



SEP 19 2006

**NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs**  
**(GEAR UP)**

September 13, 2006

Ron Haugen  
Gadsden Independent Schools  
PO Drawer 70  
Anthony, NM 88021

Dear Ron Haugen,

We are pleased to announce that the United States Department of Education has awarded the New Mexico Higher Education Department an \$18 million dollar GEAR UP grant, \$3 million dollars a year for six years. This letter confirms that Gadsden Independent Schools is a participant in the GEAR UP grant.

The goal of the GEAR UP grant is to increase career and college readiness among student populations with the greatest need in New Mexico. In the first year we will begin supporting the cohort of 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in your district, and to continue to assist the students and their families throughout their middle and high school careers using GEAR UP support programs and services. Our goal is that they become the college graduates and successful workers of the future.

Academic intervention needs to start early so that students graduate from high school prepared for college coursework. Some of the student interventions that GEAR UP encourages are academic tutoring before, during, or after school, mentoring, summer enrichment programs, goal setting, college readiness assessments, and intensive counseling and guidance. Outreach to families regarding the requirements and costs of attending college, as well as sharing information about financial aid resources, is a key component of GEAR UP. Staff professional development and curriculum alignment and improvement are other areas that can be addressed through this grant.

The New Mexico GEAR UP kick off event is tentatively scheduled for Friday evening, October 27, and Saturday, October 28, 2006 in Albuquerque. Each GEAR UP middle school will develop two-year plans to utilize GEAR UP funds. This will be your opportunity to meet the other educators from GEAR UP schools from across New Mexico. We ask you to include four people from your district: a middle school principal or assistant principal, a 7<sup>th</sup> and an 8<sup>th</sup> grade core teacher, and a counselor from the middle school to this event. Additional information on this event and other program start up material will follow.

The HED GEAR UP staff looks forward to working with you and your staff to assist the students in your district. Please contact us anytime you have questions or concerns. Together, we will encourage and support the career and college aspirations of all of your students. Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Liz Gutierrez & Rebecca Belletto

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