

GEAR UP TN – Year 3 Grant Requirements

Direct Student Services – Cohort and Priority

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	College Advising Planning Sessions (Target: 100% of student population)	X	X	X	Ongoing <i>(Seniors by October 31, 2026 Cohort by Dec. 15, 2026)</i>	College and career planning sessions are vital one-on-one meetings between a GEAR UP TN student and a trained adult, such as the site coordinator, liaison, mentor, or faculty member. These sessions are an essential opportunity for building relationships, offering personalized guidance, and ensuring students receive the support they need to succeed academically and prepare for their future careers. Each GEAR UP TN site is responsible for conducting at least one College Planning Session with every student. Initial meetings with seniors should take place by October 31, 2026 and cohort students by December 15, 2026. College and career planning sessions for seniors should take place at least once each semester. These sessions will serve as the primary vehicle for each student to create a Post-HS plan to accomplish the following milestones prior to high school graduation • Finalize postsecondary plan • Submit at least one application to a college or university • Submit at least one scholarship application • Complete the FAFSA, if eligible These sessions are guided by a college planning session form, which helps structure conversations around the student's individual goals, aspirations, and academic progress. Based on the outcomes of these meetings, students will be referred to relevant services and resources tailored to their needs. Additional support will be provided to students identified as at-risk, using early warning indicators like attendance and course grades, to ensure they stay on track toward their academic and career objectives.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	CollegeforTN.org (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X		Ongoing	All cohort students are required to access CollegeforTN.org and complete a lesson plan that connects their career interests to postsecondary education options. As part of this process, students will: • complete a career assessment on the platform • explore career fields aligned with their interests • identify their top three college and career preferences According to Tennessee Department of Education guidelines, 8th and 9th-grade students should reach specific milestones. They will engage in career exploration to discover and understand various pathways through assessments and interactive activities. Students will also develop postsecondary awareness by exploring different education and training opportunities available after high school. Additionally, they will set academic and career-related goals to guide their future planning and aspirations.
Know	Comprehensive Mentoring (Target: at least 30% of student population, specify data driven criteria)	X	X		Ongoing	Sites must develop and implement a comprehensive, college-focused mentoring program to support cohort students. These programs can take various forms, allowing schools to tailor mentoring initiatives to meet the unique needs of their diverse populations. Using data to identify students who would benefit most, sites may focus mentoring efforts on a targeted subset of students. Mentoring structures can include older students mentoring younger peers, college students or alumni guiding current students, or staff and community volunteers providing mentorship. Sites are also encouraged to include current 1st Year PSE as mentors to cohort students. Sites may use GEAR UP funds to hire external vendors, organizations, or individuals to manage the program. The goal is to build students' self-confidence and aspirations by connecting them with mentors who exemplify positive academic and life choices. By fostering meaningful mentor relationships, sites can help students develop a stronger belief in their potential for future success and readiness for postsecondary education.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	Data-driven academic tutoring (Target: 30% of student population, specify data driven criteria)	X	X		Ongoing	Tutoring must be accessible to all cohort students utilizing either GEAR UP TN funding or existing school-based resources. To meet the tutoring requirement, sites must adopt one of the following approaches. Implement a tutoring program funded through GEAR UP TN resources or enhance an existing school-based tutoring program by integrating additional resources. Sites are permitted to allocate GEAR UP funds to hire external vendors or individuals to manage the tutoring process comprehensively, ensuring high-quality support for students. The tutoring program should be data-driven, with academic progress and needs assessed regularly to target areas for improvement. Additionally, sites should leverage the College Planning Session structure to guide students toward available tutoring services.
Act	GEAR UP TN Orientation/Middle School (Target: 90%-100% of student population)	X			Sept. 1, 2026	This event will serve as a formal orientation, ensuring all 8 th graders understand the GEAR UP TN program, its goals, and the array of opportunities available to support their academic and career aspirations. The orientation should highlight resources such as college visits, career exploration, and academic support services, laying a strong foundation for their journey toward postsecondary success. To foster a collaborative environment, sites may opt to host a separate orientation event for parents or include them in the student-focused event. To maximize participation, the orientation must be held during school hours, ensuring full attendance from all 8 th grade students. Consider incorporating interactive activities, engaging presentations, and fun incentives.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	GEAR UP TN Orientation/High School (Target: 90%-100% of student population)		X	X	Sept. 1, 2026	Provide separate GEAR UP TN orientations for 9th grade cohort and 12th grade priority seniors. For 9th grade students, the GEAR UP TN Orientation is a refresher on the GEAR UP TN program and the opportunities available to them. This orientation should highlight college and career exploration, college visits, and academic resources to support them in their transition to high school and beyond. For seniors, the GEAR UP TN Orientation is a pivotal program designed to ensure they fully understand the resources, services, and opportunities available to support their transition to postsecondary education. This orientation highlights GEAR UP TN's role in helping seniors navigate critical steps such as college applications, financial aid, and career planning. The program will clearly outline the specific benefits seniors can access, including one-on-one guidance, FAFSA assistance, college visits, and career exploration activities. To foster engagement, the orientation may feature interactive workshops, guest speakers from local colleges or industries, and discussions about postsecondary readiness. Including parents in the orientation is encouraged, as it strengthens student support systems and ensures families are informed about important deadlines and resources. Scheduling the orientation during school hours maximizes student participation, while promoting the event through multiple channels ensures strong attendance.