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ABSTRACT

This report examines state-sponsored early intervention programs whose aims are to assist educationally and economically disadvantaged students to plan for postsecondary education. It highlights common policy mechanisms and discusses practices that have become established over time. It highlights 17 programs in 12 states that are leaders in early intervention efforts (California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin). The programs are categorized by: general program approach, how the program is targeted, and program oversight and administration. Overall, more than half of the programs offer awareness and/or academic support services alone, and do not include financial incentives. Counseling and academic enrichment are the most common services provided. Most of the programs target middle and/or high school students. Some target student cohorts, while others target students in specific grades. Eligibility criteria for student participation vary considerably among programs, but low-income status is the most common criterion. All of the programs are overseen by state government agencies. In some states, these agencies also administer the programs. There are substantial differences in program funding. Results suggest that programs that combine multiple components are more effective than those that emphasize a single component. Tutoring, mentoring, and academic enrichment are important aspects of many programs. An appendix presents program descriptions. (Contains 88 references.) (SM)



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INVESTING EARLY

INTERVENTION PROGRAMS IN SELECTED U.S. STATES

FEBRUARY 2003

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent research suggests that financial aid, while necessary, is not sufficient to ensure equal access to higher education for all types of students. Despite many years of investment in equalizing post-secondary education opportunity in the United States, gaps in enrolment rates persist between low-income and higher-income students, and between white students and other racial/ethnic groups. This is because a range of variables influences college enrolment behaviour, including academic preparation, student and parent aspirations, access to information about college and financial aid application processes, and other factors. It has become increasingly clear that to be successful in promoting equal educational opportunity, government policies must target educationally and economically disadvantaged students early in the educational pathway in addition to providing financial aid to assist them after they have made the decision to attend college.

Early intervention programs aim to do just that. These programs encourage educationally and economically disadvantaged students to gain the information and perform the steps necessary to enter the post-secondary education pipeline. Policymakers in many U.S. states are placing their hopes on the potential of early intervention programs to intervene on behalf of this historically underserved population. With this incentive in mind, state early intervention programs have exploded over the past decade in response to federal government initiatives and state policy concerns aimed at increasing academic levels and post-secondary opportunities for this student population. State early intervention programs are those programs that are sponsored by state governments and are a part of state education policy. They provide different portfolios of services — counselling/awareness, academic enrichment and support, parent involvement, personal enrichment and social integration, mentoring, and scholarships — depending on the specific goals, structure, and location of the program. State early intervention programs share many similarities but also many differences, including variations in program design as well as the policy context within which they operate. Therefore, an examination of state early intervention programs provides an opportunity to investigate different models for early intervention programs and to learn from the experiences of various states.

This report examines state-sponsored early intervention programs in the United States in order to highlight some common policy mechanisms in these programs and discuss some of the more established practices that have become apparent over the history of these programs. The report focuses on programs in a dozen states that are “leaders” in early intervention efforts — those that have the most experience in this area, with early intervention programs that have been up and running since 1995–96 and earlier. These states, given their longer experiences with such programs, are *more likely* to have learned from those experiences, refined program designs, and attempted to examine program results, than states that have just established new programs. The study focused on 17 programs in 12 states:

- **California:** Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), College Readiness Program (CRP), California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)
- **Florida:** College Reach Out Program (CROP)
- **Georgia:** Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP)
- **Indiana:** 21st Century Scholars

- **Minnesota:** Get Ready!
- **New Jersey:** College Bound Grant Program
- **New York:** Liberty Partnership Program, Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)
- **Oklahoma:** Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP), GEAR UP (including OHLAP-Plus)
- **Rhode Island:** Children's Crusade
- **Vermont:** Vermont Student Assistance Corporation Outreach Programs
- **Washington:** GEAR UP Scholar's Project
- **Wisconsin:** Early Identification Program, Minority Pre-college Scholarship Program

For the purposes of analysis, the above state programs can be categorized based on several programmatic lenses: general program approach, how the program is targeted and program oversight and administration.

The general approach of the program: Does the program focus on support services (such as college awareness or academic enrichment), targeted financial incentives (such as a four-year scholarship to an in-state institution) or a combination of the two? Findings are the following:

- More than half of the programs offer awareness and/or academic support services alone, and do not include financial incentives.
- Reflecting the distribution of program approaches, counselling and academic enrichment are the most common services provided, followed by parental involvement activities, mentoring and personal/social integration activities.
- A substantial proportion of the programs offer summer activities.

How the program is targeted: How is the student eligibility criteria defined? Are the programs restrictive to certain students or fairly open to all state residents, regardless of characteristics? Does the program attempt to serve a small number of students over a long period of time, or does it try to spread funding over a broader group of students?

- Most of the state early intervention programs target students in middle school and/or high school.
- Some programs target a cohort of students and follow them through high school graduation and enrolment in college, while others target students in a particular grade(s) on a more limited basis.
- The choice of program design is generally reflected in the number of students that are served, as it tends to be more expensive to serve a cohort of students as they transition through various educational stages.
- Eligibility criteria for student participation vary considerably among the programs we examined, but low-income status is the most common criterion.

Locus of oversight and administration of the program: What entity oversees and evaluates the program? Is this entity distinct from the organization(s) that actually administers the program? Finally, are these entities separate from the program delivery sites?

- All of the state early intervention programs reviewed for this report are overseen by state government agencies, which generally distribute the funding, oversee the program direction and manage relevant accountability procedures.
- In some states, these agencies also administer the programs — they provide the day-to-day management and implementation of program activities and services. In other states, however, the program administration is delegated to other organizations within the state, such as higher education institutions (or consortia of institutions) or non-profit organizations.
- When responsibilities for program administration are delegated, funding is often awarded through a competitive grant process.
- Regardless of the administrative structure, the actual delivery of program services frequently occurs at a number of sites, such as elementary or secondary schools, or at post-secondary institutions.
- There also are substantial differences in how these programs are funded, with funding coming from various combinations of state, federal, institutional and private sources.

Because the programs identified for this study were some of the longest-running state early intervention programs, they offered the best chance of deriving established practices as well as evidence regarding the effectiveness of the programs. Difficulties did exist in measuring program effectiveness due to variation across projects in target population, program emphasis and data collection practices. Nevertheless, the analysis of state early intervention programs allowed a synthesis of common elements, enabling several conclusions about the program aspects that seem well established, as well as those aspects that did not work and were consequently changed.

- State programs that combine multiple components appeared to be more effective than those that focus on a single component. The multiple components could be college awareness and financial aid counselling combined with academic support, or support services combined with financial incentives.
- Tutoring, mentoring and academic enrichment were important aspects of many of the programs. These services frequently make use of former or older program participants, and one-on-one, ongoing contact may be the most effective approach for counselling and tutoring practices.
- There are trade-offs involved between the extensiveness of program services and the size of program participation. In some states this means that early intervention programs fail to reach a substantial portion of the targeted populations. The trade-off depends on both commitment to funding and efficiency of activities, although some states have attempted to mitigate the trade-off through the use of a tiered approach to services, where a smaller group receives more extensive services and a broader group is targeted primarily with awareness and information efforts.

