

**DATE:** January 24, 2008

**SUBJECT:** P-16 Initiatives/GEAR UP TN Status Report

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Information

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The GEAR UP initiative is a federal discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serve an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP TN is designed to promote student achievement and enhance awareness of the need to expand access to post-secondary education statewide, especially in those areas of the state that are traditionally underserved. GEAR UP TN funds are also used to provide incentive awards to students graduating from the high schools served and scholarships to low-income students in the cohort.

Staff will provide an update on the implementation and activities of Tennessee's 2005-2010 GEAR UP initiative. Staff will also provide an update on implementation of CollegeforTN.org and the Bridge Incentive Award.