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	TN Promise Application Workshop (Target: 90% - 100% of student population)			X	Nov. 1, 2026	All eligible seniors must be given the opportunity and support to complete a TN Promise application. The GEAR UP TN central office will provide essential resources to aid in the planning and execution of application-related efforts. It is expected that a good faith effort is made to ensure every eligible senior successfully submits their TN Promise application. To support this goal, the GEAR UP TN central office will also supply student application tracking data to monitor progress. The timeline for application submissions is as follows: 30% of eligible students should have submitted by August 31, 60% by September 30, and 90-100% by October 31. These benchmarks are critical to maximizing student participation and ensuring access to valuable postsecondary financial aid opportunities.
Act	TN FAFSA Frenzy / One-on-one FAFSA Completion counseling (Please see comments for timeline and participation expectations)			X	April 1, 2027	The TN FAFSA Frenzy initiative is a comprehensive service designed to ensure that all high school seniors have the opportunity and support to successfully complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This initiative aims to remove financial barriers to higher education by connecting students with critical financial aid opportunities, such as grants, scholarships, and work-study programs, making postsecondary education more accessible and affordable. GU TN and TSAC Outreach Specialists will provide schools with extensive resources, including step-by-step FAFSA guides, promotional materials, and implementation strategies to encourage widespread participation. Additionally, we will offer hands-on assistance when available, such as workshops, one-on-one counseling sessions, and events where students and families can complete their FAFSA with expert support. Data tracking tools will help schools monitor completion rates and identify students who may need additional outreach or assistance. It ensures that every senior has access to the knowledge and resources necessary to unlock the financial aid needed to pursue their postsecondary aspirations. TN FAFSA Frenzy initiative empowers students and families to take actionable steps toward achieving their educational goals.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	Career Exploration (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X		May 31, 2027	Sites are asked to provide each 8th and 9th grade student with at least one of the following career exploration opportunities: (1) an in-class learning experience, such as a seminar series or hands-on demonstrations facilitated by CTE departments, Academy Coaches, or industry professionals. These activities aim to expose students to a wide range of careers through interactive learning, discussions, and real-world examples. (2) A job site visit or job shadowing experience tailored to the student's interests, as identified through the College Planning Sessions or course selection. This opportunity allows students to observe professionals in their work environments, gaining firsthand knowledge of various careers and industries. (3) Attendance at a regional or local career fair, where students can meet industry professionals, explore different career options, and gather information about education and training pathways. For 9th grade students, there should be an emphasis on job shadowing/job site visits. These should be guided by students' career interests and conversations during College Advising Planning Sessions. It is expected that every student in the cohort will have the opportunity to participate in at least one career exploration activity. Ensuring equitable access to these opportunities, we are helping students explore their interests and begin considering their future career paths. These experiences will provide a valuable foundation for future decision-making.
Go	College Signing Day (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)			X	May 31, 2027	College Signing Day is a meaningful event that celebrates the achievements and bright futures of graduating seniors. This event gives students a moment to proudly announce their postsecondary plans—whether a college, university, technical school, workforce, or military service in front of their families, peers, and the school community. By highlighting their accomplishments, this celebration inspires younger students and strengthens the school's culture of postsecondary success. Every student should engage in this activity to spark inspiration and foster hope for the future.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	College Visits (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X	*	May 31, 2027	For 8th grade students, college visits will focus on helping students begin to imagine themselves as future college students and learn about the wide variety of higher education options available. At least one of the college visits must include a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) to expose students to technical education options. The second at a 2-year community college or 4-year university. For 9th grade students, college visits must include a regional 2-year community college and/or 4-year university. These visits should include an official campus tour and presentations from college departments such as admissions, academic departments, student affairs, athletics, residence life, multicultural affairs, and other relevant areas. The goal for these students is to build aspirations and introduce them to college life and opportunities. A good faith effort should be made to ensure every student in the cohort attends at least two college visits. To support this, the GU TN office will send an updated participation report at midterm and the end of the semester, listing students who have not yet attended a visit. Site coordinators will work to increase participation before the due date. <i>* College visits for seniors are not required but should be thoughtfully organized to align with each student's academic credentials, career interest, and postsecondary goals. Site coordinators should prioritize planning college visits for seniors that have not attended a college visit or would benefit from a college visit to aid in their decision-making. These should take place in the Fall of their senior year.</i>

