
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: DR. COLE
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: BACKGROUND INFO ON "GEAR UP" FOR NGA MEETING
DATE: 2/23/00
CC: FILE

While discussing funding opportunities through the U.S. Department of Education with Cheryl Rose of Secretary Riley's staff this morning, she mentioned that Secretary Riley will address the Appalachian Regional Commission at the NGA Conference (February 27, 4:30 p.m.). Secretary Riley will be discussing GEAR UP, a new program to increase the number of students going to college. Cheryl suggested that I brief you on GEAR UP prior to that meeting. The following is a brief description of GEAR UP.

GEAR UP provides multi-year competitive grants to states and to local partnerships between colleges, low-income middle schools and high schools, and least two other organizations (businesses, a community-based religious or parent organization, and student groups).

Funding totaled \$120 million in 1999 and will total \$200 million in FY 2000.

GEAR UP differs from, but complements, existing federal programs in several ways:

- GEAR UP partnerships start early – no later than the 7th grade – to ensure that more students reach high school having taken algebra and other courses needed for college.
- GEAR UP works with entire grades of students to transform their schools and school feeder system. The key services driving these changes include mentoring, tutoring, counseling, strengthening the school curriculum, professional development for teachers and staff, involving parents, and supporting other activities such as after-school programs, summer academic and enrichment programs, and college visits.
- GEAR UP leverages local resources by encouraging all colleges to partner with low-income middle schools and leverages non-federal resources with a one-for-one match requirement.

- GEAR UP can provide college scholarships and provides information to students and parents about college options and financial aid, including providing students with 21st Century Scholar Certificates – an early notification of their eligibility for financial aid.

Governor Musgrove signed correspondence on Monday, February 21, designating the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) as the state education agency eligible to apply for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) State Grant.