## SECTION 1: NEED FOR THE PROJECT

***The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by this project.*** West Virginia

(WV) is struggling to overcome devastating cycles of poverty and "brain drain," stemming from

low educational attainment rates and the absence of a college-going culture. This story is detailed

by the **disintegration of communities** and the isolation and paralysis wrought by a **rapidly**

**changing economic system that simply left some people behind.** As shown in Table 1.1,

problems are magnified in the districts the WV GEAR UP (WVGU) program plans to serve.

| | % Low SES in 2012-13[1] | % 25+ w/ HS grad. or more in 2008-12[2] | % 25+ w/ Assoc. or more in 2012[3] | % 25+ w/ BA or more in 2008-12[4] | College going rate in 2012[5] | ACT Scores 2012-13[6] | % 1st year students enrolled remedial courses, fall 2013[7] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **US Avg.** | **48.1*** | **85.7** | **39.4** | **28.5** | **64.6** | **20.9** | **N/A**** |
| **WV Avg.** | **55.8** | **83.7** | **27.8** | **17.9** | **56.4** | **20.6** | **32.2** |
| Boone | 54.2 | 74.3 | 14.9 | 8.5 | 52.2 | 19.7 | 41.2 |
| Fayette | 65.6 | 78.9 | 17.3 | 10.4 | 46.9 | 19.1 | 48.1 |
| Mason | 65.2 | 80.7 | 22.0 | 10.4 | 50.0 | 20.0 | 33.9 |
| Mercer | 68.2 | 80.9 | 25.3 | 17.4 | 45.4 | 19.7 | 40.6 |
| Mingo | 77.5 | 71.3 | 16.1 | 9.6 | 47.6 | 19.3 | 51.4 |
| Nicholas | 64.6 | 82.1 | 22.9 | 13.8 | 42.6 | 20.1 | 43.1 |
| Summers | 71.3 | 78.5 | 19.6 | 13.5 | 50.0 | 19.3 | 39.5 |
| Webster | 79.5 | 68.3 | 9.4 | 7.3 | 50.0 | 19.0 | 41.5 |
| Wirt | 66.1 | 84.2 | 20.0 | 10.2 | 66.7 | 19.9 | 45.9 |
| Wyoming | 64.1 | 74.6 | 14.8 | 9.5 | 39.0 | 20.3 | 42.9 |

**Table 1.1: Need indicators in target districts, as compared to WV and national averages**

*\*Most recent data for national low SES is 2011.*
*\*\*The US Federal Government does not report national developmental education enrollment.*

***The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or***

***opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by this proposed project.*** By

conducting reviews of education policy research and working with administrators, faculty and

students at current and proposed WVGU schools, WVGU has identified the following

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[1] Source: WVDE, Student Demographic Data, 2013
[2] Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012
[3] Source: Lumina Foundation, A Stronger Nation, 2014
[4] Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012
[5] Source: HEPC, WV College Enrollment Data, 2013
[6] Source: WVDE, ACT Performance, 2014
[7] Source: HEPC, Remedial Education Enrollment Rates, 2013

weaknesses and opportunities for improvement:

**Lack of support for rigorous coursework:** Target schools struggle to meet State and national standards of progress. To help students achieve at the same level as their more economically advantaged peers, WVGU schools will receive resources to provide students with academic supports, such as tutoring and credit recovery, as well as opportunities for advanced learning, such as Advanced Placement (AP) programs, dual enrollment programs, and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) academies.

**Lack of financial literacy supports and curriculum:** Schools do not have the capacity to provide in-depth financial literacy instruction, and they are unable to provide afterschool resources to engage parents and students in financial planning for college. WVGU will work with the State's Treasurer's office, the WV Department of Education (WVDE) and community partners to provide financial literacy curricula and professional development (PD) to schools.

**Lack of knowledge among school staff and counselors:** Training on college-readiness issues is a minimal part of the required program of study for school counselors. WVGU will provide educators with supplemental training in addressing college access and success issues and will focus on building the capacity of staff to address students' needs in these areas.

**Geographic isolation:** WV's rugged terrain makes it difficult for students to travel to visit colleges. Families lack the financial resources to make visits on their own, and the time required to travel even short distances on WV's rural roads necessitates that schools hire drivers and chaperones for trips that extend beyond the regular school day. Local education agencies (LEAs) will utilize GU resources to provide students and families with opportunities to visit colleges.

**Lack of informational, personal and cultural supports for college:** With fewer than 28%

of West Virginians holding an associate's degree or higher,[8] most target students lack social capital, or personal relationships with individuals who have experience completing post-secondary education. WVGU will provide interventions (as outlined in Quality of Project Services) to help students and families make informed choices so that students can enroll in colleges where they will be successful.

**Deficiencies in non-cognitive or soft-skill development:** A vast field of research indicates that non-cognitive skills such as resilience, dependability, self-regulation and social comfort are essential for academic success and college persistence, but the classroom setting does not effectively promote these characteristics.[9] WVGU will provide co-curricular self-development opportunities and implement a variety of mentoring interventions, including professional mentoring for high-need students, peer-to-peer outreach to promote students' leadership skills and online e-mentoring to connect students to area professionals.

**Lack of alignment amongst systems:** WV students struggle to transition from middle to high school and high school to college. These problems illustrate what Kirst and Venezia refer to as "… a profound organizational, political and cultural chasm… between the systems of K-12 and higher education." [10] Thus, WVGU will provide opportunities for PK-12, higher education, community members and workforce professionals to come together to tackle alignment issues. WVGU also will focus its 2016 summer academy for students on transitioning to high school. WVGU will support summer bridge programs for students between their 12th grade year and first year of college and provide strategic interventions during the first year of college.

<div align="center">

**SECTION 2: QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN**

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The WV Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) will partner with 10 high-need

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[8] Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012
[9] Source: Duckworth et al, 2007; Lareau, 2011; Tough, 2012; Savitz-Romer, 2012; Gore, 2012; Farrington, 2012
[10] Source: Kirst and Venezia, Improving College Readiness and Success for All Students , p.3, 2006

LEAs, consisting of 50 schools, for WV's third GU grant. WVGU proposes a hybrid approach encompassing a cohort and priority model serving more than 5,000 students annually.

Through the cohort model, WVGU will serve an estimated 2,955 students in 35 schools starting with seventh graders and, later, 15 schools with ninth through 12th graders. Services for this cohort, the class of 2020, will begin in students' seventh grade year and continue through high school graduation and into their first year of postsecondary study.