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Go	High School/College Transition Workshops (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)			X	May 31, 2027	Site coordinators will host college transition workshops to prepare 12th-grade students for a successful move to postsecondary education. The workshops will equip students with essential skills and knowledge to navigate the academic, social, and administrative aspects of college life. Early College Registration Events: Transition workshops must include Early College Registration Events where postsecondary partners will collaborate to provide seniors accepted to their institutions with opportunities to complete key processes—such as advising, course registration, eliminate institutional holds that hamper enrollment, orientation, parking permits, and financial aid—before graduation, either at their high school or on a college campus. The workshops will also introduce students to critical college offices, including the bursar, registrar, and financial aid. Students will learn how to manage tuition payments, register for courses, request transcripts, and understand financial aid packages, ensuring they are well-prepared for their freshman year. Workshops will also address campus life essentials, covering topics like roommate communication, navigating campus resources such as libraries and writing centers, and participating in student organizations. Students will have the opportunity to engage in small group discussions led by recent alumni or college students, who can share their first-hand experiences and offer peer-to-peer advice. The workshops will be scheduled during school hours or another accessible time, with invitations sent to all seniors. Materials from the session will be provided in digital and print formats, allowing students to revisit the information as needed. These workshops will serve as a pivotal resource in building students' confidence and readiness for the challenges and opportunities of college life.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Think	Next Guides (Target: 100% of student population)	X	X	X	May 31, 2027	The Middle School Guide is a detailed workbook designed to help 8th-grade GEAR UP TN students build a strong foundation for their future by exploring career interests, setting academic goals, and learning about postsecondary options. This resource will be integrated into structured activities with materials and guidance provided by the GEAR UP TN central office. Site coordinators will assist students in using the Middle School Guide to connect their interests to potential careers, understand the importance of academic success, and begin exploring the types of postsecondary institutions and opportunities available to them. This early preparation lays the groundwork for informed decisions and success in high school and beyond. The 9th Grade NEXT Guide is a detailed workbook designed to help 9th grade students in their transition to high school and preparing for life after high school. Building upon the foundational knowledge including in the Middle School Guide, students explore career interests, become familiar with high school graduation requirements and learn about postsecondary pathway. The Senior Guide is a detailed workbook designed to help GEAR UP TN students achieve key milestones during their senior year, including choosing a postsecondary plan and career interest, applying to colleges and scholarships, completing the FAFSA (if eligible), and receiving tailored GEAR UP TN support. This resource is implemented through structured activities in senior classes with materials and training provided by the GEAR UP TN central office. Site coordinators will guide students in using the Senior Guide to complete college and scholarship applications, prepare for the workforce or military, and fulfill requirements for TN Promise and FAFSA applications. To keep families informed, senior parents will receive the complementary Family GUIDE. This resource will help them understand the requirements, deadlines, and processes their seniors will navigate throughout the school year. The GU TN office will provide resources, including planning guides and templates, to help teachers create impactful and memorable classroom lessons to assist with using these guides. These events are a powerful way to honor students' hard work and reinforce the importance of pursuing education beyond high school.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Think	Youth Summit (Participation number provided in the Spring of 2027)	X	X		June 2027	Sites should plan to bring a team of rising 9th and 10th-grade cohort students and chaperones to participate in a multi-day GEAR UP TN Youth Summit, which will take place on a college campus during the summer 2027 hosted by the GEAR UP central office. This event may be statewide or regional and is designed to inspire students as they prepare for their high school journey and explore postsecondary opportunities. The Youth Summit will feature engaging activities, workshops, and experiences designed to build leadership skills, foster a college-going mindset, and provide students with valuable exposure to campus life. Students will benefit from lessons on navigating a college campus, understanding academic and extracurricular opportunities, and envisioning themselves as future college students through on campus living. These experiences aim to inspire and prepare students for their educational journey ahead. Sites will be responsible for covering travel costs, and the number of student slots will be allocated based on the size of the cohort. The GEAR UP TN central office will provide resources such as planning guides and templates to support sites in organizing their participation and ensuring a meaningful and memorable experience for students. This event plays a critical role in encouraging aspirations and reinforcing the importance of higher education.