- The timing of program interventions is important, and many of the programs attempt to tie the content and intensity of services provided to the grade level of participating students.
- Ongoing contact between program staff and participants is an essential ingredient — both throughout the year and extending from middle school into high school and beyond.
- The involvement of higher education institutions can be an asset to state early intervention programs, including providing matching funds and offering awareness and financial aid information. However, it is important for them to maintain close ties with the elementary and secondary schools participants are attending, especially when program services are being delivered at the schools.
- Broadly, it is important for state early intervention programs not only to create partnerships with other education institutions and community organizations, but also to coordinate their efforts with other higher education initiatives in the state such as curriculum reform, need-based financial aid and college or university admissions policies.

CHAPTER 1 — INTRODUCTION

Disadvantaged students in the United States — especially students of colour and low socio-economic status — still lag behind their counterparts in terms of their access to and success in post-secondary education. Although more disadvantaged students are going to college, gaps in access to higher education continue to exist. College-going rates have increased for both minority and low-income students; however, in 1999, the percentage of students enrolling in college immediately after high school graduation was still lower for these groups of students — 49 per cent for low-income students, 59 per cent for African-American students, and 42 per cent for Hispanic students compared to 76 per cent for high income students and 66 per cent for white students (NCES 2001). The gaps in college enrolment rates remain despite decades of effort by the federal government to reduce them, particularly through its investment of billions of dollars in financial aid programs.

Recent research suggests that financial aid, while necessary, is not sufficient to ensure equal access to college for all types of students. A range of non-financial variables influences college enrolment behaviour, including academic preparation, student and parent aspirations, access to information about college and financial aid application processes. One study found that the rigor of high school courses was the most important variable affecting students' eventual college completion (Adelman 1999). These types of factors affect disadvantaged students long before they enter the post-secondary education pipeline (see Berkner and Chavez 1997). If government policies are to be successful in promoting equal educational opportunity, those policies must address non-financial variables for disadvantaged students early on in their education, in addition to providing financial aid to assist them. Federal and state early intervention programs aim to do just that, by encouraging disadvantaged students to gain the information and perform the steps necessary to enter and successfully pass through the post-secondary education pipeline.

Educators and policymakers are now placing their hopes on the potential of such programs (NPEC 2001), and early intervention programs have exploded over the past decade in many U.S. states. An earlier publication by the Institute for Higher Education Policy (1994) reported that the number of states with current or planned early intervention programs jumped from eight in 1990 to 19 in 1994; since then, even more states have established programs in response to federal government initiatives such as GEAR UP (see Box 1) or state policy concerns. State early intervention programs share many similarities but also many differences, including variations in program design as well as the policy context within which they operate. Therefore, an examination of state early intervention programs provides an opportunity to investigate different models for early intervention programs and to learn from the experiences of various states.

This report first defines state early intervention programs and outlines the parameters of this study, then summarizes the results of a review of the early intervention programs in a dozen U.S. states, describing design characteristics as well as the established practices of the selected programs. More detailed descriptions of the selected programs are included in the appendix.

1.1 WHAT ARE STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS?

Early intervention in elementary and secondary schools refers to programs designed to keep at-risk students in school and to increase the college enrolment rates of educationally and economically disadvantaged students by providing a variety of services.¹ Programs

Programs provide different portfolios of services, depending on the specific goals, structure and location of the program.

provide different portfolios of services, depending on the specific goals, structure and location of the program. In general, however, the types of intervention services provided can be classified into the following categories (NPEC 2001):

- **Counselling/awareness:** The goal of counselling efforts, including college advising, career advising, assistance with financial aid and personal counselling, is to provide students with access to information, whether through individual consultation with students or presentations to groups of students.
- **Academic enrichment/support:** Academic components such as summer programs, tutoring, assessment, test preparation and college-level courses taken while in high school attempt to strengthen students' college eligibility and prepare them for the demands of college-level courses.
- **Parent involvement:** As parents' involvement in their children's education is a critical factor in achievement, many programs try to ensure that parents support their children's participation in early intervention programs through such activities as orientation programs, volunteering and awareness programs.
- **Personal enrichment/social integration:** Many programs try to build self-confidence and a feeling of educational empowerment by providing activities geared toward social integration, including leadership seminars, field trips, speakers, involvement of peers and cultural activities.
- **Mentoring:** Although the effects of mentoring activities on achievement and behaviour are difficult to measure, many programs involve a mentoring component in the belief that it is important to success in the program. Mentors may be peers, staff/faculty, volunteers or even college students.
- **Scholarships:** Financial assistance may be used as an incentive to attend college, or may be solely for the purpose of defraying the costs associated with attendance. Often, assistance takes the form of "last-dollar" scholarships (in which aid received from other sources is taken into account) or merit awards. When financial assistance is a core component of an early intervention program, it often is with the intention of encouraging students to apply to specific colleges or academic programs.

According to a College Board survey of early intervention programs across the United States (Swail 2000), the most common intervention service offered by all programs is college awareness, with high percentages offering related activities (campus visits, etc.) as well. Academic enrichment and support activities are also common and more than two-thirds of all programs offer a parental component. In general, fewer programs offer other types of services, such as mentoring and financial incentives.

1. Academic outreach programs, which are operated by academic institutions, are a subset of the broader concept (Fenske et al., 1997).

Despite differences in early intervention programs, the overwhelming majority (91 per cent) tend to be targeted toward students in middle school or beyond.² The most common characteristics of students targeted by early intervention programs include low-income, minority and first-generation. For almost half of the programs, the primary location of program services is a college or university campus (Swail 2000). Early intervention programs may be sponsored by different types of entities, including the federal government, state governments, not-for-profit organizations and individual colleges and universities (Swail and Perna 1998).

State early intervention programs are those programs sponsored by state governments that are part of state education policy. The programs may be administered by state agencies, colleges and universities, high schools or even not-for-profit organizations. In addition, state early intervention programs may receive funding from non-state sources; one can differentiate between state-sponsored programs with matching federal support and

entirely state-supported programs. According to the College Board survey, about 15 per cent of all early intervention programs in the United States are state funded³ (Swail 2000). In some cases programs began with private money and later evolved into publicly sponsored programs (Fenske et al. 1997).

States often initiate early intervention programs to meet specific policy purposes — for example, to increase the number of highly qualified college graduates to fuel its economy, or to react to ongoing demographic trends (NPEC 2001). The state policy focus that drives these programs will influence characteristics of state-supported early intervention programs, differentiating them from features of early intervention programs in general. For example, one-third of state funded programs were delivered at K-12 schools, a higher proportion than other types of programs (Swail 2000). In addition, state early intervention programs that have a financial component may require participants to attend public institutions, in order to encourage students to remain within the state.

-
2. Although there is some variation across local school districts, middle schools in the United States tend to include students in grades 6 through 8, while high schools tend to serve students in grades 9 through 12.
 3. Note that this percentage does not include GEAR UP programs, and it may not include some programs that are administered and funded by post-secondary institutions but directed by state agencies. Depending on the definition of state programs, therefore, the percentage may be higher.

1.2 FRAMEWORK OF THIS STUDY

This report focuses on state-sponsored early intervention programs, in order to review some of the current practices in the United States. The study is designed to highlight some common policy mechanisms in these state-sponsored early intervention programs and discuss some of the more established practices that have become apparent over the history of these programs.