Under the priority model, WVGU will provide just-in-time services, such as financial aid counseling, college match/fit, advising and college transition assistance, to an *average* of 2,424 *high-need* 12th grade students annually. In Years 1 through 5, priority services will be offered to high-need 12th grade students in schools in the same LEAs as cohort students. In Year 6, the cohort group will enter 12th grade and receive the just-in-time priority services, and postsecondary services will be provided to assist the priority class of 2019. This transition will allow WVGU to build a strong, supportive infrastructure at the postsecondary level in preparation for the cohort group's entry into higher education. In Year 7, WVGU will provide postsecondary services to the cohort group, and continue priority 12th grade services to the class of 2021. This overlapping approach will strengthen ties between WVGU high schools and the State's postsecondary institutions.

| Table 2.1: WV GEAR UP Cohort and Priority Model – Students to be Served by Year | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Key:** C = Cohort; P=Priority. *Example: P 2015 = Priority Group, Class of 2015* | | | | | | | |
| | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** | **Year 6** | **Year 7** |
| 7th grade | C 2020 | | | | | | |
| 8th grade | | C 2020 | | | | | |
| 9th grade | | | C 2020 | | | | |
| 10th grade | | | | C 2020 | | | |
| 11th grade | | | | | C 2020 | | |
| 12th grade | P 2015 | P 2016 | P 2017 | P 2018 | P 2019 | C 2020 | P 2021 |
| 1st Yr. of College | | | | | | P 2019 | C 2020 |

***The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.*** In providing services to cohort and priority

students, families and educators, WVGU will employ best practices and innovative methods to ensure achievement of GU's overarching goal to increase the number of students from low-income schools who are prepared to enter and succeed in college. WVGU will be guided by the three national GU objectives, as well as a fourth focused on enhancing educators' knowledge to improve student achievement. All WVGU goals, objectives and outcomes are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timely). Outcomes include all GPRA[11] performance measures.

| Table 2.2: WVGU's SMART Goals, Objectives and Outcomes | |
|---|---|
| **Goal: Increase the # of GU students who are prepared to enter & succeed in postsecondary education.** | |
| **Objectives** | **Outcomes (*GPRA indicators in italics*). Targets set where baseline data was available.** |
| **Objective 1 (National):** Increase the academic performance & preparation for postsecondary education for GU students. | *1a: 92% of cohort students pass Pre-algebra by end of 8th grade. GPRA 1* |
| | *1b: 85% of cohort students pass Algebra 1 by end of 9th grade. GPRA 2* |
| | *1c: 90% of cohort students complete two years of math beyond Algebra 1 by 12th grade. GPRA 3* |
| | 1d: By 2020, the cohort's average daily attendance will be *80%*. |
| | 1e: Cohort student performance on the new Common Core Smarter Balance Assessment will improve each time the assessment is administered over the grant. (% increase to be determined once new assessment results are available). |
| | 1f: The mean GPA of cohort students will be at least 3.1 by 2020. |
| | 1g: 50% of cohort students will have successfully completed at least one AP course or one dual enrollment course by 2020. |
| | 1h: *85% of cohort students will graduate from high school on-time. GPRA 4* |
| **Objective 2 (National):** Increase the rate of high school graduation & participation in postsecondary education for GU students. | *2a: 50% of cohort (GU and former GU) students will enroll in postsecondary education by 2020. GPRA 5* |
| | *2b: 55% of cohort students place into college-level math and English without need for remediation by 2020. GPRA 6* |
| | 2c: Increase the % of students who complete at least two postsecondary admissions applications by 2020. (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | *2d: Increase % of cohort (GU & former GU) students who will still be enrolled in postsecondary in 2021 & on track to graduate on time. GPRA 7.* (Target to be set in Yr. 2) |
| | *2e: 60% of GU cohort students will complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by 2020. GPRA 8.* |
| | *2f: 85% of cohort students will be on track for graduation at the end of each grade. GPRA 9* |
| **Objective 3 (National):** Increase educational expectations & knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation and financing among GU students and | *3a. Increase % of cohort students who are on track to apply for college as measured by completion of SAT or ACT by 2019. GPRA 10.* (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | *3b: Increase the % of parents of cohort students who have actively engaged in WVGU activities associated with assisting students in their academic preparation for college by 2020. GPRA 11.* (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | 3c: 65 % of cohort students will complete at least two college site visits by 2020. |
| | 3d: Increase the % of cohort students and % of parents who expect to earn a postsecondary education credential by 2020. (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | 3e: Increase the % of cohort students and % of parents who report speaking to someone from their school or GU about college entrance requirements (including college options and match) by 2020. (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | 3f: Increase the % of cohort students and % of parents who report speaking to someone from |

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[11] Government Performance and Results Act of 1993

| | |
|---|---|
| their families | their school or GU about financial aid by 2020. (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | 3g: 50% of cohort students will complete at least one job site visit/activity by 2020. |
| **Objective 4 (WV):** Enhance GU educators' knowledge to improve student achievement & success in postsecondary education. | 4a: With the support of educators, 100% of GU schools will participate in College Application and Exploration Week. |
| | 4b: Increase % of GU school counselors who complete 2 financial aid training workshops by 2020. (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |
| | 4c: Increase the % of GU educators who receive college access related PD including training on using the State's college access web portal, CFWV.com and on how to assist students in properly "matching" college choice based on their academic and personal abilities, needs and interests by 2020. (Target to be set in Yr. 1) |

To further define our approach and align program resources, strategies and services to
intended impacts, WVGU has developed a logic model.

| Table 2.3: WVGU Logic Model | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Inputs** | **Activities/ Process** | **Outputs** | **Short & Mid-Term Outcomes** | **Long-Term Outcomes** |
| ***Resources*** US ED GU funding WV HEPC staff Statewide partners GU site coordinators LEA & school staff Students Parents ***Risk factors*** Social norms & cultural beliefs Personal identities & experiences Geographic isolation Social capital (lack of) Gaps in education pipeline | Curricular development/ alignment Academic tutoring/ support/workshops ACT/SAT test preparation Dual enrollment/AP Credit recovery Counseling/Mentoring Family workshops College & job site visits/fairs College Application/ Exploration Week FAFSA events/CGS Student leadership & career academies GUU Summer academy College Decision Days Bridge/transition/ retention events & interventions, including texting prompts Dissemination of 21st Century Scholar certificates College access & success advisory board meetings; LEA & partner meetings | # & hours of services/ activities offered # of participants in services # of students taking required classes & enrolled in rigorous coursework # of college credits earned # of students taking ACT/SAT # of FAFSAs submitted # of college & job site visits # of college appli-cations submitted # & types of informational materials produced # of partner & advisory board meetings held Creation of local access/ success infrastructure Awareness of data | ***Students will:*** -pass appropriate math classes on time -attend school regularly -improve Common Core assessment results -take the ACT/SAT & improve scores -have a GPA of 3.1+ -complete rigorous courses -graduate high school on time -receive FA information - enroll in & complete postsecondary programs ***Students and parents will:*** - actively engage in GU - have conversations about college requirements -be connected w/ those who can help them prep for college/career - expect postsecondary success - identify as college bound & academically capable ***Educators will:*** -receive relevant training; supports college access/ | ***Objective 1:*** Students' academic performance & post-secondary preparation is improved ***Objective 2:*** High school graduation & post-secondary participation rates increase ***Objective 3:*** Students & families' educational expectations &knowledge of post-secondary options, preparation & financing is increased ***Objective 4:*** GU educators' |

