

# Attachment 1 –Texas GEAR UP College & Career Readiness Advising InterestProject Overview

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# 1. Purpose

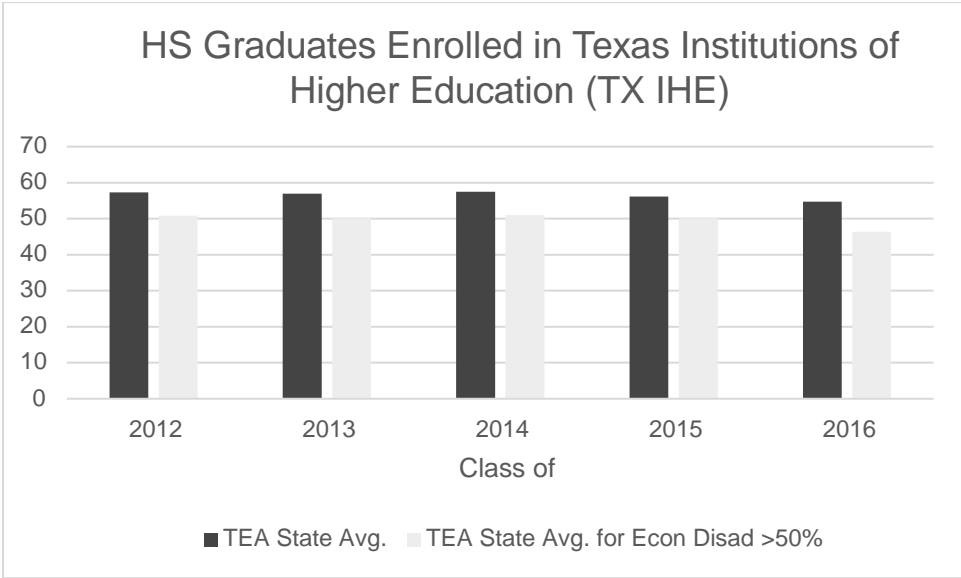
The Texas Education Agency's Beyond Grad initiative seeks to award multi-year grants to eligible college and career readiness advising organizations to build capacity with innovative programs that increase postsecondary preparation, enrollment and persistence among Texas students

## a) Background Information

TEA's Beyond Grad initiative is working to improve college and career readiness (CCR) outcomes by defining core problems faced by local education agencies (LEAs) and CCR advising organizations<sup>2</sup> piloting innovative solutions<sup>3</sup> identifying practices that improve outcomes, and scaling successful programs across the state of Texas.

With this multi-year grant opportunity, Beyond Grad will build the capacity and sustainability of external CCR advising organizations. The Beyond Grad initiative encourages CCR advising organizations to expand and enhance their programs for Texas schools that serve a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students<sup>1</sup>, by developing and delivering innovative pilot programs for Texas GEAR UP districts.

Texas has seen a decline in college enrollment for high school graduates. In 2014, 54.7% of Texas high school graduates enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college the following year. As shown in the chart below, from 2014-16 there has been a 2.8% decline in enrollment. The enrollment rate for high schools serving a majority of economically disadvantaged students is 8 percentage points lower than the state average.



Texas State Avg. of HS Graduate Enrollment in a Texas IHE within one year of graduation. Source: TEA 2012-2018 Reports

As Texas looks to the future, it is imperative that more high school graduates attain a postsecondary education. In 2015, Governor Greg Abbott announced the Texas 60X30 plan

<sup>1</sup> Economically Disadvantaged Students – a student is considered economically disadvantaged if they are eligible for free or reduced priced lunches at school. Source: <https://txschools.org>





Source: TEA, CCR Research on Programs in Texas

Additionally, in whole school advising models, much of the CCR advising activities focus on the junior and senior students, limiting the impact upon younger students. Research is clear that students who receive personalized CCR advising before 12<sup>th</sup> grade have greater postsecondary success in the aggregate than their counterparts who only receive CCR advising in 12<sup>th</sup> grade.<sup>4</sup> Through this grant, TEA seeks to expand capacity of



\*\*\*\* College Enrollment in TXData for Texas high school graduates from 2016, that enrolled in Texas public or independent higher education in the following fall Source:  
<https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tprs/2017/index.html>

### c) Eligibility Requirements

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education. The grantee should have strong project management processes and tools in place. Additionally, applicants must provide evidence of a culturally responsive approach to advising and outreach to diverse populations. Applicants should demonstrate ability to meet all requirements stated here (see ).

## 2. Project Description

### Project Overview

TEA's strategy for this initiative is to invest in programs to stimulate the growth of their organizational capacity to serve students across diverse geographic locations, GPA levels and all grade levels. In serving Texas GEAR UP schools, the following activities are expected of each grantee:

- 1) Serve all students in the 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades at partner GEAR UP high schools (services to be provided to students and their parents)
- 2) In coordination with the district and school staff, establish a reasonable advisor caseload that allows individual advising for all high school students, recognizing that advising structures and activities may vary across grade levels
- 3) Collaborate with all Texas GEAR UP stakeholders (districts, schools, parents, TEA staff, TEA Technical Assistance Providers, etc.) in meeting all applicable Federal program objectives (Spo ( C)10.g. in general)







- Regular(Monthly) Data Reporting
- Communication Schedule
- Advisor On-site Supervision
- Advisor Organizational Supervisor and Contact Information

The MOU agreed upon by both parties must be approved by TEA prior to the implementation of services.

### 2.2.3 Continuous Improvement Cycle

The Beyond Grad Initiative will embrace a Continuous Improvement Cycle where all stakeholders will participate in the planning, implementation and reflection process of the program. The stakeholders in the project are the Texas GEAR UP grantee district administration, staff and students, the CCR advising organizations, Technical Assistance providers and TEA staff.

