

Rural Northeast Washington State GEAR UP – 2018

The Community Colleges of Spokane (Spokane Falls and Spokane Community College), NLA Group, Rural Alliance and 14 school districts (Chewelah, Columbia, Colville, Curlew, Cusick, Deer Park, Lind/Ritzville, Newport, Northport, PRIDE Prep, Republic, Riverside and Valley) partner in a Rural Northeast Washington State GEAR UP application to serve 1,700+ students in rural northeastern Washington State. Students in these districts have limited access to libraries, museums, cultural centers, large employers, universities and colleges, available to urban and suburban students. This project seeks to join students, administrators, teachers and partners into a community of learners to identify best practices for rural school districts to support their students' postsecondary aspirations.

PROJECT GOAL: "To prepare GEAR UP students to enroll and persist in PSE.

Objective 1: Increase students' academic readiness for PSE.

Objective 2: Increase student awareness and planning for PSE.

Objective 3: Increase students' and families' knowledge and pursuing of PSE options.

Objective 4: Heighten students' understanding and acceptance of STEM learning.

Services will include 1) information on financial aid for students and their parents; 2) expanded student enrollment in dual credit (high school/college) coursework to minimize remediation; 3) VR and other learning enhancements to improve student learning; and 4) visits to college campuses to help students prepare strong college enrollment plans.

Activities support DOE **Absolute Priority (1)** Fostering flexible, affordable paths to obtaining knowledge and skills, (d) Creating opportunities for students to obtain STEM credentials; **Absolute Priority (2)** Promoting STEM with a focus on computer science (3) Utilizing technology for educational purposes in rural communities; **Absolute Priority (3)** Protecting Freedom of Speech (b) Fostering knowledge of the common rights and responsibilities of citizens and **Absolute Priority (4)** Fostering knowledge and promoting skills that prepare students to be informed citizens; providing instruction in personal financial literacy, markets and economics, knowledge of higher education financing, and other skills.

Another key intervention builds districts' capacity to support this initiative. The Rural Alliance will convene twice yearly meetings each of the seven years of the grant with the following groups: 1) superintendents 2) principals 3) counselors and 4) math teachers, to build learning communities to strengthen partner districts' teaching and learning capacity.

All adopted activities have been recommended either in a What Works Clearinghouse practice guide with strong or moderate evidence, and associated studies reporting a positive effect in a study that had a minimal impact (the latter will be investigated as demonstrating promising evidence through the evaluation process in specified years).