Domain	Student Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	Summer academic enrichment program (Target: 10% of student population)	X	X		July 31, 2027	Design an engaging and impactful Summer Academic Program to inspire students and ensure they remain on track academically while exploring future possibilities. The program could be done at your school or local community college and should encourage students to enroll in challenging coursework, with a focus on preparing them for high school and beyond. Activities might include educational field trips that connect academics to real-world applications, academic camps emphasizing critical subjects, and hands-on experiences in CTE (Career and Technical Education) and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). Consider integrating sessions that allow students to explore high school clubs, organizations, and elective courses, helping them identify their interests and build enthusiasm for high school engagement. Career exploration workshops and interactive activities can introduce students to diverse career paths and the education required to achieve their goals. To maximize impact, sites should aim for at least 10% of their cohort student population to participate in these enriching summer programs. By offering dynamic and meaningful experiences, the program will spark curiosity, build academic confidence, and foster a sense of excitement about their educational journey.
Go	Summer Melt (Target: 80% - 100% of college-intending students)			X	Summer 2027	Programs for graduating 12th-grade students should aim to reduce summer melt and enhance their readiness for postsecondary education. These programs can include activities such as organizing peer or mentor meetings, administering bridge programs, coordinating visits to the institutions where students have enrolled, and offering workshops on study skills, financial literacy, and budgeting. Efforts should also focus on reaching out to every graduating senior to confirm their postsecondary plans and provide support in overcoming any obstacles or barriers they may face during the matriculation process.

Parent/Family Services

Domain	Parent/Family Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	Parent/Family Engagement (Target: 60% of students' families)	X	X	X	May 31, 2027	The goal is to actively engage families in creating a supportive environment that fosters students' academic achievements and future colleges success. Sites will implement the two parent/guardian/family events listed below. • One Parent/Guardian/Family Service – Knowledge and Information • College and Career Planning Night In addition to these events, other parent/family engagement activities can include: • Parent/Family College Visits • Individual Parent/Family Counseling/Advising • Parent/Family Workshops • Family Events

Domain	Parent/Family Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	One Parent/Guardian/Family service – Knowledge & Information (Target: 40% of students' families)		X	X	Sept. 1, 2026	Sites will hold a College Knowledge Workshop for 9th grade parents/families. This event aims to equip families with the tools, knowledge, and confidence needed to support their students in pursuing postsecondary education. This initiative seeks to strengthen the role of families as key allies in their students' success. Topics should include: - HS Graduation Requirements - Dual Enrollment Opportunities - Types of Colleges and Degrees/Credentials - Types of Financial Aid - TN Reconnect Sites will hold a College Planning Workshop for 12th grade parents/ families. This event guides parents through the steps of senior year college planning with a focus on the application process, key deadlines, and FAFSA Completion. This initiative seeks to equip families with strategies for supporting their students in decision-making and ensuring a smooth transition from high school to college.

Domain	Parent/Family Service	8th	9th	12th	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	College and Career Planning Night (Target: 40% of students' families)	X			May 1, 2027	Middle schools will host "College and Career Planning" activities to lay a foundation for early college awareness. Utilize resources from CollegeforTN to design engaging activities and ensure your school signs up for Path to College mailings to access valuable updates and materials. Suggested Middle School Activities: Career Exploration Fairs: Invite local professionals or high school students to share their career journeys. FAFSA Awareness Day: Introduce the concept of financial aid with simplified games or quizzes about paying for college. College-Readiness Panels: Host an event with local high school students, college representatives, or alumni sharing advice for college and career planning. "Future Me" Signing Day: Celebrate students declaring their dreams, whether it's a career, college, or specific goals, by having them sign certificates.

