



NEWS & INFORMATION ABOUT  
PLANNING FOR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

# The GEAR UP Gazette

APRIL

FOR PARENTS OF 7<sup>TH</sup> & 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS

## EXTRA, EXTRA! EXTRACURRICULARS ARE KEY TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Students who participate in extracurricular activities are less likely to skip class or miss school and are more likely to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and score in the highest quartile on math and reading assessments. Extracurricular activities have other benefits, too:



- **Activities teach universal lessons.** Students learn the value of practice, how to apply themselves to a task, and the satisfaction that comes from achievement. Students involved in multiple activities learn how to manage and plan their time, a key skill for success.

- **Activities build confidence.** Students struggling in the classroom may begin to doubt their own abilities and skills. Success in an out-side activity can create a sense of confidence that translates into more confident classroom performance. Also, it helps struggling students earn esteem among their peers.



- **Activities build relationships.** Sports, theater, music, and other achievement-focused activities increase opportunities for strong adult relations, mentoring, and positive peer associations.

- **Activities keep students in a safe, monitored place.** Effectively extending the school day, activities help keep kids out of trouble and help to reduce working parents' anxiety about their children.

- **Activities build character.** Participation helps students develop discipline, commitment, tenacity, control and a healthy respect for authority.

Source: [Education Partnerships, Inc.](#)

### DID YOU KNOW?

Colleges are more interested in the quality of extracurricular activities than the quantity. Just one out-of-school activity might be enough!

## COLLEGE MYTHS (AND REALITIES)

**MYTH:** Community colleges don't have extracurricular activities on campus like student clubs or athletics.

**REALITY:** Community colleges offer a range of extracurricular activities for students, just like a 4-year university. Some community colleges have competitive athletic teams, while others offer club sports. Other activities include student government, pre-professional clubs, and cultural groups.

## PARENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Explore interests with your student and encourage involvement.** Talk to your student about the kinds of activities she is interested in – it doesn't have to be sports or an academically-related club. Consider potential careers and try to find activities related to fields he is interested in. Consider activities outside of school as well, like in the community or at church.
- ☐ **Remind students that school still comes first.** Extracurricular activities are important – but doing well in classes trumps sports or clubs. Make sure your student understands your expectations for good grades.

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs and is a federally-funded program that helps rural, low-income middle and high schools prepare students for education after high school.

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# COLLEGE. It's not a dream, it's a plan.