The programs highlighted in this report are all targeted toward a specific group of students, as opposed to non-targeted programs, which are available to a broad portion of the state population (such as the Georgia HOPE program, which provides tuition scholarships to all students who attain at least a B average). Programs may emphasize support services such as college awareness and academic enrichment, financial incentives or a combination of both.

Research for this study involved several phases. The first step was to conduct an initial review of state early intervention programs in all 50 U.S. states, using resources such as the Web sites of each state's education agencies and coordinating boards, on-line resources of the federal GEAR UP program and any available academic research. As much information as possible was collected on the design and parameters of each program, including the governance of the program, the definition of low-income and disadvantaged students, and the ways in which eligible students are targeted and encouraged to participate in the programs.

As much information as possible was collected on the design and parameters of each program

This initial research was used to narrow the focus to programs in a dozen states that are "leaders" in early intervention efforts — those that have the most experience in this area, with early intervention programs active since 1995–96 and earlier. The study therefore focused on 17 programs in 12 states:⁴

- **California:** Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), College Readiness Program (CRP), California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)
- **Florida:** College Reach Out Program (CROP)
- **Georgia:** Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP)
- **Indiana:** 21st Century Scholars
- **Minnesota:** Get Ready!
- **New Jersey:** College Bound Grant Program
- **New York:** Liberty Partnership Program, Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)
- **Oklahoma:** Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP), GEAR UP (including OHLAP-Plus)
- **Rhode Island:** Children's Crusade
- **Vermont:** Vermont Student Assistance Corporation Outreach Programs
- **Washington:** GEAR UP Scholar's Project
- **Wisconsin:** Early Identification Program, Minority Pre-college Scholarship Program

4. Note that this list may not be exhaustive; the states may have other programs related to early intervention, but did not fit within the scope of this study.

The next step was to analyze program characteristics — common design aspects and policies among the targeted state programs, as well as some of the major differences. These program characteristics included the various types of state approaches to early intervention program(s), the student demographics targeted, program administration and program services.

Finally, the analysis attempted to identify established practices in state early intervention programs and, if possible, point to the positive outcomes of such practices. Evidence on outcomes was drawn from sources such as state commissioned research and academic studies. Indicators such as rates of application and enrolment in college, percentages of students taking the “pipeline steps” toward enrolment in college,⁵ and percentages of students taking core college preparatory courses may also be included.

Note that a meta-analysis of the available program evaluations was not conducted, given the lack of a sound methodology to determine if the program outcomes are based on sound criteria and to decide which programs are more effective than others.

It was not within the scope of this project to “evaluate the evaluations,” although limitations are pointed out when appropriate, and no comparisons between state programs — or judgments of these programs — are made in this report. Rather, the available evaluations are taken at face value. The analysis concentrates on the targeted states with the assumption that because they have the longest history, they may be the *most likely* to have learned from their experiences, refined program designs and attempted to examine program results. In addition, the established practices outlined in the report are offered within the context of conclusions drawn by other available research conducted by individual state programs or external organizations.

The following sections describe the findings of this research, including both a summary of program characteristics and a discussion of established practices and program outcomes. Highlights from the programs of state “leaders” are used to support these findings. Detailed descriptions of the 12 states’ efforts are included in the appendix.

BOX 1: THE FEDERAL NEISP AND GEAR UP INITIATIVES

In understanding state early intervention programs, it is important to understand the U.S. federal government efforts that have attempted to encourage the creation of such programs. In 1992, the U.S. Congress authorized the National Early Intervention Scholarship and Partnership Program (NEISP). The program offered states federal matching grants (up to 50 per cent) to establish or sustain programs that provided financial incentives, academic support services and college-related information to disadvantaged students. Programs were required to have several components: a guarantee of financial assistance to eligible low-income students who obtain a high school diploma, additional counselling and supportive services and information to students and their parents about financial aid and the benefits of attending college. The initial funding was limited, with funding going to nine states (California, Indiana, Maryland, New Mexico, Vermont, Washington, Minnesota, Rhode Island and Wisconsin). States were encouraged to work collaboratively with local educational agencies, colleges and universities, community organizations and other groups.

Box 1 continued on the next two pages

5. Horn (1998) describes the pipeline steps to enrolment in a four-year college or university as follows: aspirations for a bachelor's degree, academic preparation for college, taking entrance exams, applying to college and enrolling.

BOX 1: THE FEDERAL NEISP AND GEAR UP INITIATIVES CONTINUED

In 1998, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) was enacted as a successor to NEISP through the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. When GEAR UP replaced the NEISP program, any state that received a GEAR UP grant that formerly served students under the NEISP program on October 6, 1998 was mandated to continue providing services to former NEISP/now GEAR UP students until they completed secondary school.

Though similar in the purpose and structure of NEISP and built on its success, GEAR UP has some differences, including the 21st Century Scholars Certificate program, which provides notification to low-income 6–12th graders of their eligibility for the federal Pell Grant program. GEAR UP funds partnerships between high-poverty middle schools, colleges and universities, community organizations, and businesses to work with entire cohorts of low-income students, rather than individual students, starting no later than the 7th grade through high school graduation. In its first year of operation, the program served nearly 450,000 students nationwide.

GEAR UP is designed to have an impact on low-performing and underserved schools that have historically served low-income and minority students. The program's approach is to examine the reasons contributing to students' low performance and to provide the necessary financial incentives and academic models to transform these schools into high-performing ones with high-performing students. For example, GEAR UP requires a rigorous, academically aligned K-16 curriculum that demands high performance and standards for all students, intensive and continuous opportunities for teachers in the areas of pedagogical and content development, the elimination of academic tracking, in-school, after-school, and summer activities, and data collection and analysis in order to measure the impact of the program and areas of improvement early on.

GEAR-UP grants are available either to states, or to partnerships comprising combinations of local educational agencies, higher education institutions and community organizations. Grants to states are those most relevant to our review of state early intervention programs.

Partnership grant projects are awarded to partnerships of at least one higher education institution, at least one school district that oversees one or more middle schools and high schools serving predominantly low-income communities, and at least two additional partnering organizations, such as community-based organizations, religious groups, businesses, elementary schools, state agencies, or public or private organizations. Partnership projects are required to provide six years (7th through 12th grade) of long-term mentoring, tutoring, counselling, parent involvement activities, curricula and staff development to a whole cohort (one grade level) of students. Services must include: financial aid counselling and information about opportunities for federal financial aid, college and admission test preparation, advice on college application procedures and information for parents on helping students prepare for college. The grant stipulates that at least 50 per cent of the students in the cohort who are in participating schools with a 7th grade must be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, or work with more than one grade level of students who live in public housing. In addition, a coordinator must be hired who is devoted solely to the GEAR UP project.