| Non-cog-nitive skill development (lack of) <br><br> Access & success training for educators (lack of) | Data, collection, analysis & dissemination <br><br> PD opportunities <br><br> PK-20 collaboration opportunities | & research findings <br><br> # of hours of PD & collaboration <br><br> # of educators participating in PD <br><br> # and strength of relationships of stakeholders | success activities & implement strategies <br><br> - support strong partnerships between systems of education <br><br> -support students in transition from HS to postsecondary | knowledge to improve student achievement & success in post-secondary education is increased |
|---|---|---|---|---|

## SECTION 3: QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES

WVGU's project design and services are based on findings from scholarly research. Table

3.1 provides an overview of the **minimum** services to be provided to achieve the outlined goals.

| Table 3.1: Minimum Required Annual LEA/School/College Project Services | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Minimum Project Services** | Class of 2020 (Cohort) YEAR OF SERVICE | | | | | | | Priority Group | GU Objective / Outcomes service meets |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Annual Services | |
| Academic tutoring/support/workshops | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1 - all; 2a, b, d, f; 3a, b |
| ACT/SAT Preparation | | | X | X | X | X | | X | 1e, f; 2a, b; 3a, d, e |
| Dual enrollment/AP opportunities | | | | X | X | X | | X | 1e, g, h; 2a, b, d, f; |
| Credit recovery opportunities | | | X | X | X | X | | X | 1c, d, e, h; 2a, b, f |
| College access/success counseling, career exploration, financial literacy, & college match | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1 – all; 2 – all; 3 – all |
| Professional mentoring, peer-to- peer and near-peer mentoring, and/or online e-mentoring | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | 1 - all; 2 - all; 3a, b, d, e, f |
| Student/family events to meet goals (e.g. academic readiness, fin. literacy, college match). | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1 - all; 2 - all; 3a, b, c, d, e, f |
| College site visits | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | 2a, c, d; 3a, b, c, d, e, f |
| Job site visits | | X | X | X | | | | | 1c, d; 2a, b, f; 3b, d, e, g |
| College Application & Exploration Week | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | 2a, c, d; 3a, b, c, d, e; 4a |
| FAFSA events & College Goal Sunday | | | | | | X | X | X | 2a, d, e; 3b, d, f |
| Fall Student Leadership Academy | | X | X | X | X | X | | | 1d, f, h; 2a, c, d, f; 3a, c, d |
| Summer Academic/College Prep Academy (GEAR UP U) | | X | X | X | X | X | | | 1c, d, e, f, g, h; 2 - all; 3a, b, c, d, e, f |
| Spring Career Academy | | | X | X | X | X | | | 2a, b, d; 3c, d, e, g |
| Professional development activities, including statewide Student Success Summit | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | All |
| College Decision Day events | | | | | | X | | X | 2a; 3b, d, f |
| Bridge/transition to college and retention programs including cell texting intervention. | | | | | | X | X | X | 2a, c, d, e; 3e, f |
| Issue 21st Century Scholar Certificates | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | 1a, 2a, 3e, f |
| LEA grant progress meetings; LEA College Access & Success AB meetings; 5 SC meetings | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | All |

WVGU services ***will increase the percentage of students taking rigorous courses that***

***reflect challenging academic standards and reduce the need for remedial education at the***

***postsecondary level*** by providing opportunities through subgrants for students to participate in

school-based academic tutoring and support services, with an emphasis on math. Tutoring will

focus on homework help, expanding on classroom lessons and ACT/SAT preparation. Educators

will participate in PD to improve curricular alignment to the Common Core to ensure a rigorous

curriculum, with the goal of reducing the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level.

Research shows that students who earn college credit while in high school are more likely to

enroll and persist through postsecondary.[12] As such, WVGU also will provide opportunities for

students to earn college credits through dual enrollment and AP classes. Additional supplemental

student academic intervention and PD services will be provided as needed.

WVGU Regional Coordinators (RCs) also will provide direct services to improve academic

preparation for postsecondary education. One such event is GEAR UP U (GUU), a summer

residential academy. GUU will help students improve their knowledge in core content areas,

develop their non-cognitive skills and focus on personal accountability. During GUU, students

will participate in near-peer mentoring, allowing them to learn from current college students.

WVGU services will ***increase the percentage of secondary school completion*** by providing

opportunities for students to participate in credit recovery courses to ensure on-time graduation.

State-approved distance learning courses and summer school options will be available as options.

WVGU will support schools' implementation of dropout prevention models that identify

students at risk of dropping out. WVGU RCs, in partnership with educators, will continue our

successful school-based, professional mentoring program for at-risk students to make certain

they are receiving the support needed to persist through high school.

To further improve on-time high school graduation and provide students with relevant

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[12] Education Commission of the States, Dual Enrollment: Challenges in Rural Areas, 2014

contexts for learning, WVGU will support student job-site visits and host career academies —

both of which will offer students the chance to better connect their career cluster choice and

classroom study to actual workplace skills and environments. WVGU also will create and

distribute a *High School 101* publication to help students and families understand: 1) how to

successfully transition into secondary education, 2) courses required for timely high school

graduation, and 3) tips for families to support their students throughout high school.

Because student persistence through high school and into college requires extensive

collaboration, WVGU will host an annual statewide Student Success Summit. This two-day

conference will bring together education stakeholders from across the P-20 continuum and from

the State's business and community sectors. The Summit, co-sponsored with WV Department of

Education (WVDE), will feature plenary sessions from experts in education and multiple

concurrent sessions on topics ranging from dropout prevention, to college access, to integrating

technology into the classroom, to college completion, to student and family support programs.