#### Beyond Grad Annual Planning Cycle

- Before the Academic Year starts, stakeholders (CCR Advisor, CCR Grantee District Grant Manager, District/School Advisors, Teachers, TEA staff) will establish outcome goals for each district/school. These goals will be driven by the Texas GEAR UP program metrics (see Texas GEAR UP Summative Metrics) or year outcomes, and CCR student activity goals.
- CCR advising grantees and TEA Beyond Grad staff will hold Texas GEAR UP Check calls every two weeks to discuss program activities and outcomes. These calls will also be used to address any adjustments to the monthly goals. Agendas for these calls will be prepared by CCR advising grantees.
- CCR advising grantees will provide monthly reports on progress toward monthly goals.
- A Mid-Year Review will be held to assess the progress of the program. All stakeholders will participate in this review. The purpose of the review is to assess improvements in the program's delivery to determine if adjustments are needed to reach the annual goals. The agenda for the review will be submitted by the CCR advising organization and approved by TEA. e so 2.3 2.1 uallsf -4.f a

## 2.2.4 College & Career Readiness Training

To ensure the alignment of the CCR advising organization and assigned LEAs, a training will be held prior to the start of the school year with each district. The CCR advising organization will provide training to the district on their service delivery methodology, data system requirements, and partner expectations. The assigned LEA will provide the advising organization with training on their student data system(s), school operational policies and procedures, and space allocation for advising. The training agenda must be approved by TEA prior to the implementation of the training. Documentation of the agenda, attendance and information items addressed in the training must be submitted to TEA. TEA staff will attend this training to observe and clarify program objectives needed.

Training will be required annually for both CCR advising organizations and district grantees.

## 2.2.5 CCR Advisor Hiring & Training

The CCR advising organization is responsible for the hiring and training of CCR advisors working with students. These activities must take place before the start of each academic school year. The advisor training will include introductions to the district staff at the local school level. The training agenda must be approved by TEA prior to the implementation of the training. Documentation on the agenda, attendance and information items addressed in the training must be submitted to TEA.

## 2.2.6 CCR Advising Program Initiation

Advising program services will begin at the start of the 2019 academic school year. Services will be provided at the assigned high schools as designated within the OU. There are numerous activities required for the program documented in .

## 2.2.7 Data Collection & Reporting

The Texas GEAR UP program has rigorous activity and outcome reporting expectations. CCR Advising Program reports include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Monthly Student Contact Reporting (type of contact and amount of time)
- Student Milestone Reporting (e.g. FAFSA/TAFSA completion, ACT/SAT/TSI training & results, essay completion, college application submissions, career certifications completed, financial literacy)
- Student Event Details (College visits, Financial Literacy workshops, College Fairs,
- Parent Meetings and Event Attendance
- Mid-year Student Status Report
- End of School Year Review (including student postsecondary enrollment, matriculation, employment, etc.)
- GEAR UP Annual Performance Report (APR)
- Student Agency Pre-Post-Surveys

## 2.2.8 Beyond Grad Advisory Council

As a stakeholder in the Texas GEAR UP program, representatives from all CCR partners will participate in the Beyond Grad Advisory Council. The purpose for the Council is to share program updates and concerns/wins/best practices from the field. The Council will be made up of all the GEAR UP grantee districts, school, TEA Beyond Grad staff, partners, educational leaders, and community partners.

## 2.2.9 High School Student Summer Programming

The CCR advising partner will provide a summer program activity to keep students engaged in the college and career readiness process. Services should be targeted for high school students based upon the needs identified by the organization and LEA. Documentation on the agenda, attendance and information items addressed in the summer program will need to be submitted to TEA. The program agenda must be approved by TEA prior to the event.

Because middle school summer programming is an optional requirement for this grant opportunity, proposals that include middle school students' access to summer programming will receive special consideration.

## 2.2.10 Fidelity of Implementation

To effectively replicate and eventually scale the results of this COB initiative, the project will include the development of a Fidelity of Implementation (FOI) rubric. Education and social service research demonstrates that the implementation of evidence-based programs has a direct impact upon the effectiveness of a program. In coordination with the GEAR UP LEAs, the grantees will participate

February 6 2019	Request for Competitive Letters of Interest for providing CCR Advising services Posted
February 13 2019	Last day to submit written questions about Texas GEAR UP CCR grant, no later 5:00 p.m. CT; Send <a href="mailto:BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov">BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov</a> with the subject line: "GUCCR- LOI Question@ORGANIZATIONNAME>"
February 15	

## 4. Program Administration

To ensure successful implementation, monitoring and management of all LEAs with GEAR UP Texas GEAR UP requires the following:

- Designate a Texas GEAR UP Rising Grant Manager.
- Participate in biweekly status meetings with TEA program staff to monitor implementation, track progress towards metrics and coordinate on best practices.
- Send sufficient and appropriate personnel to the national GEAR UP conference, the Texas GEAR UP State Conference, and all other GEAR UP events.

During the award

- Technology and/or other resource enhancements that are not directly related to the program goals

Grant funds must supplement (increase level of service), and not supplant (replace) state or local funds.

## 6. Overview of Required Application materials

Interested candidates should review and complete

- Please notify TEA of your intent to submit a Letter of Interest by emailing [BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov](mailto:BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov). Submission should be emailed to [BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov](mailto:BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov) with the subject line "GU ECR LOI Notice of Intent <ORGANIZATION NAME>"
- Please submit your completed Letter of Interest, comprised of <https://www.tea.texas.gov/Portals/0/Forms/2018-2019%20GU%20ECR%20LOI%20Response%20Form.pdf>. Submission should be emailed to [BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov](mailto:BeyondGrad@tea.texas.gov) with the subject line "GU ECR LOI Response Form <ORGANIZATION NAME>"