Box 1 continued on the next page

BOX 1: THE FEDERAL NEISP AND GEAR UP INITIATIVES CONTINUED

When *state grants* are awarded under GEAR UP, the governor of that state is given the authority to designate the entity(ies) that may apply for and administer the GEAR UP grant — typically state higher education agencies, state departments of education, student financial assistance agencies or governor's offices. In comparison to the partnership grants, state GEAR UP projects are not required to implement the cohort model; however, if they choose not to use the model, the state is required to target services to students who receive free or reduced-price lunch or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, attend Title I schools or are at risk of dropping out of school. States must provide at least 50 per cent of the total project costs each year. Like the partnership grant projects, state grant projects must include an early intervention component (i.e., early college awareness, outreach and so on), but unlike the partnership grants, states must also offer scholarships to GEAR UP students. The states are required to allocate 25 to 50 per cent of grant funds to the early intervention component, and 50 per cent to the scholarship component.⁶

In order to receive a GEAR UP scholarship, students must be less than 22 years old, graduate from high school or receive a diploma or its recognized equivalent (i.e., a General Equivalency Diploma), fully and successfully participate in either NEISP, GEAR UP or TRIO programs, and be enrolled or accepted by an undergraduate program at an in-state institution.⁷ Students who are eligible to receive federal Pell Grants must be given priority by states when awarding scholarships. Scholarships must cover 75 per cent of the cost of attendance for an in-state student at a four-year public institution, or the maximum Pell Grant for that fiscal year.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 1999, 21 state grants were awarded with an average year one award of \$1,980,373 (awards are generally made for a five-year period). In FY 2000, seven additional state grants were awarded with year one funding averaging \$1,725,378, and in FY 2001, two more state grants were awarded with year one funding averaging \$2,210,467, bringing the total to 30 states. Of the 12 state "leaders" highlighted in this study, 10 have received state GEAR UP grants: California, Indiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin. Some of these states have integrated their GEAR UP funds with early intervention programs initiated under NEISP or earlier, while others have well-established early intervention programs that are largely separate from the new GEAR UP efforts.

Sources: GEAR UP Web site (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/gearup>); Silver 2000; Swail and Perna 1998.

6. In some cases, this stipulation may be waived (for example, in the Minnesota Get Ready! program).

However, states have the discretion of extending GEAR UP scholarships to be used at an out-of-state institution.

CHAPTER 2 — SUMMARY OF PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

The review of state early intervention programs found that while there are many similarities among the program designs and characteristics, there are also some important differences. See Table 1 on the next page.

Most of the programs sponsored by the 12 state leaders were established before 1995–96, with the exception of some of the GEAR UP initiatives that have been added on to existing programs.⁸ A significant number were established in the mid- to late-1980s. In addition, six were established (or received funding) under the National Early Intervention Scholarship Program (NEISP) in the early 1990s, many of which now receive funding through GEAR UP. Given the duration of these programs, it makes sense that some of the most common program characteristics have developed based on their experiences over time, and may even be used as models for newer state programs.

Most of the programs target students in middle school and/or high school, and low-income status is the most common criterion for program eligibility. In addition, almost half of the programs offer support services only (without financial incentives). Counselling and academic enrichment are the most common services provided, followed by parental involvement and mentoring. A substantial proportion of the programs offer summer activities.

Nonetheless, there is clear variability within these characteristics, leading up to important differences in program approaches. For example, eligibility criteria may be defined quite differently, even if they purport to measure low-income status, and an overarching description of programs as “focusing on support services” fails to capture the nuances of program design and missions. For the purpose of analysis, the programs can be categorized based on several lenses:

- **The general approach of the program:** Does the program focus on support services (such as college awareness or academic enrichment), targeted financial incentives or a combination of the two?
- **How the program is targeted:** How are the eligibility criteria defined? Are they restrictive or fairly open? Does the program attempt to serve a small number of students over a long period of time, or does it try to spread funding over a larger group of students?
- **Locus of oversight and administration of the program:** What entity oversees and evaluates the program? Is this entity distinct from the organization(s) that actually implements the program? Finally, are these entities separate from the program delivery sites?

8. State GEAR UP grants are included for the purposes of this analysis in cases in which existing early intervention programs receive a portion (or all) of the GEAR UP funding, or when the GEAR UP programs build upon and/or expand existing state programs. They are not included if they function as largely separate programs, because these programs are generally too new to show results.

TABLE 1: MATRIX OF CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

STATE	NAME OF PROGRAM(S)	YEAR ESTAB.	RECEIVED FUNDING: NEISP	RECEIVED FUNDING: GEAR UP	WHAT STATE AGENCY OVERSEES?	WHAT BODY(IES) ADMINISTERS?	NUMBER OF DELIVERY SITES	COMPETITIVE GRANTS?	FUNDING SOURCE(S)
CA	Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)	1980	No	No	CA Department of Education	AVID Center (non-profit), through 11 regional centers	over 800 sites in CA	No	1994-95: State: \$100,000 (3%); Institutional: \$3,510,000 (97%)
CA	College Readiness Program	1986	No	No	CA Department of Education	CSU/CA Dept of Education	21 middle schools; 5 CSU campuses	Yes	1994-95: State: \$420,265 (76%); Institutional: \$132,000 (24%)
CA	California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)	1978	Yes	No	CA Student Aid Commission (CSAC)	Individual projects run by consortia	17 project consortia, 74 public school districts, 9 UC campuses, 20 CSU campuses, 41 community colleges, 25 independent institutions, and 43 other community-based organizations.	Yes	1994-95: State: \$650,000 (38%); Institutional: \$1,051,129 (62%)
FL	College Reach Out Program (CROP)	1983	No	No	FL Department of Education and Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission	Individual projects run by post-secondary institutions and consortia	41 projects, involving 10 state universities, 27 community colleges, 4 independent colleges	Yes	1998-99: State: \$2.48 million (45%); Institutional: \$2.52 million (45%); external: \$537,000 (10%)
GA	Past-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP)	1996	No	No	University System of Georgia/ Board of Regents	University System of Georgia (participating institutions)	29 USG institutions, in partnership with technical colleges and 115 school districts (rep. 200 middle schools and 115 high schools)	No	FY2001: State: \$3 million (78%); Private Funding: \$550,000 (22%)

TABLE 1: MATRIX OF CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS – CONTINUED

GENERAL PROGRAM APPROACH	GRADE LEVEL(S) TARGETED	NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED (YEAR)	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	PROGRAM SERVICES OFFERED:						SUMMER PROGRAM/ ACTIVITIES?
				COUNSELING	ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	MENTORING	PERSONAL ENRICHMENT/ SOCIAL INTEGRATION	SCHOLARSHIPS	
Support services	Grades 6–12	65,000 in U.S. (2002); 54,538 in CA (2002)	Underachieving students with academic potential, low-income, first-generation, ethnic minorities, underserved; students and parents must sign contract.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Support services	6th, 7th, and 8th grade	870 (1994–95)	First-generation and low-income students achieving at grade level, plus teacher recommendations.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Support services	Primarily middle and high school	Expected to serve 45,000 (2001–2002)	Determined by need and by the Cal-SOAP coordinator. Emphasis on low-income, first-generation students.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Both (but primarily support services)	Grades 6–12	7,869 (1998–99)	Low-income/educationally disadvantaged students who meet certain guidelines such as the child receives free or reduced lunch and is a first-generation student; requires agreement with student and parents.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (some projects)	Yes
Support services	Grades 7–12	15,000; 3200 in summer program (FY 2000)	"At risk" students based on parents' SES, behind one grade level and/or are at risk for academic failure, poorly socialized, low self-esteem, and live in violent communities or dysfunctional family environments. Students are selected by teachers and counselors in consultation with PREP counselors.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

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TABLE 1: MATRIX OF CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS – CONTINUED