WVGU will ***increase students' knowledge of and access to financial assistance for***

***postsecondary education***. WVGU will partner with the WV Treasurer, WVDE, and the

Education Alliance, a non-profit group engaging business leaders in the education system, to

provide the *NetWorth Financial Literacy Program* to WVGU schools. The program ensures that

students gain skills to make wise decisions regarding saving and paying for college. Families

also will learn about *SMART529*, WV's 529 college savings program.

Because completing a FAFSA is an important indicator of whether or not a student will

enroll in college, WVGU piloted a FAFSA completion initiative in 2013 that led to increased

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates. Thus, all WVGU schools

serving seniors will enter into FAFSA data sharing agreements with HEPC that will allow

counselors to better target financial aid outreach efforts. Through a secure management system, counselors will upload seniors' basic demographic information. HEPC will match that information with FAFSAs on file and provide counselors with one of three responses per student: 1) FAFSA complete, 2) FAFSA incomplete or 3) No FAFSA on file. No personal information, such as EFC, will be shared.

WVGU will work with HEPC's division of financial aid, campus financial aid staff and community partners to provide many opportunities for GU families to learn about financial aid and complete the FAFSA. WVGU will increase students' knowledge of aid by disseminating materials including a *Financial Aid 101* guide. WVGU also will continue coordinating local financial aid workshops and partnering with the WV TRiO Association to host WV's annual College Goal Sunday event. As required by US ED, WVGU will issue to students 21st Century Scholar Certificates, which include information about State and Federal financial aid.

WVGU will ***increase the percentage of students enrolling and succeeding in postsecondary education*** by providing direct, intensive college and career counseling services to students and families. WVGU will work with school-level site coordinators (SCs), counseling staff and educators to strengthen advising skills and programs. WVGU educators will receive PD on topics such as improving college "match" and utilizing the State's college and career planning web-portal, cfwv.com, featuring a guided grades 7-12 college- and career-planning curriculum.

From 2009-14, WVGU students and parents consistently rated college visits as one of the program's most valuable services.[13] WVGU will continue these visits to help students and families learn about college options and navigate the college environment. Students and families will have multiple opportunities to visit campuses beginning in Year 1 of this grant.

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[13] Source: Hughes-Webb, Ho, and Gore, 2013

Also, each fall,[14] all students will be invited to visit a campus for a one-day leadership academy. The academy will focus on empowering students to promote a college-going culture in their schools and on helping them realize they can succeed through goal-setting, hard work and grit. Each spring, all students will have the opportunity to visit a campus to attend a one-day career academy. This academy will help students to connect coursework to careers, to understand the academic requirements related to careers and to develop skills such as professionalism. Finally, each summer, students will be invited to spend four days on a campus as part of GEAR UP U, a residential academy focused on academics, college preparation and student leadership.

WVGU recognizes that students are powerful agents of change in creating and sustaining a college-going culture. WVGU will continue the HEROs (Higher Education Readiness Officers) program, which was created during its 2008-14 grant and recognized nationally as a promising practice in promoting college access. HEROs organize activities to help their peers learn about college options, help with GU events and rally their communities to support college access.

Family support and understanding also is critical in ensuring that all students graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education. Thus, WVGU site coordinators will coordinate multiple family workshops each year. Workshop themes will relate to the students' progress in the education pipeline. For example, families of eighth graders will have a workshop on transitioning from middle to high school. Evening programs will be designed to help students and families understand ACT's EXPLORE and PLAN results in grades eight and ten. Families of 12th graders will participate in admissions and FAFSA completion workshops.

Timely communication is integral to helping students navigate the college enrollment process.[15] For that reason, WVGU is working with the Kresge Foundation and Dr. Ben

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[14] Due to the grant cycle, the leadership, career, and summer academies will begin in Year 2.
[15] Source: Ross et al, 2013

Castleman on a project that utilizes text messages that 1) prompt students to take action on tasks associated with preparing for and succeeding in college and 2) connect students with college counselors who can provide individualized assistance. WVGU will offer this resource to all seniors served within the priority and cohort groups of this grant.

Research from Complete College America's report, *Time is the Enemy*[16] shows that the faster students accumulate credits toward a degree, the more likely they are to persist in earning a postsecondary credential. With that in mind, WVGU will provide opportunities for students to earn college credits in high school through enhanced dual enrollment and AP opportunities.

In Years 6 and 7 of the grant, WVGU will provide services to students who enroll in postsecondary education, with an emphasis on programs such as summer-bridge interventions designed to reduce summer melt. WVGU will disseminate a *College 101* guide to help students enroll and navigate the college environment. WVGU also will provide first-year GU college students with on-campus support in the form of mentoring, tutoring and counseling to ensure they persist. WVGU will partner with successful campus programs, such as TRiO's Student Support Services, to maximize impact without duplicating services. WVGU will support WV's "15 to Finish" campaign, which focuses on keeping students on track to completing a degree.

WVGU also will provide ongoing support and technical assistance to schools and college partners to ensure services are appropriate to the population and address the needs identified in Need for the Project. This will be achieved, in part, by requiring a minimum of: two LEA grant progress meetings, two LEA college access and success advisory board meetings, and up to five SC meetings, where school-based staff and full-time staff convene for PD and support. SC meetings always will include strategies for improving student academic performance and understanding the needs of first-generation, low-income and underrepresented students.

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[16] Source: Complete College America, Time is the Enemy, 2011

_**The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the**_

_**collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.**_ As

noted in Table 3.2, WVGU will utilize various local, regional and national partners to provide

additional support and expertise and maximize the effectiveness of the project.

