

## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release Date: Friday, February 1, 2019

Contact: Ivonne Davila-Beegle for Bourbon Citizen and Paris Independent website

Phone: Patrice Thompson, Assistant Superintendent

Patrice.thompson@paris.kyschools.us

### **Paris Independent selected to participate in GEAR UP Kentucky**

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – GEAR UP Kentucky has announced that Paris Independent middle and high schools are two of 23 schools that have been selected to participate in a seven-year, federal \$24.5 million grant program designed to increase the number of students from low-income households graduating from high school and enrolling in college or workforce training programs. The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education administers the grant.

Beginning in Fall 2019, GEAR UP Kentucky will provide direct student services to the entire seventh-grade class at Paris Middle School. The students in this cohort, as well as those in the following academic year's seventh-grade class, will receive support services throughout middle and high school and extending into their first year of college. For the duration of the grant, all members of each senior class (including the class of 2019) at Paris High School will receive direct services from GEAR UP Kentucky both during their senior year and their college freshman year.

GEAR UP, which stands for **G**aining **E**arly **A**wareness and **R**eadiness for **U**ndergraduate **P**rograms, provides three categories of services to boost student success: direct services for students and parents, school support services, and state and community services. The program seeks to increase academic performance and college preparation, high school graduation and participation in college, and student and family knowledge of options, preparation and financing. Nationally, GEAR UP students apply and enroll in postsecondary education at a higher rate than their peers.

“GEAR UP focuses on identifying and closing achievement gaps of low-income, underrepresented, and underprepared students, so this is exactly the right program at the right time for Kentucky,” said Dr. Aaron Thompson, president of the Council on Postsecondary Education. “We have learned valuable lessons during each grant cycle, and we used these lessons to develop the right balance of services, identify the best partners and engage the ideal school systems, like Paris Independent.” Thompson added.

“We are honored to have been selected to participate in the GEAR UP Kentucky grant and excited for the opportunities it brings to our students, families and schools. GEAR UP is a perfect match for our district’s strategic plan focused on empowering lives,” said Patrice Thompson, Assistant Superintendent.

Kentucky is one of only six states to receive GEAR UP funding from the U.S Department of Education in this year’s competition, and this is fourth time the Council has been awarded the grant.

During the next seven years, GEAR UP Kentucky program will serve a minimum of 10,000 students in 12 school districts: Bath County, Bourbon County, Bracken County, Covington Independent, Fleming County, Frankfort Independent, Marion County, Mason County, Mercer County, Paris Independent, Pendleton County and Robertson County.

For more information about GEAR UP Kentucky, visit [www.gearupky.org](http://www.gearupky.org) .