STATE	NAME OF PROGRAM(S)	YEAR ESTAB.	RECEIVED FUNDING: NEISP	RECEIVED FUNDING: GEAR UP	WHAT STATE AGENCY OVER SEES?	WHAT BODY(IES) ADMINISTERS?	NUMBER OF DELIVERY SITES	COMPETITIVE GRANTS?	FUNDING SOURCE(S)
IN	21st Century Scholars	1990	Yes	Yes	State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI)	SSACI's Office of 21st Century Scholars	n/a	n/a	State: \$2.5 million (\$300,000 administration; balance to program), \$7.0 million for the scholarship component (total state funds: \$8.9 million in FY 98-99); Federal (GEAR UP): \$2.6 million (FY99); AmeriCorp: \$379,733 (01-02).
MN	Get Ready!	1995-96	Yes	Yes	MN Higher Ed Services Office	MN Higher Ed Services Office (Communications, Legislation, and Outreach Services Division)	10 sites	No	FY2001: Federal (GEAR UP): \$1.7 million (85%); state: \$280,000 (15%); plus in-kind support from partners and specific private donations (Amex).
NJ	New Jersey College Bound Grant Program	1986	No	No	NJ Commission on Higher Education	Individual projects run by post-secondary institutions	12 colleges and universities	Yes	FY1998: State: \$2.8 million (58%); Institutions: \$2 million (41%); Other: \$54,500 (1%)
NY	Liberty Partnership Program	1988	No	No	NY Education Department (Pre-College Unit)	Individual projects run by post-secondary institutions or consortia	57 projects, involving 15 school districts, 3 colleges, a university, and numerous community-based organizations and private industries	Yes	2000: State: \$11.5 million
NY	Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)	1986	No	No	NY Education Department (Pre-College Unit)	Individual projects run by post-secondary institutions	More than 40 individual projects administered by colleges and universities at numerous schools and school districts	Yes	2000: State: \$6 million
OK	Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP)	1992	No	No	OK State Regents for Higher Education	OK State Regents for Higher Education	n/a	n/a	FY 2000-01: State: \$1.9 million

TABLE 1: MATRIX OF CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS – CONTINUED

GENERAL PROGRAM APPROACH	GRADE LEVEL(S) TARGETED	NO. OF STUDENTS SERVED (YEAR)	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	PROGRAM SERVICES OFFERED:						SUMMER PROGRAM/ACTIVITIES?
				COUNSELING	ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	MENTORING	PERSONAL ENRICHMENT/SOCIAL INTEGRATION	SCHOLARSHIPS	
Both	7th and 8th grade	8,403 enrolled (1998)	Must fulfill a pledge (to refrain from alcohol, drugs, and crime; to complete high school with a 2.0 GPA; to take the Core 40 curriculum; and to apply for college admission and financial aid when they are seniors). Must be a resident of Indiana, and be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Support services	Grades 4-6 (core services)	est. 1000 in core program (2000-01); 7,500 receive presentations, 35,000 view performances	Minority, low-income, first-generation, and those who attend Title I schools.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Both	Grades 6-12	2,279 (FY1998)	Urban/minority youth located in "special needs" school districts; specific criteria differs according to program.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Support services	Grades 5-12	12,672 (1998-99)	Students with high risk of dropping out.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Support services	Grades 7-12	5,347 (1999-2000)	Students in schools with at least 20% under-represented students; lower income, minority students.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Primarily financial	8th, 9th, 10th grade	9,468 total students served (2000-2001)	Less than \$50,000 income per year, take 17 units of required HS courses, have 2.5 GPA, attend class regularly, stay out of trouble (drugs, crime), and apply for other financial aid during senior year.	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

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TABLE 1: MATRIX OF CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS – CONTINUED

STATE	NAME OF PROGRAM(S)	YEAR ESTAB.	RECEIVED FUNDING: NEISP	RECEIVED FUNDING: GEAR UP	WHAT STATE AGENCY OVER SEES?	WHAT BODY(IES) ADMINISTERS?	NUMBER OF DELIVERY SITES	COMPETITIVE GRANTS?	FUNDING SOURCE(S)
OK	GEAR UP (incl. OHLAP-Plus)	1999	No	Yes	OK State Regents for Higher Education	OK State Regents for Higher Education, through 5 regional coordinators	5 regional coordinators assigned to numerous school districts	n/a	Federal (GEAR UP): \$1.62 million (FY99-00)
RI	Rhode Island Children's Crusade	1989	Yes	Yes	RI Office of Higher Education	RICC (non-profit), with RI Education Assistance Authority	11 elementary; 27 middle and high schools	Yes	Est.: Federal: \$2.1 million (42%); State: \$1.7 million (30%); Other: \$1.6 million (28%)
VT	Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) Outreach	1965	Yes	Yes	VSAC and Vermont legislature	VSAC (quasi-public non-profit)	Every middle school and high school in the state	n/a	Primarily federal and private
WA	Washington GEAR UP Scholars Project	1994	Yes	Yes	WA Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB)	HECB (through 7 sites that work in 12 communities)	12 communities	Sometimes	Federal (GEAR UP): \$15.5 million starting in FY 99 (over five years); State matching: \$15.8 million
WI	Early Identification Program	1982	No	Yes	WI Department of Public Instruction (WEOP)	WI Department of Public Instruction (WEOP)	7 districts/service communities near WEOP offices	No	Primarily State; some Federal (GEAR UP and Talent Search)
WI	Minority Pre-College Scholarship Program	1985	No	Yes	WI Department of Public Instruction (WEOP)	WI Department of Public Instruction (WEOP)	17 UW colleges, 3 technical colleges, 11 private institutions (offered in all school districts)	Yes	est.: State: \$2 million (FY 2000-01); Federal: \$100,000 (GEAR UP); Institutional: \$1 million

TABLE 1: MATRIX OF CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS – CONTINUED

GENERAL PROGRAM APPROACH	GRADE LEVEL(S) TARGETED	NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED (YEAR)	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	PROGRAM SERVICES OFFERED:						SUMMER PROGRAM/ACTIVITIES?
				COUNSELING	ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT	PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	MENTORING	PERSONAL ENRICHMENT/SOCIAL INTEGRATION	SCHOLARSHIPS	
Both	Grades 5-12	Almost 800 (OHLAP-Plus)	(For OHLAP-Plus): OHLAP students who receive Pell Grant and still have unmet need; must enroll by three years after HS graduation, and must maintain good grades.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Both	Grades 3-12	17,000 total in grades 3-12 (2001). 500 incoming 3rd graders (max) per school year	3rd graders in designated enrollment school, must avoid drugs, early parenthood, and problems with the law. Must abide by the Crusade pledge.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Both	Grades 6-12	Total "contacts": 8,049 middle school, 19,359 high school, and 16,075 adults (FY 99)	Any Vermonter who would like information about career planning and college, particularly low-income, first-generation students and their families (depending on specific program).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Both	Grades 7-12	1200 (320 Ambassadors)	Students who are either low-income, in Title I school, are at risk of dropping out, teen parents, who are below one grade level or more in math and/or English, or who are Limited English Proficient.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support services	Grades 6-12	Est. 4,000	Students in grades 6 through 12 (in a targeted school) are selected from all academic levels (high potential group, marginal group, and probationary group). At risk or economically disadvantaged students are given consideration.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Financial	Grades 6-12	6,600	Minority students; to qualify for a scholarship, students must first be admitted to a pre-college program.	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes (pre-college only)	Yes

One thing that needs to be kept in mind when reviewing state early intervention programs and their similarities and differences is that each of these programs should be viewed within the context of an individual state's policy as a whole (see Box 2).