Direct Student Services – 1st Year Postsecondary

Domain	Student Service	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	PS Student Success Workshops (Target: 100% of student population)	X	Ongoing	In partnership with the GEAR UP TN central office, each GEAR UP TN Collaborative will identify higher education institutions where a large concentration of students is anticipated to attend. Site coordinators will conduct student success workshops at these campuses during the grant year. These visits will serve to encourage students to participate in on-campus activities and student organizations, make use of campus resources, celebrate success, troubleshoot challenges, and connect with other GEAR UP TN students. These workshops will also cover topics such as time management, study skills, and goal setting. Coordinators are encouraged to partner with other coordinators where there is an overlap in student populations to plan workshops. A best practice is to connect with student services on campus to join events or activities where your students may participate.
Know	PS Student Check-In and Advising (Target: 100% of student population)	X	Ongoing	In addition to planned student success workshops, site coordinators will check-in with 1 st Year PSE students on a monthly basis to provide ongoing counseling/advising in-person or via email, text, or phone. Check-ins are designed to maintain student/site coordinator relationships and will allow coordinators an opportunity to identify and troubleshoot student challenges. Check-ins are designed to encourage student persistence through their first year of postsecondary education. The GEAR UP TN central office will provide a calendar of topics and a college student success guide to help guide student/site coordinator conversations.

Domain	Student Service	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	PS Student Financial Aid Counseling/Advising (Target: 100% of student population)	X	April 1, 2027	Site coordinators will provide financial aid counseling/advising or workshops for 1 st Year PSE students. These services assist students in understanding and navigating financial aid, such as assistance with FAFSA renewal, financial aid packages, scholarships, and referrals to appropriate aid-related services. Coordinators are encouraged to partner with other coordinators where there is an overlap of student populations to plan workshops.

Educator Professional Development

Domain	Educator Service	8th	9th	12th	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
	GEAR UP TN Educator Orientation (Target: 90% - 100% of school staff)	X	X	X		Sept. 1, 2026	Site coordinators and GEAR UP TN central office staff will jointly provide a GEAR UP TN orientation for 100% of school staff. Site coordinators will provide an orientation to teachers who are absent from the initial teacher in-service and for any new teachers hired after the start of school. This orientation will provide an overview of the GEAR UP TN project and the services that the project provides. The orientation should focus on the role every faculty member plays in increasing the number of students who access and succeed in higher education.
	Three Pre-Approved Professional Development Activities for Educators (Target: 90% - 100% of school staff)	X	X	X		Sept. 1, 2026 - College-Going Culture Workshop Dec. 15, 2026 - Social Emotional Learning Workshop Feb. 28, 2027 - ACT Prep Workshop	Site coordinators are asked to conduct a follow-up school-wide College-Going Culture Workshop reviewing the collective commitment to embedding college readiness into the fabric of daily life within the school. This workshop will evaluate efforts in fostering an environment where conversations about postsecondary education are normalized and areas for additional events, programming, and visible displays. Site coordinators are also asked to conduct a school-wide Social Emotional Learning Workshop to help educators explore strategies for creating supportive, welcoming classrooms and integrating SEL practices into daily instruction with an emphasis on growth-mindset interventions. Sites coordinators are also asked to conduct a school-wide ACT Prep Workshop in the Spring to equip educators with strategies for ACT success emphasizing test-taking skills, instructional practices, and resources. This workshop will assist in creating a collaborative, school-wide effort to improve ACT scores and college readiness.

Administrative Requirements

Domain	Student Administrative Requirements	8th	9th	12th	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Think	College-Going Culture Plan	X	X	X		Aug. 31, 2026	The site coordinator will begin in August by collaborating with school staff and students to develop a comprehensive plan to foster a college-going culture. This plan will target 8th, 9th, and 12th graders through grade-appropriate activities and initiatives designed to inspire, educate, and engage students in college readiness. This plan also includes creating a college/career atmosphere to be implemented by October 1, 2026. Activities include transforming hallways and corridors with themes, messages, and information that promote college aspirations. Schools are encouraged to display college-going messages, university and college banners, and similar visual elements. Other ideas include using bulletin boards to share age-appropriate information about college, designating one day a week for faculty to wear college t-shirts, and other creative initiatives. For 8th and 9th graders, the coordinator will focus on early awareness by integrating college-themed lessons, hosting events like career exploration activities, and creating a school environment that highlights the importance of higher education. For 12th graders, the emphasis will shift to application readiness, including workshops on financial aid, college applications, and career planning. Throughout the year, the coordinator will actively engage families with workshops and resources to support students. The initiative will run throughout the school year, culminating in an evaluation phase in May to assess outcomes and plan for future improvements in fostering a college-going culture.

