

DATE: July 27, 2006

SUBJECT: GEAR UP Status Report

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Implementation of the Tennessee GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grant continues. GEAR UP is the multi-year federal grant to increase the number of socio-economically disadvantaged and underserved students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The \$3.5 million annual grant serves nine selected counties (Campbell, Cocke, Grundy, Hardeman, Johnson, Lake, Meigs, Union, and Wayne), all of which have entered into contracts for the GEAR UP initiative, and local implementation is underway.

GEAR UP Tennessee (GEAR UP TN) has contracted to provide each of the participating counties with assistance and resources over the course of the grant to serve a student cohort beginning in the seventh grade (the 2006 rising eighth graders) and will assist this cohort of students to successfully complete high school and to transition to postsecondary education. In addition, GEAR UP TN has now accepted the first applications to provide college scholarships (Bridge and GEAR UP PLUS Scholarships) to qualifying students in the partnering counties to be utilized at any public or private institution located in Tennessee.

Staff will provide an update on the progress made and future activities planned to implement the 2005-2010 GEAR UP initiative.