BOX 2: THE DISTINCT CONTEXTS OF U.S. STATES

Each state in the United States has a unique history and a distinctive structure of educational institutions and governance systems, which influence the continuing development of state early intervention programs. In addition, other state programs and initiatives may play a complementary role to that of early intervention programs.

Some states may have strong financial aid programs, which may or may not be linked to a student's participation in early intervention efforts (see Table 2). States such as Georgia, New York and New Jersey award more than \$1,000 per full-time equivalent undergraduate student in state grant aid. In New York and New Jersey, the overwhelming majority of this aid is need-based, through the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and the Tuition Aid Grant (TAG), respectively. In Georgia, on the other hand, the bulk of state grant aid is made up of non-need-based aid through the HOPE scholarship program, which guarantees the cost of public college tuition and fees for students who maintain a B average in high school. Other states may link their early intervention program explicitly to state financial aid programs; for example, Wisconsin students who graduate from high school and who have participated in the state's Early Identification Program (EIP) are given higher consideration for the state's Talent Incentive Program (TIP), which provides grant awards to aid low-income/disadvantaged students with limited financial resources.

Other states have core curriculum initiatives that may be integrally linked to the academic enrichment components of their early intervention programs. For example, one of Indiana's education strategies involves restructuring the secondary school curriculum (known as Core 40) and encouraging students to take college prep courses; in concert, the pledge needed to receive a scholarship through the state's 21st Century Scholars Program requires students to take the Core 40 curriculum.

States also have very different patterns of post-secondary enrolment and tuition structures (see Table 3). In states such as California, post-secondary education policy focuses on maintaining low levels of tuition at public institutions, especially community colleges, and students are encouraged to enrol initially at community colleges. In Vermont, on the other hand, average tuition and fees at public institutions tend to be substantially higher, in keeping with the state's "high tuition, high aid" policy; at the same time, the majority of students are enrolled in four-year colleges and universities. In general, states in the northeastern region of the United States tend to have higher proportions of students enrolled in private not-for-profit institutions, reflecting the abundance of private institutions in this region.

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF STATE GRANT PROGRAMS, 1998-99

	NEED-BASED AID TO UNDERGRADUATES		NON-NEED-BASED AID TO UNDERGRADUATES		ESTIMATED TOTAL GRANT DOLLARS TO UNDERGRADUATES, PER FTE
	MILLIONS OF DOLLARS	PERCENT OF TOTAL	MILLIONS OF DOLLARS	PERCENT OF TOTAL	
California	\$331.6	100%	\$0.0	0%	\$414
Florida	\$36.7	22%	\$133.3	78%	\$582
Georgia	\$0.5	0%	\$220.9	100%	\$1,236
Indiana	\$99.5	99%	\$1.3	1%	\$564
Minnesota	\$113.4	100%	\$0.0	0%	\$730
New Jersey	\$160.9	91%	\$16.0	9%	\$1,092
New York	\$619.1	99%	\$9.2	1%	\$1,077
Oklahoma	\$17.4	66%	\$9.1	34%	\$273
Rhode Island	\$5.7	100%	\$0.0	0%	\$134
Vermont	\$12.8	99%	\$0.1	1%	\$558
Washington	\$74.2	98%	\$1.5	2%	\$448
Wisconsin	\$53.7	94%	\$3.1	6%	\$340
United States	\$2,945.7	82%	\$668.0	18%	\$496

Notes: Full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate enrollment figures are for fall 1997.

Source: NASSGAP, 2000

TABLE 3: STATE ENROLLMENT AND TUITION PATTERNS

	% DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN FALL 1999:				AVERAGE TUITION AND FEES, 1999-2000:		
	TOTAL FALL ENROLLMENT, 1999	PUBLIC 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	PUBLIC 4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	PRIVATE NOT-FOR- PROFIT 4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	PUBLIC 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	PUBLIC 4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS	PRIVATE NOT-FOR- PROFIT 4-YEAR INSTITUTIONS
California	2,017,483	57%	27%	12%	\$317	\$2,562	\$14,996
Florida	684,745	45%	34%	16%	\$1,333	\$2,242	\$12,352
Georgia	311,812	23%	53%	20%	\$1,366	\$2,524	\$12,660
Indiana	304,725	14%	62%	21%	\$2,125	\$3,647	\$15,643
Minnesota	282,756	34%	40%	22%	\$2,372	\$3,817	\$15,562
New Jersey	330,537	37%	43%	18%	\$2,155	\$5,261	\$15,938
New York	1,020,991	23%	33%	41%	\$2,554	\$3,998	\$16,564
Oklahoma	179,055	33%	54%	11%	\$1,239	\$2,187	\$9,832
Rhode Island	74,821	21%	31%	48%	\$1,746	\$4,328	\$17,655
Vermont	36,728	13%	43%	41%	\$2,846	\$6,918	\$18,298
Washington	306,723	56%	30%	12%	\$1,649	\$3,355	\$14,765
Wisconsin	304,776	34%	48%	18%	\$2,107	\$3,315	\$14,347
United States	14,791,224	36%	40%	20%	\$1,338	\$3,349	\$14,588

Notes: Enrollment is for degree-granting institutions only. Percentage distribution of students does not add to 100 due to the exclusion of other types of institutions. Tuition and fees are for full-time-equivalent undergraduates, and are for in-state students in the case of public institutions. Enrollment data are imputed.

Source: NCES, 2002

2.1 GENERAL PROGRAM APPROACH: SUPPORT SERVICES, FINANCIAL OR BOTH

As mentioned above, almost half of the programs offer awareness and/or academic support services alone. For example, the three California programs focus on the provision of

All scholars who complete the program receive scholarships for up to four years.

counselling services and academic support, although they differ in terms of the intensity of support, the combination of services provided, and the target populations. The rest of the programs we reviewed offer some type of financial incentive. Only two programs — OHLAP and Wisconsin's Minority Pre-college Scholarship Program — offer such incentives alone.⁹ The other seven programs offer a combination of both approaches.¹⁰ Although the showpiece of the Indiana 21st Century Scholars program is a scholarship worth up to the cost of four years of tuition at a state institution, the program also includes a parent

education component as well as tutoring and mentoring services, the latter provided by AmeriCorps staff. Under the Washington Scholars Project, low-income students participate in a range of activities, including academic planning, tutoring, advising and mentoring, in both middle school and high school. All Scholars who complete the program receive scholarships for up to four years.

Reflecting the distribution of program approaches, counselling and academic enrichment are the most common services provided across all 17 programs, followed by parental involvement activities, mentoring and personal/social integration activities. A substantial proportion of the programs offer summer activities. For example, the community service component of the Georgia PREP program functions primarily through summer programs and has attracted increasing numbers of students.