Domain	Student Administrative Requirements	8th	9th	12th	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	College Application and Exploration Month (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X	X		Sept. 2026	College Application and Exploration Month is a statewide event designed to promote excitement and engagement with the college application process. During this month, high schools dedicate time for seniors to complete at least one college application, including TN Direct Admissions selections, with support from school staff, college representatives, and community volunteers. For middle school students, the month focuses on college exploration through activities like admissions visits, spirit days, workshops, and door decorating contests. While participation in College Application and Exploration Month is required, schools have flexibility in scheduling to align with local needs and maximize community support. The GU TN central office will provide resources and templates to help schools create impactful and memorable school events.
Think	GEAR UP TN Welcome Packet (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X	X		Sept. 1, 2026	Each site will manage the distribution of introduction and welcome packets for the GEAR UP TN program to parents of all 8th and 9th-grade cohort students, as well as high school seniors. These packets will serve as key resources to inform parents about the program's purpose, available opportunities, and the support offered to their students. The GEAR UP TN central office will provide standardized packet contents and templates to ensure consistency and clarity across all sites. Additionally, sites are encouraged to customize the materials with local information, including site coordinator contact details, upcoming events, and opportunities for parental involvement in the program. This personalized approach will strengthen connections with families and enhance their understanding of the program's benefits.

Domain	Student Administrative Requirements	8th	9th	12th	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Know	GEAR UP Newsletter (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X	X	X	Once per semester: Fall Newsletter by 9/10/2026 Spring Newsletter by 1/10/2027	Newsletters can be formatted using the template provided by the GEAR UP TN central office or another platform that suits your needs. Each issue should focus on fostering college aspirations among GEAR UP students, while also addressing topics such as student success strategies, parent involvement and support, upcoming GEAR UP TN events and important dates, recent program highlights, and information about specific majors, career fields, or higher education institutions. The GEAR UP TN College Access Communications office may provide articles to include in the newsletters to ensure consistency and quality. All newsletter drafts must be submitted to Laura Gonzalez for review at least one week prior to printing or distribution via email. For detailed guidance on how newsletters count as a parent or student contact, refer to the Implementation Guide.
	Collect senior student cell phone numbers (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)			X		May 15, 2027 (ongoing)	Collect cell phone numbers for senior students to be used in text communications throughout the school year.
Think	21st Century Scholar Certificate (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)	X	X	X		May 31, 2027	In compliance with Federal GEAR UP requirements, all GEAR UP TN students must receive a 21st Century Scholar Certificate. These certificates, provided by the GEAR UP TN central office, summarize potential Federal and State financial aid available to students. Only students who have not previously received a certificate should be issued one. All documentation associated with the certificates must be accurately uploaded to the GEAR UP data management platform. This ensures proper tracking and accessibility of records are within compliance. Before distribution, site coordinators should place the certificates in the Senior Next GUIDES to ensure every senior receives one.

Domain	Student Administrative Requirements	8th	9th	12th	1 st Year PSE	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
Act	TN Promise Community Service Opportunity			X	X	May 31, 2027	Site coordinators are responsible for ensuring that students are informed of at least one opportunity to complete their TN Promise community service requirement for Spring 2027. These requirements are essential for maintaining eligibility for TN Promise and fostering a sense of civic engagement and responsibility among students. While it is not mandatory, coordinators are strongly encouraged to take an active role in organizing a volunteer opportunity tailored to the Tennessee Promise students. This could include partnering with local organizations, schools, or community groups to create accessible and meaningful service experiences. By facilitating these opportunities, site coordinators help ensure students can easily meet the requirement.
Act	Text Messaging (Target: 80% - 100% of student population)			X	X	Ongoing	Site coordinators will utilize a text messaging platform of their choice to engage directly with 12th-grade GEAR UP TN students, 1 st Year PSE students, and their families. This platform will serve as a vital tool for delivering timely and relevant information about key college-going milestones, such as application deadlines, financial aid opportunities, and enrollment reminders. By leveraging the accessibility and immediacy of text messaging, site coordinators can ensure that students stay informed and on track throughout their postsecondary preparation journey. Coordinators will also monitor responses and maintain open communication with students via the platform, addressing questions, providing guidance, and offering encouragement as needed.

