated by the number of students receiving regular high school diplomas divided by the total number of students in the cohort. This percentage was taken from what is reported for all GEAR UP schools in the WISEDash Data Dashboard on Wisconsin public schools.

Graduate: This is the number of students in the 2017 graduating cohort in all eight GEAR UP schools that graduated. Graduates in this analysis also included students who graduated in four years or less. Information on 2018 graduating class was not currently available at the time of making this report. Some students in the 2017 graduation file are not traceable. The number of graduates listed for all analyses are the number of students we could associate to other sources of data.

Appendix C: Description of Activity Types⁹

Academic Enrichment: Activities or programs that offer advanced learning opportunities to students.

ACT Prep: Various activities that prepared students to take the ACT test. This included ACT preparation classes and ACT practice tests.

AVID: Participation in AVID, or the Advancement Via Individual Determination program.

College Advising: Student advising to prepare students for college. This included check-up meetings with students or helping students select colleges.

College Preparation: An activity that assisted students in the transition to college.

College Visit: Any activity that involved visiting a college campus to help students decide what colleges to apply for.

Comprehensive Mentoring: Intensive and ongoing support for students.

Credit Recovery: Activity where students could retake a class during the summer that they had failed during the school year.

FAFSA: An activity that helped students with understanding or completing their FAFSA applications

Financial Literacy: An activity that promoted financial literacy skills such as financial responsibility.

Pre-College Programs: Activities or programs that took place at colleges that are designed to give college experiences to students.

Senior Bridge: An activity in the Senior Bridge program, a unique transition program that was developed by GEAR UP for first time seniors.

Social and Cultural: An activity that involved students going to conferences, educational field trips, or sporting events.

⁹ Activities that were in categorized as Informational Meetings and Other activity types were removed from the analysis.

Transition Program: An activity that prepared students for the transition before they entered high school and while they were freshman students.

Tutoring: An activity that involved academic tutoring such as afterschool homework assistance.

Workshops: An activity that involved attending workshops or seminars within a larger conference. These workshops were also focused on one particular topic such as Advanced Placement.