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9. We have categorized OHLAP as financial only for the purposes of this review, but it should be noted that in the past, awareness activities were authorized (but only minimally funded) through the program, and today, such activities are being implemented through the Oklahoma GEAR UP program in collaboration with OHLAP.
10. GEAR UP-funded projects are required to have both components, however, some programs (e.g., Minnesota's Get Ready!) have received a waiver for the scholarship component.

2.2 TARGETING OF STUDENTS: GRADE LEVEL, PROGRAM SIZE, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Most of the state early intervention programs examined target students in middle school and/or high school. The majority target students at both educational levels, with some programs starting as early as 3rd or 4th grade (including the Rhode Island Children's Crusade and the Minnesota Get Ready! program). Regardless of the education level targeted, however, the design of the programs differs. Some programs target a cohort of students and follow them through high school graduation and enrolment in college, while others target students in a particular grade(s) on a more limited basis. To participate in the Children's Crusade, Rhode Island students must be in the third grade. Once enrolled, they receive long-term support services that vary depending upon their grade level, but that continue until they complete the program. New York's Liberty Partnerships Program, on the other hand, awards funding to higher education institutions or consortia to implement 12-month programs that identify at-risk students enrolled in grades 5 to 12 and provide tutoring and counselling services during the year to encourage high school graduation and college enrolment.

The choice of program design is generally reflected in the number of students that are served. Serving a cohort of students tends to be more expensive as they move through various educational stages. Thus, the programs range in size dramatically, from about 1,200 students statewide in the Washington Scholars Project to tens of thousands of students served by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) outreach programs. Some programs attempt to stretch their dollars by providing intensive services to a "core" group of students, while

providing broader activities for a larger group. For example, in the Minnesota Get Ready! program, education outreach liaisons provide counselling and information to a relatively small group of 4th to 6th grade students and their families. Larger groups of older students are offered college planning presentations, and theatre performances about preparing for college reach a broad group of elementary and middle school students.

Eligibility criteria for student participation vary considerably among the programs examined. Although low-income status is the most common criterion, it is defined differently in various programs; the OHLAP program uses a specific family income level as a cut-off, while the Florida CROP program and the 21st Century Scholars program require students to be eligible for free or reduced-price school lunches. Other common criteria include first-generation status, minority status and dropout risk.¹¹ Frequently, however, these criteria are not strictly defined and interpretation is left to the individuals implementing the programs. In fact, in some programs, the judgment of school counsellors or program coordinators is explicitly taken into account in deciding which students will participate. For example, Cal-SOAP coordinators determine eligibility for students, and participants in the Georgia PREP program are selected by teachers in consultation with program coordinators.

Other, less common criteria include the location/type of public school, academic requirements and requiring students to make

Most of the state early intervention programs examined target students in middle school and/or high school.

11. First-generation students generally are those whose parents' highest level of education is high school or less. Dropout risk is defined differently by programs, and often involves subjective evaluations by school counsellors or other parties.

a pledge or parents to sign a contract. Such criteria tend to be specific to the motivation and development of the program, or to the particular state context. For example, the New Jersey College Bound program targets urban and minority youth located in “special needs” school districts, which were identified in 1990 by state legislation. Several programs require parents to sign a contract promising to support their children, or require students to pledge to certain types of behaviour, such as staying out of trouble, taking a college preparatory curriculum and applying for financial aid when they are seniors (e.g., OHLAP, 21st Century Scholars and the Children’s Crusade).

2.3 LOCUS AND NATURE OF PROGRAM OPERATION AND FUNDING

Frequently, agencies and organizations are involved in the operation of state early intervention programs at various levels. It is helpful to distinguish between program *oversight*, which is the most broad level of involvement, including program direction, design and accountability; program *administration*, which entails the day-to-day management and implementation of program activities and services; and program *delivery*, which refers to the actual sites at which program services take place. In some cases, substantial overlap in these levels of involvement exists, while in other programs, they are quite distinct.

All of the state early intervention programs reviewed for this report are overseen by state government agencies — most frequently the state department of education, but also state financial aid agencies, high education governing boards or state legislatures. These agencies generally distribute the funding, oversee the program direction and manage relevant accountability procedures.

In some states, these agencies also administer the programs, either alone or jointly with another organization. In other states, however, the program administration is delegated to other organizations within the state. It is quite common for higher education institutions (or consortia of institutions) to administer the programs, as in the case of the Florida CROP program, New Jersey College Bound, the New York Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) and several others. Three programs are managed by quasi-public,

non-profit organizations — the AVID program is managed by the AVID Center through eleven regional centres, VSAC administers outreach programs for the state of Vermont and the Rhode Island Children's Crusade is administered by a non-profit organization. When responsibilities for program administration are delegated, funding is often awarded through a competitive grant process; this is true for almost half of the programs, including California's College Readiness Program (CRP).

Finally, the actual delivery of program services frequently occurs at a number of sites, such as elementary or secondary schools or at post-secondary institutions. In the Cal-SOAP program, for example, projects operate at 17 locations throughout the state, and services are designed on the basis of local needs. Where

program services are delivered at a number of site-specific projects, general program management (as well as funding) may come through a centralized administering organization (separate levels); or, the program administration may be the purview of the specific sites, thereby omitting the need for a central administering organization. Similarly, the delivery of services may be consolidated along with management and implementation at one administering organization, as is the case for finance-based programs like 21st Century Scholars and OHLAP.

The actual delivery of program services frequently occurs at a number of sites, such as elementary or secondary schools or at post-secondary institutions.

These different types of operational structures mean that, for some programs, a substantial number of organizations participate in the program, from middle schools to local universities. The Minority Pre-College Scholarship Program involves 17 University of Wisconsin campuses, three technical colleges and 11 private institutions, while Cal-SOAP reaches out to more than 74 public school districts, 41 community college campuses, 20 California State University campuses, nine sites of the University of California, 25 independent colleges and 43 other community-based organizations.

In addition to these differences in operation, there is substantial variation in how these programs are funded. Some, such as OHLAP,

are almost entirely funded by state appropriations. Others rely primarily on funding from participating institutions, especially colleges and universities; in the AVID program, institutions put up the overwhelming majority of the funds. In many cases, states put up some funding but require institutional matching funds; the Florida legislature began to require matching funds from institutions several years ago as part of the expansion of CROP, and today the program has achieved a balance between state and institutional funding. Similarly, programs that receive federal GEAR UP funding such as Minnesota Get Ready!, Washington's Scholars Project and the Rhode Island Children's Crusade also require a match of funds from state and other sources.

CHAPTER 3 — ESTABLISHED PRACTICES AND EVIDENCE OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Because the programs identified for this study were some of the longest-running state early intervention programs, they offered the best chance of deriving established practices as well as evidence on the effectiveness of the programs. Before reviewing the findings, however, a discussion of some of the research on the effectiveness of early intervention programs in general, as well as some of the problems that arise in the evaluation of these types of programs, will help place the findings in context.

Ideally, indicators of outcomes and effectiveness in early intervention programs might include such measures as rates of application to/enrolment in college, the percentage of participating students taking the “pipeline steps” toward enrolment in a four-year college or university and the percentage of participating students taking core college preparatory courses. In fact, many early intervention programs include “descriptive” evaluation material such as the numbers of students served or qualitative reviews. For example, a national survey of early intervention programs reported that almost all conducted program evaluations; about 75 per cent reported that they track program completion, 64 per cent reported tracking high school graduation, and 29 per cent reported tracking graduation from college (Swail 2000). However, very few conduct rigorous outcome evaluations in which such indicators are compared with the rates for comparison or control groups.

