4-Year Plans Help Students Prepare for High School

GEAR UP staff helped students create a 4-year high school plan based on a career inventory the students took earlier in the school year. The majority of 8th grade students completed the career inventory and 20% completed a 4-year plan. The Bridges program was used to create the 4-year plan. This program can be accessed through the internet at the students’ homes. Along with a 4-year plan, the Bridges program also has information about careers, colleges and technical schools.

“The 4-year plan will keep me on track and help me work harder so I can become an architect.”
—Alysia Hall

“I thought the 4-year plan was cool because it got me thinking about high school and jobs I may be interested in.”
—Nathan Nelson

“The 4-year plan was helpful because there were a lot of new subjects that I had never seen before.”
—Andrea Rivera

“The 4-year plan helped me to know what to expect from high school so I can be prepared.”
—Nick Alvarez
Self-determination is the right for students to be in charge of their life and make decisions for themselves.

- Students must learn how to take greater responsibility in their ARD meetings.
- Students must learn how to speak up for themselves.

If you would like more information about the GEAR UP program and the activities planned, contact the GEAR UP Coordinator, Lourdes Gorzycki, at 979-209-2582 (see page 6).

Special Education Teachers Receive Training on Self-Determination

Have you heard your student or your student’s teacher talk about self-determination? What is that about? Self-determination is the right for students to be in charge of their life and make decisions for themselves. Special education teachers from BISD recently received training in a curriculum to help our students become more self-determined. At this age, self-determination may mean choosing electives they will take in high school or deciding what high school they want to attend based on their personal interest in a certain program. Self-determination skills are critical for students with disabilities to be successful in post-secondary environments.

After high school, in order to receive accommodations or modifications in college or post-secondary training, students MUST be able to:

- Describe their disability
- State their strengths and limitations as a learner
- Identify the support and modifications they need to be successful
- Advocate for themselves to receive the services they need

We hope to continue this training in self-determination at the high school level. Our students should be taking on greater responsibility at their ARD meetings and speaking up for themselves. You can help your student by helping them articulate their particular learning needs in a positive way.

Congratulations to GEAR UP T-Shirt Contest Winner Imperial Gilbert!

Imperial Gilbert is the winner of the GEAR UP 2010-2011 t-shirt contest. Imperial’s design will be used to create new GEAR UP t-shirts for the GEAR UP cohort. Imperial also won an iPod for designing the t-shirt!
The Influence of GEAR UP in the BISD Community

When we first learned that BISD, TAMU and GEAR UP would be partnering, we just knew the program would be a win-win for all involved. As parents, we were excited about our daughter participating in the program because the wonderfully planned activities would help reinforce our hopes that our child would seek personal growth and self-confidence. This past year has been rewarding to see her enthusiasm to grow as a student, to learn about the importance of academics and going to college, and transitioning into a mature, young lady. Having her friends and other parents participate in the program, we can attest to the quality and lasting value of the relationships developed with other participants, staff and teachers.

We are grateful to BISD, TAMU and GEAR UP for enriching all the students’ lives. There is no doubt in our mind that the program has and will continue to make a profound impact on our daughter’s life. Without hesitation, we highly recommend the program to other parents that their children may join the program. Thomas Bosquez, Parent

GEAR UP is a very successful program. I have learned many things from being on field trips. I have learned good things about each and every college we have been to. I have seen results in students wanting to go to college. I believe if GEAR UP continues to help these kids in Bryan there will be a larger percentage of teens wanting to go to college and going to college in the future. Elisia Reyes, Student

GEAR UP has made a positive impact in the life of my son Taylor. He has been involved with the program for the past two years. This year in particular he was privileged to visit four prestigious colleges. I was able to make the trip to San Marcus where we viewed the campus of Texas State University. As a parent I found it to be informative as well as encouraging. The trips provide a strategic way of planting a seed into the minds of our youth that allows them to see that they have options after graduating from high school. I believe it gave the students something to look forward to and a hope for their future. I am grateful to Mrs. Trejo and everyone involved with GEAR UP. Thanks for making a difference in the lives of our children. Cynthia Caldwell, Parent

Thank you for letting us take a tour around Prairie View A&M University. I had a wonderful day and learned a lot about the school and campus. I learned about all the groups and activities they have to offer. I learned a lot about college that I didn't know, like how you can adjust your school schedule with how you live your life. “I think that is so cool.” Some day I hope to go Prairie View A&M University. I think it would be a wonderful school for me. Skileya Mitchell, Student

The GEAR UP program is such a great tool for me to use for learning easy ways to further my daughter education. I have attended workshops to learn the right procedures to follow for attending college; such as the most important grades that matter for scholarships, financial aid and visiting college campuses to get an overall view of college life. I’m very excited that GEAR UP works with the students to encourage them to continue on to higher education. Thank You GEAR UP. Sherry Nutall, Parent
8th Grade Field Trips to Texas Colleges

- Texas A&M University
- Texas State University
- Baylor University
- University of Texas
- Sam Houston State University
GEARING UP for the Transition to High School

Studies show that there is a period of stress and elevated anxiety about topics surrounding the transition from middle school to high school. Understanding the concerns of students could help decrease the anxiety they may feel, and also gives them the opportunity to discuss what excites them. GEAR UP recently surveyed BISD students, parents, and teachers on what they believe 8th graders are thinking about when it comes to the transition to high school.

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<th><strong>Teachers</strong></th>
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BISD Open House for High School Parents

Visit classrooms to learn about course outlines, class expectations, and general information about the subjects taught.

August 30, 2010
6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

**For information about BISD High School Open House contact your child’s school**
College Tips From Daniel Uresti, Jr.

Daniel is a Senior Admissions Counselor for Texas A&M University. As an admissions counselor, Daniel travels across Texas to provide information to high school and community college counselors, parents, and students about the application process for Texas A&M University. In addition, Daniel provides college tips in commercials on KBTX.

⇒ Get involved, be a leader, and remember to give back.

⇒ Remember to sign up for advanced courses and to graduate from high school on the recommended or distinguished plan.

⇒ Utilize the tutors and volunteer staff that come to your campus.

⇒ Climb as high as you can in your class rankings. It’s important to have a high class ranking when applying for colleges and universities.

⇒ Know that college is for you. It is possible, and you can do it!

First Day of School Celebration
August 21, 2010
Downtown Bryan
6:00 p.m. - Dusk

Bring your family to Downtown Bryan to enjoy the First Day of School Celebration hosted by the City of Bryan and BISD! Visit booths with information about opportunities to get involved in secondary schools in BISD! Enjoy performances by the BISD bands, choirs, drill teams, and cheerleaders!