| Table 3.2: WV GEAR UP Partners | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Partner** | **Services to be provided** | **Audience** | **Outcome** |
| WV Council for Community &Technical College Education | Provide dual enrollment opportunities & support College Application and Exploration Week (CAEW) & College Goal Sunday (CGS) | Students, families | Increase participation in dual enrollment courses; Significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. |
| Three college partners | Serve as host sites for 3 full-time GU RCs; host on-campus events; provide technical assistance. | Students, families, educators | Significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. |
| WV Dept. of Education | Provide PD and technical assistance. | Educators | Enhance educators' knowledge to improve student achievement & success. |
| 10 LEAs (50 schools) | Implement interventions outlined in this grant proposal. | Students, families, educators | Significantly increase the # of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in college. |
| WV Secretary of Education and the Arts | Outreach to assist understanding of ACT's EXPLORE and PLAN results. | Students, families, educators | Improve students', families', &educators' knowledge of assessments that predict college readiness. |
| WV TRIO Association | Assist in organizing CGS; support CAEW | Students, families | Increase FA awareness and FAFSA completion; promote CAEW. |
| WVACRAO | Organize college fairs for schools to assist students in finding college match; Support CAEW | Students, families, educators | Increase students', families', and educators' awareness of postsecondary opportunities. |
| WV Assoc. of Student Fin. Aid Administrators | Staff College Goal Sunday & other FA workshops; provide FA training for HS counselors | Students, families, educators | Increase financial aid awareness and FAFSA completion |
| WV Treasurer's Office | Financial literacy & college savings plan opportunities. | Students, families | Increase the financial literacy awareness/skills of students &families. |
| WV Education Alliance | Administer e-mentoring program | Students | Increase the # of students receiving high quality academic & career mentoring. |
| XAP, Inc. | Support State's college planning web-portal, CFWV.com | Students, families, educators | Increase students', families', & educators' knowledge of education options, preparation & financing. |
| National Partners such as NCCEP, Kresge Foundation, ACT, College Board, & ACE. | Provide technical assistance; Provide additional funding and support to implement a text-messaging project; and Provide testing fee waivers, information, research, and professional development | Students, families, educators | Enhance educators' knowledge to improve student achievement & success in college. Increase the # of students who enroll in postsecondary education & are still enrolled after their first year. Increase the # of students who are on track to apply for college. |
| Postsecondary Institutions | In Yrs. 6 & 7, support efforts to improve students' success in 1st yr. year of college | Students, families, staff | Increase the number of students who enroll in postsecondary education and are still enrolled after their first year. |

**SECTION 4: QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL**

_The qualifications, including training and experience, of the project director or principal_

_investigator_. **Director [Key Personnel]:** The GU project director is a full-time (75%) 12-month

position. Dr. Adam Green will continue to serve as the GU director. In addition to the director,

WVGU will employ seven highly qualified staff members with qualifications appropriate to their

responsibilities (see Table 4.1).

| Table 4.1: Qualifications, Training, Experience, and Expectations of Personnel, WVGU State Team | |
|---|---|
| **Position** | **Description of Responsibilities** |
| Coordinator of Research and Evaluation *[Key Personnel]* | Support the director in keeping abreast with best practices research and the dissemination of project results. S/he must understand the Federal APR requirements; GPRA, the performance measures outlined in this grant; and provide evidence & skill in creating appropriate formative & summative assessments & interpreting qualitative and quantitative data to manage the evaluation of the grant. S/he will work to ensure clarity in local evaluation plans, compile all programmatic &learning outcomes data, and assure that the evaluative indicators are measured and reported in the APR. |
| Assistant Director for Fiscal and Admin. Services | Provide fiscal and administrative leadership. S/he will ensure that the Federal GEAR UP grant meets articulated goals and are compliant with Federal regulations. S/he will be responsible for State and Federal annual budget development for division, Federal match documentation, expenditure oversight, processing invoices, purchasing, day-to-day oversight and monitoring of the budget and grants. |
| Assistant Director for Communi-cations | Serves as the chief communications officer for all HEPC college access/success initiatives. S/he will apply a range of integrated social change communications strategies, including public relations, advertising, marketing, design, social media, digital development and video production. S/he will offer leadership to foster a culture of college-readiness and success by implementing campaigns and services to mobilize communities, encourage innovation, change perception/behavior, and promote positive systemic change. |
| Coordinator of Curriculum & Professional Development | Serves in a coordinating capacity & is responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating programs and professional development for 10 WVGU LEAs. Duties also include developing curricular strategies to incorporate college-readiness within class-room activities and working with the WVDE to host P20 learning opportunities, including statewide Student Success Summit. |
| 3 Regional Coordinators (RCs) | RCs will work at 3 higher education institutions across the State and provide direct support to LEAs within close proximity to their respective colleges. Institutions include a Historically Black College/University (HBCU), WV State University (Central region); a regional public four-year university, Concord University (Southern region); & a community college, Southern WV CTC (Southwestern region). The RCs are responsible for coordination & communication among their respective LEA sites, with the ultimate goal of building capacity and sustainability. RC's will supervise & assist school-based SCs & help develop and sustain partnerships. The RCs will also work to build collaborations between higher ed. & LEAs. |

**LEA-based WVGU Staff:** WVGU will utilize a model proven successful during its past

grant, in which each of WVGU's 50 partner schools will have a dedicated project staff member,

known as a site coordinator (SC). SCs are LEA employees contracted by WVGU to work, on

average, 10 hours per week _above-and-beyond_ normal school hours to implement building-level

programs and activities outlined within this grant. SCs are supported and managed by WVGU

RCs (HEPC staff) to ensure effective program implementation. Also, each proposed district has

identified one GU LEA Coordinator. District staff member will dedicate up to 10% of his or her

time to coordinate GU LEA-level activities, including PD, LEA GU implementation team

meetings and the creation of a local college access and success advisory board.

### SECTION 5: QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table 5.1 provides information on the WVGU Implementation and Action Plan.

| Table 5.1: YEAR 1 WV GEAR UP Implementation/Action Plan | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Timeline** | **Milestones** | **Personnel Responsible** |
| Grant Award Notification | Convene LEA Superintendents, Treasurers, Principals, and others to negotiate work plans and project subgrants | Director, RCs |
| Oct. 2014 | Recruit and hire any vacant full-time staff positions | Director, HR |
| Oct. 2014 | Recruit, hire and train school-based GU site coordinators | Director, RCs, HR |
| Oct. 2014 | Administer student and family survey to obtain baseline data | RCs, Coord of R&E |
| Oct. 2014 | Assign facilities | Director, LEAs and IHEs |
| Oct. 2014 | Procure equipment, services and supplies | Director, Asst. Dir. of Admin. & Fin., RCs |
| Oct.-Dec. 2014 | Solicit "Request for Proposals" for external evaluation. Award 7-year external evaluation contract. | Director, Asst. Dir. of Admin. & Fin., Coord. of R & E |
| Nov.-Dec. 2014 | Develop and execute subgrants to LEAs and College Partners | Director, Asst. Dir. of Admin. & Fin. |