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	Regional Site Coordinator Meetings	Ongoing	GEAR UP TN central office staff will convene site coordinators monthly (in-person/virtual) to share best practices, report on grant implementation, and discuss opportunities for collaboration among sites.
	Completion of Monthly Activity Plan (MAP), Completed Activity Documentation, Data Entry, Reimbursement Request, and Over \$1000/\$5000 Purchase Requests.	10th of each month 15th of each month	GEAR UP TN sites will complete and submit the following: 10th of each month – Completed Activity Documentation 15th of each month - Monthly Activity Plan (MAP), reimbursement requests, and Over \$1000 or \$5000 Purchase Requests. Additionally, all data entries with documentation for the prior month must be entered by the 10th of each month.
	College-Going Culture Assessment and GEAR UP TN Surveys	Fall 2026	You are asked to administer surveys to your students to assess their attitudes, expectations and knowledge about GEAR UP TN and postsecondary access programs. We will provide you with paper and online versions of the survey to meet the diverse needs of your schools. It is expected that a good faith effort will be made to survey 90-100% of your students.
	Two College Access Steering Committee meetings	Sept. 2026 and April 2027	The College Access Steering Committee meetings should focus on developing project sustainability, resource development, building new partnerships, and expanding a college- going culture in direct-service schools.
	Establish the College Access Steering Committee	Sept. 30, 2026	Please provide your College Access Steering Committee roster to your regional director.
	Update District Contact Information	Sept. 30, 2026	Please provide all changes with district or school administration to your regional director.

Domain	Grant Administrative Requirements	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
	Travel to the mandatory GEAR UP TN Kickoff meeting	June 2027	Project directors and site coordinators from each Collaborative are required to attend the kickoff meeting held in Nashville TN area. Topics covered will include college access professional development, data collection, required services, grant outcomes, and fiscal policies.
	Professional development offered by the GEAR UP TN central office	Dates To Be Determined	During Year 3, the GEAR UP TN central office plans to offer several professional development opportunities via webinar and in-person. Please budget travel expenses for the site coordinators and at least one additional school representative to attend day-long professional development sessions in Nashville, TN area.
	Data submission	Ongoing	Submit required data as requested by the GEAR UP TN central office. Requests will include but are not limited to service delivery data, transcript data, and teacher/parent rosters.
	One Programmatic Site Visit	Spring 2027	A site visit will be scheduled by the GEAR UP TN central office staff to discuss implementation. Attendees should include the director of schools (or designee), the project director, site coordinator(s), relevant GEAR UP TN staff, and others as needed. (This activity does not need to be on your work plan.)
	One Fiscal Site Visit	Spring 2027	A site visit scheduled by the GEAR UP TN fiscal manager and THEC internal auditor to audit grant financial records. (This activity does not need to be on your work plan.)

Domain	Grant Administrative Requirements	COMPLETION DEADLINE	Comments and Clarifications
	National GEAR UP Academy - Virtual Platform	February 2027	The National GEAR UP Academy offers an invaluable opportunity to enhance your skills, expand your knowledge, and refine your practices as a GEAR UP leader, practitioner, or partner. This event is thoughtfully designed to address key topics relevant to GEAR UP, with a strong focus on practical tools, essential information, and collaborative team time. By attending, you'll join a nationwide network of peers to exchange ideas, revitalize your GEAR UP programming, and gain actionable resources to implement in your work. The Academy also features inspiring keynote speakers, engaging pre-conference activities, and sessions tailored to our shared mission of student success.
	Travel to the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP) Annual Conference	July 2027	Attending the NCCEP Conference each July is a vital component of GEAR UP TN's professional development and collaboration efforts. This conference provides opportunity to network, exchange best practices, and gain valuable insights to enhance program effectiveness. It is required that GEAR UP TN central office project directors and site coordinators participate, with opportunities for others within the school involved in the grant to attend as well. To ensure participation, each collaborative should allocate funds in their budget to cover travel expenses.