



APEX Transylvania Partner Agreement 2024 - 2031

GEAR UP GOALS:

Thank you for your interest in establishing a partnership with Appalachian State University to provide college and career readiness supportive services to your students, families, and school district personnel. The GEAR UP program, federally funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is an investment in your county with 3 very important goals at the center of everything we do:

1. Increase academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students (including 8th grade math and reading, Math 1, English I, ACT, rigorous academic courses, etc.)
2. Increase rate of High School graduation and participation in postsecondary education of GEAR UP students (including postsecondary aspirations, etc.).
3. Increase education expectations for GEAR UP students and increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financial literacy and awareness (including FAFSA completion, ACT preparation, college applications, etc.).

DESCRIPTION OF THE GEAR UP PROJECT:

With these goals in mind, there are key areas we will focus on to achieve our mission of improving preparation, enrollment, and success in postsecondary education. These key areas are referred to as the Exceptional Approaches Model, and include four high-impact bucket areas of academic readiness, college preparation, school climate, and systemic change (Attachment B). In addition, the GEAR UP APEX program proposes an overarching theme of addressing the opportunity gap in rural communities by leveraging support systems founded in research-based and sustainable approaches. By encouraging students, parents, and teachers to work together to create solutions to local challenges, it is our goal that GEAR UP becomes a catalyst for college and career readiness in western North Carolina, and the state of NC. This overarching theme is meant to serve as a backdrop for all GEAR UP APEX services.

Appalachian State University would like to invite Transylvania County Schools to participate in the FY24 GEAR UP, GEAR UP APEX Appalachia, grant proposal which will be submitted on or before May 7, 2024. If funded, the FY24 GEAR UP grant would be administered for a minimum of seven years from 2024 to 2031 (Attachment A) in the following schools within Transylvania: Brevard Middle, Rosman Middle, Brevard High, and Rosman High School. Committing to this partnership means that:

*Schools listed are contingent upon data verification.

Appalachian State University will:



- Award a designated amount of funding using an 8-tiered funding model based on your district’s GEAR UP student enrollment. These funds will be funded on a cost-reimbursement subaward model, and will be contingent on student enrollment.

	GY01	GY02	GY03	GY04	GY05	GY06	GY07	Total
Transylvania County	\$140,000	\$150,000	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$165,000	\$1,115,000

- Promote and monitor progress toward goals through consistent, timely, and relevant data reporting to partners
- Provide grant management support, guidance, and resources
- Ensure financial accountability through federal compliance support and guidance that maintains minimum risk for audit
- Assist in providing direct services to GEAR UP stakeholders through programs such as:
 - College campus visits (App State Mountaineer Expeditions and Summer Bus Tours)
 - Summer programs
 - Virtual tutoring
 - STEM camps and hands-on inquiry opportunities
 - Teacher & support staff professional learning opportunities (including but not limited to the Education Policy Fellowship Program in partnership with the Public School Forum of NC, Science Fair PD through partnership with Society for Science, Global Teacher Leaders Cohort through partnership with Participate Learning, etc.)
 - Family & community engagement programs (including programs to support multilingual learners and their families, Family Design Night, etc.)
 - Student leadership programs
 - Postsecondary team development programs (including partnership with the National Postsecondary Strategy Institute)
 - ACT and academic test preparation services (including partnership with MasteryPrep)
 - Research interventions directly focused on improving GEAR UP outcomes
- Seek, establish, and maintain supportive partnerships with other higher education institutions that can assist in direct service delivery to GEAR UP students, families, and school district personnel

Transylvania County Schools will:



- Capture and submit cost-share documentation until the entirety of the overall grant match commitment is achieved
- Provide the following to ensure GEAR UP goals are met on time and within budget:
 - Strategic services aligned with the overarching theme of the Opportunity Gap
 - The Exceptional Approaches and associated 4 high-impact bucket areas (Attachment B)
 - Execute a data sharing agreement
 - Supply timely and accurate data (identifiable) as required by the U.S. Department of Education
 - Serve every GEAR UP student every year
 - Provide strategic integration of GEAR UP services that involves an annual plan designed by the district’s GEAR UP Postsecondary Leadership Team and School Improvement Team, with the support of Appalachian State University GEAR UP
 - Responsible expenditure of all grant funds to ensure costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and necessary and within all federal, state, and district policies

- Partnering with local, state, and national organizations to provide high quality supportive services to address the unique needs to all GEAR UP students

- Support the program through identified GEAR UP personnel including:
 - GEAR UP Site Director
 - GEAR UP Site Coordinator (funding provided for full 1.0 FTE salary)
 - GEAR UP Finance Officer
 - GEAR UP Postsecondary Leadership Team
 - GEAR UP School Innovation Team

- Provide a designated amount of cost-share based on a 8-tiered cost-share model

	GY01	GY02	GY03	GY04	GY05	GY06	GY07
Transylvania County	\$210,000	\$225,000	\$247,500	\$247,500	\$247,500	\$247,500	\$247,500

It would be a great privilege to begin a GEAR UP partnership with Transylvania County Schools, if our proposal is funded. In order to move forward, we will need the attached “Partner Identification Form and Cost Share Worksheet” completed, with the signed Letter of Commitment, and returned to Rachel Nave-Lewis, navelewisrc@appstate.edu by close of business on April 8, 2024.



GRADE	GY01 2024-2025	GY02 2025-2026	GY03 2026-2027	GY04 2027-2028	GY05 2028-2029	GY06 2029-2030	GY07 2030-2031
6th	6	6	6				
7th	7	7	7	7			
8th	Comparison	8	8	8	8		
9th		Comparison	9	9	9	9	
10th			Comparison	10	10	10	10
11th				Comparison	11	11	11
12th					Comparison	12	12
13th (ECHS)						Comparison	13
PS						Comparison	PS



EXCEPTIONAL APPROACHES TO IMPACT THE GAP MODEL



Advancing Prosperity through Education and eXcellence



WHAT IS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP?

“The opportunity gap is the way that uncontrollable life factors like race, language, economic, and family situations can contribute to lower rates of success in educational achievement, career prospects, and other life aspirations” (Close The Gap Foundation).

EXCEPTIONAL APPROACHES TO IMPACT THE GAP

SYSTEMIC CHANGE ◀ ▶ SCHOOL CLIMATE ◀ ▶ ACADEMIC PREP ◀ ▶ COLLEGE PREP ◀ ▶

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

- Four Year Student Service Cohort Model ◀
- Regional Approach with Networking ◀
- Supporting Multilingual Learners ◀
- Policy & Leadership Cohorts ◀

Education Policy Fellowship, National Postsecondary Strategy Institute, Rural Teacher Leaders Network, Postsecondary Leadership Teams, etc.





SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
- Advising Models & MTSS
- Counselor Professional Development
- SEL Researched Based Interventions

Counselor Network, ASCA partnership, SEL programming, etc.

ACADEMIC PREP

- Math Advancement & Interventions ◀
- ELA Tutoring & Interventions ◀
- STEM & Computer Science Programming ◀
- Dual Enrollment ◀

Academic Innovation Conference, Math 1 RIPTIDE, STEM Camps, Science Fair, Aviation Programming, Tutor.com, etc.



COLLEGE PREP

- Global Leaders Cohort & Model
- College Visits & Campus Tours
- College & Career Courses and Instruction
- FAFSA Awareness & Campaign

Participate Learning, Mountaineer Expeditions, LevelAll, MasteryPrep, ACT prep, Financial Literacy, NCCEP conferences, etc.