| Ongoing Nov. 2014-Yr. 7 | Provide GEAR UP services and activities to students, families and educators including, but not limited to: | All staff |
|---|---|---|
| | School-based and college academic enrichment programs—Tutoring/Mentoring/Dual Enrollment and AP, ACT/SAT Prep | SCs, RCs, Partners |
| | Professional Mentoring, Peer-to-Peer outreach, -- HEROs (Higher Education Readiness Officers), and online E-mentoring | RCs, SCs., Partners |
| | Distribute 21st Century Scholar Certificates—Per SEC 404F | RCs, SCs |
| | Summer enrichment—GEAR UP U! College Res. Academy & Motivational activities—Leadership programs, Career Academies | SCs, RCs, College Partners |
| | PD opportunities for educators—Increase teacher content knowledge & knowledge regarding higher education opportunities for students; and work to align curricula across PK-20 | LEA Grant Coords., Coord, of Curriculum and PD, SCs, RCs |
| | Family events—Events designed to enhance GU family members' knowledge, including college match and financial literacy | SCs, RCs, Partners |
| | Student/parent/teacher surveys—APR data collection | SCs, RCs, Coord of R&E, Coord of Curriculum and PD, External Evaluator |
| | College counseling—College visits and fairs, admissions presentations, CFWV workshops (for students, school personnel, and parents). Includes College Application and Exploration week | SCs, RCs, Partners |
| | Financial aid and financial literacy counseling —Workshops for parents/guardians and students; includes College Goal Sunday | SCs, RCs, Partners |
| Ongoing Nov. 2014-Yr. 7 | Annually, convene meetings including, but not limited to: 2 LEA Grant Implementation Progress Meetings; 2 LEA GU College Access & Success Advisory Board Meetings; 5 SC Meetings | All |
| Ongoing Nov. 2014-Yr. 7 | On a monthly basis, collect and safely secure student participation and achievement data. | Director, Coord. of R & E RCs, External Evaluator |
| Apr. 2015 through Yr. 7 | Submit Federal Annual Performance Report. (Will also submit Biannual reports every-other December as required). | Director, Coord. of R & E, RCs, External Evaluator |
| Apr. 2015 – Yr. 7 | Receive, review and utilize external evaluators mid-year and year-end evaluation reports to improve project. | All staff, Partners, External Evaluators |
| During Yr. 5-Yr. 7 | Establish a research-based model and plan for serving students during their first year of postsecondary education in Years 6 (priority group) and 7 (cohort). The Director will seek approval from the grant's Federal Program Officer before implementation. | Director |
| Ongoing Oct. 2014 –Yr. 7 | Regular monitoring of sub-grants to LEAs and IHEs to ensure compliance. | Director, Asst. Dir. of Admin. & Fin. |

_**The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the**_

_**operation of the proposed project**_. As noted in Table 5.1, WVGU staff will meet frequently with

site coordinators and administrators to examine formative assessment results provided by the

external evaluation team, review program implementation accomplishments and identify

challenges in order to promote continuous improvement and proactive responses. Frequent

opportunities for **assessment and feedback** between WVGU staff and school staff will ensure

issues are dealt with immediately and solutions are reached in a timely manner. Site and regional

coordinators will report student and family participation service data on a monthly basis. LEA

treasurers will submit monthly expenditure reports to the assistant director of finance and

administration for approval and payment. LEA GU grant coordinators will convene a local

college access and success advisory board at least twice annually to provide feedback for

improvement and program sustainability. Furthermore, full-time staff and LEA grant staff and

administrators will convene for a minimum of two annual implementation progress meetings.

Focus groups, annual survey results and evaluation of outcomes (see Quality of Project

Evaluation), will serve to assess the progress and successes of each school. Accurate and timely

reporting from a diverse group of individuals will allow GU and LEA staff to reflect on the

program's progress and identify new strategies to support success. Lessons learned will be

carried forward in work plans for the following year.

## SECTION 6: QUALITY OF PROJECT EVALUATION

WVGU will conduct a rigorous evaluation based on the project logic model. The coordinator

of research and evaluation and an external evaluator[17] will work hand-in-hand with the director

to ensure goals and objectives are monitored and met. External evaluators will assist in the

completion of all required reports. Reporting within a web-based portal will provide real-time

tracking of service delivery.

***Extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the***

***goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.***

**Thoroughness of the evaluation:** The WVGU research questions are framed to address

project 1) implementation, 2) outcomes, 3) impact and 4) sustainability. To effectively assess the

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[17] The external evaluator will be hired through a competitive bidding process, per HEPC purchasing guidelines. Experience in college access program evaluation, designing and implementing rigorous quasi-experimental designs, and working in the West Virginia educational and postsecondary context will be required.

project in a formative and summative manner, the evaluation must be responsive to changes in

the project and context; therefore, research questions will likely evolve over time. Table 6.1

presents the preliminary questions, key data sources and planned analyses for each question.

| Table 6.1. Key Research Questions and Data Sources | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Questions** | **Analyses** | **Data Sources** |
| **1. IMPLEMENTATION: To what extent are WVGU activities implemented as planned?**<br>1a. Does implementation of the project &its components adhere to the design?<br>1b. What is the quality of project activities and outputs/outcomes?<br>1c. How much exposure do students, parents, & schools staff have to project activities, & to what extent does participation vary within stakeholder groups?<br>1d. What are participants' & others' responses to & engagement in activities?<br>1e. What challenges or difficulties emerge during implementation, & how are they resolved by stakeholders?<br>1f. To what extent are project services & activities appropriate for the needs of students, parents, and educators? | Descriptive | School & LEA data; project/ activity/ participation records; student/ parent/ educator surveys; stakeholder interviews; other extant data |
| **2. OUTCOMES: To what extent are project objectives achieved?** (*Project objectives in parentheses*)<br>2a. To what degree do students exhibit increases in academic performance & preparation for postsecondary education? (*Obj. 1- Increase the academic performance & preparation for postsecondary education for GU students.*) | Descriptive; Compare w/ baseline (e.g., t tests, X2, RM ANOVA) | School/LEA data; Student/ parent surveys; Participation data; other extant data |
| 2b. To what degree do high school graduation and postsecondary participation rates improve within participating high schools? (*Obj. 2 - Increase the rate of HS graduation & participation in postsecondary education for GU students.*)<br>2c. To what degree does students' and parents' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing increase? (*Obj. 3 - Increase educational expectations & knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation and financing among GU students and their families*)<br>2d. To what extent is educators' knowledge developed to improve student achievement and success in postsecondary education? (*Obj. 4 - Enhance GU educators' know-ledge to improve student achievement & success in postsecondary education.* | Descriptive; Compare w/ baseline | |
| 2e. How does student preparation translate into success & persistence in college?<br>2f. How are project interventions related to the achievement of objectives?<br>2g. What factors (e.g., level of participation in GU activities, family support, educator experience) influence outcomes for each objective? | Descriptive, Regression (possible SEM) | |
| **3. IMPACT: To what extent does WVGU intervention impact academic, postsecondary and outcomes for participants relative to nonparticipants?**<br>3a. To what extent do GU participating students and schools experience different academic and postsecondary outcomes than their comparison peers (e.g., ACT performance, postsecondary enrollment)?<br>3b. To what extent is GU participation associated with adequate or high levels of academic preparation & persistence through the first year of college?<br>3c. To what extent are differential levels of participation in key activities (e.g., mentoring) associated with different postsecondary enrollment outcomes?<br>3d. To what extent does participation in professional mentoring improve outcomes for participants relative to similar non-participants?<br>3e. To what extend does participation in texting intervention affect enrollment and persistence patterns? | Compare across groups (ANOVA, regression) Compare across groups Multi-level modeling Compare groups | School/LEA data; Student/parent surveys; Participation data; other extant data |
| **4. SUSTAINABILITY: To what degree is the WVGU model sustainable & transferable?** | Descriptive; Compare to | Project/Activity/ participation |

