

REQUEST FOR OMB REVIEW

Supporting Statement for the Performance Report for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Grantees

Office of Postsecondary Education
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A JUSTIFICATION

A.1 Circumstances that Make the Collection of Information Necessary

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), created in the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, is designed to raise educational expectations and strengthen preparation for college for low-income middle grade and secondary school students through competitively awarded grants to state projects and local partnerships. Grantees (states and local partnerships) will provide services including tutoring, mentoring, academic enrichment, student and family support, dissemination of information to students and their parents about postsecondary education and options for financing college, and financial assistance.

Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the U. S. Department of Education (ED) is required to establish performance indicators demonstrating to Congress whether progress is being made in achieving the goals of its programs. **(The Performance Indicators established for the GEAR UP program are attached.)** A primary purpose of the annual performance report is to collect the student outcome, program implementation, and other information required to report on the Performance Indicators established for GEAR UP. The performance report is also designed to provide ED program officers/monitors, who are responsible for making annual decisions about whether continued funding should be provided to individual GEAR UP grantees, with the information needed to make these decisions. Accordingly, the performance report also collects basic information on budgetary expenditures (federal dollars and nonfederal matching contributions), program structure, participants in GEAR UP, and comparisons of annual measurable outcomes to annual objectives.

The current Annual Performance Report, or APR (OMB #1840-0777), expires on December 31, 2006. The Department of Education is seeking approval to revise its APR for dissemination to grantees.

A.2 How, By Whom, How Frequently, and for What Purpose the Information is to be Used

The performance report is completed by each GEAR UP grantee on an annual basis. The Federal Government uses the information to report progress in meeting the performance objectives of GEAR UP. In addition, this information is the basis for determining that substantial progress has been made, allowing the program office to process continuation awards.

A.3 Use of Improved Technology to Reduce Burden

The APR form attached for your review and approval has been converted to a computer based application. The data collection can now be conducted electronically through a website developed for ED by Computer Business Methods, Inc., at the following address, <http://webprod.cbmiweb.com/gearup>. This site is open for a period thirty days prior to the April 15th due date and ninety days following the due date (March 15 – May 31). Grantees access the report by entering their unique ID and password. They can save their report by sections, and submit the report to ED once completed. There are also edit checks on numbers served and automatic totaling of budget information to avoid typographical and computational errors. These changes prevent submission of incomplete and erroneous reports. Hard copies of the APR report are printed from the web-based application and placed in the official file.

A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication

GEAR UP's performance report is the primary method to collect grantee programmatic and fiscal information. Since the information submitted is specific to the GEAR UP program, there is no duplication. There is no other data collection instrument available that is critical to meet the purposes described in Items A.1 and A.2 above.

A.5 Minimizing Burden on Small Businesses and Entities

We continue to anticipate that no small entities will be required to complete this annual performance report. If one should ever receive a GEAR UP grant, the form is designed to be user friendly and easy for the small entity to complete.

A.6 Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

It is critical for grantees to complete their performance reports annually so that ED can review and use the reports as a means to make decisions about continued annual funding to individual grantees. Additionally, performance reporting on a schedule other than annual would be extremely difficult to carry out, as data on participant cohorts (i.e., students in a particular grade level) would need to be accurately merged, and information specific to a particular year of a GEAR UP project, especially student outcomes, could be lost. In addition, information collected less frequently would not allow ED staff to provide early assistance to projects.

A.7 Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances associated with this data collection.

A.8 Consultation Outside the Agency

Comments have been obtained from a variety of sources including four-year universities and colleges, community colleges, local education agencies and state agencies involved in the GEAR UP program, during the testing of the web-based data collection. During completion of the annual performance report we obtained comments from the grantees. (for APR periods in 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006).

A.9 Payment of Stipend to Participants

ED does not provide stipends to grantees for the completion of annual performance reports.

A.10 Assurance of Confidentiality

Performance report data are not confidential. Nonetheless, individual grantee reported data are aggregated in any reports developed and published by U.S. Department of Education.

A.11 Sensitive Questions

The questions are not of a sensitive nature.

A.12 Estimate of Burden Hours

We estimate that it takes grantees approximately 34 hours to complete the performance report (assuming that grantees have maintained computerized service records for students enrolled in the program). This estimate includes the time to process the relevant participation and outcome data; administer the student and parent surveys and aggregate the results; and complete the three financial information forms. The total burden hours is 11,152 (328 respondents X 34 hours).

The cost of this data gathering and reporting process to the grantees is estimated to be \$30 per hour. The total grantee cost is estimated to be \$344,560 (328 respondents x 34 hours x \$30).

A.13 Estimates of Annual Cost to Respondents

The performance report requires grantees to maintain student files in a computerized format. Therefore, the reporting requirements for the performance report are the same as they are for general records systems maintained by projects; and no additional hour burden on the part of these grantees (and thereby no additional cost) is required. There is no additional cost beyond what is stated in A.12.

A.14 Estimates of Annualized Cost to Federal Government

The administration and analysis of the performance report will be conducted by federal officials.

Estimated costs are as follows:

Activity/Task	Cost	Hours	Number	Total Cost to Fed. Govt.
APR Revisions/Form Design once every 3 years	\$45/hr	40		\$1,800
Securing OMB approval once every 3 years	\$45/hr	40		\$1,800
Program staff reviewing APRs	\$35/hr	4 hrs/ APR	328	\$45,920
Technical assistance to grantees (pre and post APR)	\$35/hr	1 hr/ APR	328	\$11,480
Program staff processing APRs in GAPS	\$35/hr	31 hours	328	\$1,085
Preparing and issuing Continuation Grant Award Notices to grantees	\$35/hr	30 hours	328	\$1,050
Conduct data analysis for GPRA report	\$88/hr	24		\$2,112
Additional data collection and preparation of information	\$35/hr	1 hr/APR	328	\$11,480
Total Annual Cost				\$76,727

A.15 Changes in Burden

The changes in burden are due to an increase in the number of GEAR UP grantees, from 316 in FY 2003, to 328 in FY 2006 and the fact that it is now submitted electronically. The number of hours per grantee to complete the Annual Performance Report was reduced by one hour as the electronic version totals all federal and non-Federal budget information.

A.16 Plans for Tabulation and Publication

For purposes of the Federal GPRA requirements, data are aggregated for GEAR UP as a whole. In addition, reports are prepared for Department requests from the education community showing results of GEAR UP grant projects.

Table 1. Schedule

Activity	Expected Date	Number of Weeks From Submission to IMCD/OMB
Aggregate Performance Report data for GPRA Performance Indicators	12/31/2006	12
National program report	12/31/2006	12

A.17 Approval Not to Display Expiration Date for OMB Approval

This is not applicable. The expiration date for OMB approval will be displayed on the performance reporting form.

A.18 Adherence to the Guidelines in 5CFR 1320.9

No exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I are requested.

B COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.