



GEAR UP Maine RISE *Our 2023-2030 Program*

The University of Maine System Acting through University of Maine Farmington and Syntiro propose to utilize seven years of State GEAR UP (GU) funding from the US Department of Education to build on the successful work of GU 2014-2022 including findings from 3 research pilots and to address new and emerging issues facing Maine and the nation including the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. The program addresses the needs of students and their families, schools and their communities, institutes of higher education, and the workforce needs of our state and will serve 5,000 students in eleven rural Maine communities. Unique in this proposal is a focus to address the needs of emergency certified teachers and creating dual enrollment pathways for students interested in becoming teachers.

The goal of GEAR UP Maine RISE is to prepare students for postsecondary education by increasing:

- ★ academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education;
- ★ the rate of high school graduation;
- ★ students' and parents' knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing.
- ★ access to opportunities for exploration of career and college choices for students from rural regions of Maine.

GEAR UP Maine RISE is designed to enhance and improve the rate at which students graduate high school and enroll in and complete PSE and GEAR UP Maine RISE is framed upon four attributes that have critical importance to addressing the needs of economically disadvantaged, rural Maine communities.

Relevance: GEAR UP Maine RISE pledges pertinence and meaningfulness in its efforts to assure that career exploration, internships and postsecondary aspirations align with a student's interests and passions while addressing the workforce shortages in rural Maine.

Inquiry: GEAR UP Maine RISE will use continuous improvement strategies, analytics, data dives, focus groups and other inquiry techniques to augment knowledge, solve challenges and regularly assess the work.

Supports and Equity for All: GEAR UP Maine RISE will provide equal access and equitable opportunities and resources for students and schools who otherwise might be excluded or marginalized- including students with disabilities.

Expectations and Aspirations for Postsecondary Education: GEAR UP Maine RISE will elevate the postsecondary educational aspirations held by students, families, schools, and these rural remote communities. All students, including students with disabilities, can achieve high standards, matriculate, and succeed in postsecondary education and have valued careers contributing to the health of Maine communities and the state's economy.

GEAR UP Maine RISE Mission

GEAR UP Maine RISE partners with schools, postsecondary institutions, educators, families, students and organizations to develop and grow the next generation of Maine leaders by providing college and career opportunities to the state's most rural and disadvantaged school districts.

GEAR UP Maine RISE will be implementing a Hybrid Model of services that includes both cohort and priority models.

Cohort Model: Begin with all 7th grade students in GEAR UP Maine RISE schools SY 2023-24 and follow these students into their first year of postsecondary education in 2030.

Priority Model: In each year beginning in 2023-24, we will work with all 11th and 12th grade students in GEAR UP Maine RISE schools and follow them through their first year of postsecondary education from 2024 to 2030.

Service Model

Services will address:

- ★ financial literacy/financial aid education (7-12);
- ★ strengthening postsecondary culture including college visits and college immersion (7-12)
- ★ building and reinforcing strong work habits (7-11)
- ★ career awareness and exploration (7-12)
- ★ successful postsecondary transition through Scholar Coaching (11-12+); and,
- ★ direct professional development to build and expand a college going culture (7-12 staff).

GEAR UP Maine RISE staff will work with district staff responsible for teaching the grade levels we serve each year to:

- ★ understand the supporting research for each service;
- ★ plan and deliver services appropriate for each grade level; and,
- ★ collect and analyze data to determine the impact of the services.