| 4a. Which project elements appear to be sustainable beyond the project? 4b. How are local stakeholders involved in planning for sustainability? 4c. To what extent can the WVGU model be replicated in other settings (e.g., other districts in West Virginia or other states)? 4d. To what extent is the WVGU evaluation model appropriate for other programs or contexts? | national practices  Descriptive; Peer expert review | records; Student/ parent/ personnel surveys; Stakeholder interviews |
|---|---|---|
| *Note.* RM ANOVA = repeated measures ANOVA; SEM = structural equation modeling (for causal modeling) | | |

**Implementation** analyses (Q1), ongoing through the life of the grant, will examine the extent to which activities and services are enacted as intended and for the anticipated stakeholders. Examination of **sustainability** (Q4) will begin in Year 1 as local college access and success advisory boards are established. The extent to which WVGU services affect academic, postsecondary, perceptual and attitudinal **outcomes** (Q2) will be examined longitudinally for the 2020 Cohort and educators in target schools; outcomes for Priority students will be examined annually. In Years 6 and 7, evaluators will examine students' outcomes in West Virginia institutions of higher education (IHEs) during their first year of postsecondary education.

Questions assessing **project impact** (Q3) will be investigated at multiple levels. To determine the effect of the WVGU project on student outcomes, evaluators will employ a quasi-experimental design using a *longitudinal within-school matched retrospective comparison group.*[18] Students in the cohorts preceding and following the 2020 Cohort (the Classes of 2019 and 2021) will serve as comparison classes to examine the experiential influence of the WVGU program over and above other programs and activities in the schools. Within the comparison classes, propensity score matching (PSM) will be used to select a set of matched comparison students demographically and academically similar to 2020 Cohort students; this matched comparison group will serve as the primary counterfactual to understand results in the absence of intervention. In-depth examination of targeted interventions (e.g., professional mentoring) will enable evaluators to determine whether specific project components show evidence of promise.

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[18] See CoBro Consulting, 2010

As appropriate for investigating select outcomes (e.g., rates of high school graduation, FAFSA completion, postsecondary enrollment), evaluators will examine a set of school-level comparisons. PSM will be used to identify matched comparison schools based on historical and demographic data (e.g., ACT performance, student characteristics, indicators of poverty). Key school-level indicators (e.g., graduation rates, FAFSA completion, in-state postsecondary enrollment, ACT results) will be tracked over time allowing comparisons between participating and nonparticipating schools, with data from Years 1 and 2 serving as baseline.

**Feasibility and appropriateness of the evaluation plan:** Because the design of overall project implementation precludes random assignment, the quasi-experimental cohort study with student- and school-level matched comparison groups will provide as rigorous a counterfactual as possible given the context in which the program operates. The evaluation design and methods expand on the successful strategies used in evaluating the 2008-14 WVGU program[19] and is similar to the retrospective comparison group design proposed for GU program evaluations[20]. The longitudinal nature of the design and the inclusion of multiple levels of matching will help control for threats to internal validity[21] such as history (e.g., changes will affect both participants and comparison students) and maturation (e.g., both participants and comparisons will be tracked over time). Further, the proposed plan will add the ability to explore and document evidence of promise for specific project components by assigning eligible students to receive or not receive aspects of the intervention and tracking how participation is related to applicable outcomes (e.g., academic performance, postsecondary enrollment). The component studies within the larger evaluation will provide evidence of promise for discrete interventions within the program.

_**Extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance**_

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[19] See, for example, Hughes-Webb, Ho, and Gore, 2013
[20] Source: CoBro Consulting, 2010
[21] See Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002, for further discussion of threats to internal validity.

*measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce*

*quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.* **Quantitative and qualitative data**

from a variety of sources will provide a holistic understanding of the project, supply objective

and actionable information about implementation and outcomes, and support data driven

decisions. Sources include project records, student and school records, higher education data

detailed service and activity records and survey data. 2020 cohort students and parents will

complete APR surveys annually. Priority students will complete surveys biennially. Comparison

students and parents will complete APR surveys every other year beginning in eighth grade,

enabling examination of the participant and comparison groups at similar grade levels (Grades 8,

10, and 12).  Interviews and surveys with staff, school personnel and admissions staff at IHEs

will provide contextual information about WVGU implementation and impact. All data will be

analyzed and triangulated to assess outcomes, impact and progress toward project targets.

| Table 6.2. Evaluation Data to be Collected, Sources, and Frequency | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Type of Data** | **Sample Variables, Records, and Indicators** | **Sources** | **Timeframe** |
| Project records | Final technical plan; Annual work plans (statewide and local); Meeting agendas, summaries; Biennial summaries; Summaries of partner commitments, contributions; Publications, materials produced; Types of services offered | Project staff, Partners | Ongoing (at least quarterly) |
| Participation records | Frequency, hours, dates of participation in: student services; parent services; teacher PD; other events | SCs., Data management portal | Ongoing |
| Student & parent surveys | Educational expectations, aspirations; non-cognitive development; Knowledge of college entrance requirements, financial aid, costs/benefits of college; Engagement, level of effort in school; Perceptions of service, project quality | Cohort students, parents; Com-parison group; Priority students | Annually; Biennially (Grades 8, 10, 12) |
| Postsecondary surveys | Perceptions of service, project quality and utility; Suggestions for additional services needed in future | Cohort students, parents; Com-parison students | Years 6-7 |
| School personnel surveys | Support of awareness activities; Knowledge of how to support students; Perceptions of program, service quality; Familiarity w/ objectives; Likelihood of sustainability | Teachers, LEA administrators, GU counselors | Annually |
| Stakeholder interviews & surveys | Description of project activities, implementation; Project, activity quality and responsiveness; Challenges & successes; Changes to project plans & rationale for them; Students' preparation & qualification for college | SCs; Project staff; Admission staff at WV public IHEs | Annually; Years 6-7 at IHEs |
| School and district data | Graduation, postsecondary enrollment rates; Average daily attendance; Average math, reading performance; Student population characteristics (e.g., race, disability, SES); Teacher experience, characteristics | WVDE, LEAs | Semi-annually (fall and spring) |

