

Legislation Text

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Declaring Wednesday, October 18, 2000 "GEAR UP DAY"

WHEREAS, According to statistics, high achieving students from low-income families are five times less likely to attend college as compared to their counterparts from high-income families. In addition, over 70% of parents want to know more about the college preparatory courses that their children should take and how to pay for their education; and

WHEREAS, GEAR UP schools focus on academic readiness, college awareness and family and community involvement. Beginning with entire middle school grade, GEAR UP's involvement with the student and their family through partnerships between schools and community based organizations, until high school graduation thereby making low income student's preparation for college everyone's business; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's GEAR UP Network received the second largest grant in the nation and provided services to 8,000 students in the first year. Based in public schools with seventh graders and serving students who live in designated Empowerment Zones, each of the seven partnership(s) include the neighborhood high school, two or four middle or k-8 schools, one or more colleges/universities and several community organizations; and

WHEREAS, The School District of Philadelphia serves as the fiscal agent of the Philadelphia GEAR UP Network. The program components include changing public school curricula to ensure rigorous college-bound courses, content-based professional development for teachers and the delivery of a range of services, including extracurricular academic support, tutoring and mentoring programs, college fairs and visits and career guidance, directly to students and their parents; and

WHEREAS, GEAR UP is in its second year of implementation and plans on adding a new cohort of seventh graders within each of the next consecutive four years. An outcomes -based initiative, in addition to the systematic change as evidenced by the enhancement of its college-going structure, measurement of its impact will be in the numbers of students successfully applying, entering college and receiving financial aid; and

WHEREAS, The week of October 16th -20th is National College Week. Now in its second year, National College Week urges college presidents, chancellors, administrators and students to venture out into the community to talk with middle and high school students about the importance of a college education. Philadelphia GEAR UP is an outstanding example and prototype - of both awareness activities and working collaborations. Its efforts towards spearheading the involvement of individuals, businesses and organizations in students' efforts to reach college and be successful are to be applauded; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we declare Wednesday, October 18, 2000 as "GEAR UP DAY". We commend the collaborations between schools; institutions of higher learning and community based organizations to bring college preparation awareness to students in low-income communities.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to The School District

of Philadelphia's Office of Education for Employment, Philadelphia Futures and the Philadelphia Education Fund, lead partners providing senior project coordination and support to the partnerships and across the Network, as evidence of the respect and sincere regards of this legislative body.

Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller

October 12, 2000