| Other extant data (individual or aggregated) | ACT/SAT participation and performance; Course completion & performance; Student achievement test performance; FAFSA completion; College applications; Postsecondary course enrollment & performance; Persistence in postsecondary; Other IHE data | WVDE HEPC WV public colleges Web portal | Ongoing (as data become available) |

**Table 6.3 illustrates the survey schedule for WVGU.**

| Table 6.3. Student and Parent Survey Schedule | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Class of** | **School Year** | | | | | | |
| | **2014-15** | **2015-16** | **2016-17** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** |
| 2015 Students | 12$^{th}$ grade priority | | | | | | |
| 2016 Students | | | | | | | |
| 2017 Students | | | 12$^{th}$ grade priority | | | | |
| 2018 Students | | | | | | | |
| 2019 Students *& Parents* | 8$^{th}$ grade comparison group | | 10$^{th}$ grade comparison group | | 12$^{th}$ grade priority | College freshmen priority | |
| 2020 Students *& Parents* | Cohort 7$^{th}$ grade | Cohort 8$^{th}$ grade | Cohort 9$^{th}$ grade | Cohort 10$^{th}$ grade | Cohort 11$^{th}$ grade | Cohort 12$^{th}$ grade | Cohort College freshmen |
| 2021 Students *& Parents* | | | 8$^{th}$ grade comparison group | | 10$^{th}$ grade comparison group | | 12$^{th}$ grade priority |
| | **Yr 1** | **Yr 2** | **Yr 3** | **Yr 4** | **Yr 5** | **Yr 6** | **Yr 7** |

**Web-based Data Management Portal:** The evaluation will utilize a secure web-based data warehouse to collect and store data. Among the data stored in the system will be individual participation and service delivery data (e.g., hours of tutoring, attendance at events). Data will be categorized to allow cross-referencing by project objective or national evaluation indicator. Reporting and data export functions will assist with real-time monitoring of service delivery.

**Data Analysis:** As presented in Table 6.1, analyses will describe implementation, document outcomes, study impact and explore sustainability. Analyses of quantitative data will begin with descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, means, standard deviation) to understand how the project is implemented and what outcomes are achieved. Outcome and impact questions will be

examined using a variety of techniques (e.g., regression, ANOVA, causal modeling, multilevel modeling). These analyses will allow evaluators to examine how the project impacts participants and to account for student- and school-level variation related to outcomes. Annual change in observed outcomes will be modeled as 2020 Cohort students progress from 7th grade through their first postsecondary year. Evaluators will also test moderators, including gender and SES, in sensitivity analyses examining the robustness of findings. Other exploratory analyses will allow for examination of factors such as dosage over time. Effect sizes will be calculated to indicate the magnitude of impact. Qualitative analyses will be iterative, with review of emerging themes to determine how the data create an increasingly coherent picture related to research questions.

*__Extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.__* Ongoing implementation analyses will provide objective data enabling project staff to make decisions about activities and interventions on a day-to-day basis to provide the greatest benefit. Descriptive analyses will provide a snapshot of current implementation; analyses of near-term outcomes will assess progress toward goals. Course corrections can be made quickly and proactively if data suggest interventions are not achieving desired results or reaching intended recipients.

*__Extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.__* In addition to formal evaluation reports and ongoing communication between evaluators and project staff, the WVGU team will share information about project activities and evaluation findings with P-20 stakeholders in WV and other states. Staff will propose sessions at national GU conferences and workshops to present lessons learned. Relevant information will be shared broadly through the project website, social media postings and newsletters. As appropriate, project and evaluation staff will develop white papers and briefs

for submission to practitioner publications and peer reviewed journals. Publications will highlight the data demonstrating promising practices and provide recommendations and guidance for stakeholders to learn from WVGU experiences and translate practices to their own contexts.

***Extent to which methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence of promise.*** The quasi-experimental evaluation design, with its multiple levels of comparison matching, data collection and analysis, will provide a solid foundation for examining the impact of the WVGU model and suite of interventions. The evaluation incorporates examination of specific components to explore their relationship to project outcomes and impact. Dr. Ben Castleman will assess the impact of text messaging efforts. His research will enable a thorough examination of that component and how it contributes to the success of the WVGU.

An *experimental study* will be embedded into evaluation design. Although all students will have access to basic mentoring services (e.g., near-peer, e-mentoring), select 2020 Cohort students will be chosen to receive services from a professional mentor. Student eligibility will be determined by GPA, low SES status, higher than average absentee rates and other relevant characteristics. From the pool of eligible students, random assignments will be employed to create treatment and control groups. Evaluators will track these students each year, comparing the outcomes of students selected to receive professional mentoring with those of the control group students. Analyses will examine the effectiveness of the strategic intervention. This *promising practice* will be positioned for replication in other settings.

### SECTION 7: ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

***The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.*** Every WVGU activity is intended to build sustainable college-readiness supports within the

participating LEAs, schools, college campuses and communities. By providing PD, WVGU will arm educators with the capacity to provide college-readiness advising to all students. WVGU's data-driven approach to decision-making and associated practices of disseminating research will help local, state and national administrators in replicating and sustaining successful practices, strengthening infrastructure and implementing sound long-term policies benefiting future cohorts of students. Furthermore, each LEA (beginning in Year 2) and college (in Years 6 and 7), will develop and revise annual sustainability plans and present those to the project director and other staff. In adopting a collective impact approach,[22] WVGU will build a partnership network to sustain promising practices focusing on making measured progress toward a common agenda.

Finally, WVGU aims to shape state policy to enhance opportunities for all high-need students. HEPC will share evidence of WVGU's impact with legislators and policy makers. As a result, those bodies will shape policy and scale effective services aimed at enhancing investments in access and success initiatives for more WV low-income and first generation students.

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[22] Source: Kania and Kramer, 2011