Some of the limitations of program evaluations are due to a lack of appropriate data; for example, some programs fail to keep records on the extent of contact with each student and long-term outcomes —

i.e., persistence in college — are rarely measured. Because programs generally provide a combination of services, it is difficult to untangle the effects of each component. Little is known about true program costs, and few attempts are made to link costs with outcomes. In addition, the design of evaluations is important; evaluations rarely make random assignments to treatment and comparison groups, yet it is difficult to construct comparison groups that are truly comparable (NPEC 2001, PACE 1997, Perna and Swail 1998). Qualitative evaluations must be carefully considered, especially keeping in mind the source of the review.

Despite the limitations of the data, a lot has been learned about early intervention that can inform future efforts. Some of the research in this area has focused on the federal TRIO programs, which were established by the U.S. federal government beginning in 1965 to ensure equal educational opportunity, focusing on first-generation and low-income students. Two of the TRIO programs, Talent Search and Upward Bound, are early intervention programs that target students in grades 6 through 12. Through the Talent Search program (which focuses on 6th, 7th and 8th graders), participants receive information about college admissions, scholarships and financial aid programs. The Upward Bound program helps students in 9th grade and above prepare for college by providing academic instruction on college campuses, as well as counselling, mentoring and other support services (USDE 1997). Most individual TRIO sites serve fewer than 250 students and counsellors have an opportunity to work one-on-one with each student (COE 2002).

Despite difficulties in measuring program effectiveness due to variation across projects in target population, program emphasis, and data collection practices, evaluations have been conducted for both Upward Bound and Talent Search:

- *Upward Bound*: Most recently, a longitudinal study (Mathematica 1999) randomly assigned eligible students to either a treatment group (the Upward Bound participants) or a control group. The results of the study are mixed and have been somewhat controversial. According to the study findings, the program has limited impact on students during high school — the study did not find any impact on high school grades or college enrolment — and many students remain in the program for only a short time. However, the program appears to have substantial impact on certain groups of students, including students with lower initial educational expectations, academically high-risk students and boys. In addition, the program does appear to impact participants' post-secondary education experiences: program participants earned more credits from four-year colleges, were more likely to receive financial aid and were more actively engaged in some college activities. Finally, the study found that longer exposure to the program was associated with greater positive program impacts.
- *Talent Search*: These programs target a much larger student population but provide less-intensive services to students than the Upward Bound programs do. Evaluations have had difficulty assessing effectiveness due to major differences in program services and reporting. One ongoing evaluation of the program (Mathematica 2002) has

found that schools and parents feel that the provision of college information is an important service.

Several reviews of non-federal early intervention programs — especially those in California — also have drawn conclusions about the elements common to effective early intervention programs (NPEC 2001, PACE 1997, CPEC 1996). These aspects can be grouped into the following categories:

- **Program structure and services.** Effective programs tend to include some form of financial assistance, provide access to challenging coursework and supportive academic enrichment activities, and provide a peer group for participating students (NPEC 2001). Comprehensive interventions appear to be more effective than single-component strategies (PACE 1997). In addition, programs that focus on awareness counselling tend to be strengthened if they add an academic support component (CPEC 1996).
- **Targeting of students.** Effective programs tend to provide services to students over a relatively long time period (NPEC 2001, PACE 1997), and tend to take the cultural diversity of participants into account (NPEC 2001). The timing of interventions is important (PACE 1997).
- **Program administration.** Effective programs tend to use a key contact person who guides students over a long period of time (NPEC 2001). In addition, they tend to be well integrated with K-12 schools, although in the case of services such as college awareness and tutoring, higher education institutions may be best able to provide them through college student volunteers (PACE 1997, CPEC 1996).

The examination of state early intervention programs presented below revealed some of the same practices, but also some of the same problems, as previous research (see Table 4). Before describing these practices, however, it is important to recognize the difficulty of deciding which of these programs are the “best” or most effective in the absence of controlled studies. Not all of the programs have been evaluated in a rigorous manner, or have published data on program outcomes; many offer only qualitative reviews of the programs, and some have not been evaluated at all. Although it is tempting to consider those programs with more rigorous evaluations to be the most effective, this may not be the case. At the same time, the outcomes data that are available are not comparable across programs. Therefore, the following analysis is based partly on outcomes data, but also relies

on internal program evaluations, focusing on qualitative recommendations and adjustments in program design as indirect signs of “what works” in state early intervention programs.¹² It takes the available evaluations at face value and does not attempt to make judgments about those evaluations or directly compare the effectiveness of the various programs (although the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluations are pointed out when appropriate). Rather, the analysis tries to highlight some commonalities among the programs that suggest possible effective elements. Within the context of previous research conclusions, therefore, the analysis synthesizes common elements among the target programs, enabling several conclusions to be drawn about the established practices of the 17 programs reviewed for this study.

12. For example, both New Jersey College Bound and the Georgia PREP program have implemented changes based upon the recommendations of independent evaluators and in many cases, expansion of the program has been tied to evidence of progress or success (CROP, AVID, CRP, OHLAP).

TABLE 4: MATRIX OF EVALUATIONS AND OUTCOMES OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

STATE	NAME OF PROGRAM(S)	TYPE OF EVALUATION/ LIMITATIONS	MAJOR OUTCOMES CITED BY EVALUATIONS	OTHER CONCLUSIONS OF EVALUATIONS/ PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS
CA	Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)	Various evaluations, examining AVID graduates versus high school graduates in general, or versus non-AVID students, or versus national averages and in California. For the three CA programs — AVID, CRP, and Cal-SOAP — graduation rates and other indicators are not necessarily comparable across programs, as they are calculated differently. In addition, methodologies are not necessarily comparable across reports, and some of the evaluation studies evaluated a small number of delivery sites.	AVID students more likely to attend college (esp. 4-year), complete a college prep curriculum, less likely to drop out.	Recently expanded statewide.
CA	College Readiness Program (CRP)	Comparison to students on program waiting list. See above for limitations.	Increased number of low-income, first-generation students in college prep courses.	
CA	California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)	Comparison to high school graduates in relevant counties. See above for limitations.	Program participants had higher enrollment rates in post-secondary education.	
FL	College Reach Out Program (CROP)	Annual evaluation report, comparing CROP cohort with random sample of public school students, stratified by race/income. Also includes narrative reports and site visits.	Reduced program attrition of 9th graders; participants were more likely to graduate, perform better on standardized tests, and enroll in higher education.	Summer programs, the provision of college scholarships, parental involvement, low turnover rates among tutors and mentors, and partnerships with other outreach programs are key factors in program success; expansion has been tied to evidence of progress, and the legislature now requires institutional matching funds.
GA	Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP)	External evaluation conducted in 2000; primarily qualitative. The list of best PREP practices was established based on comparisons with other pre-college programs across the United States and various research findings. No further methodology is provided.	Participants in summer programs have grown; good relationship exists between participants and college student mentors.	Strengths include the academic enrichment component; the fact that the curriculum reflects the diversity of participants; the community service component during the summer; and the tutoring/mentoring component (which includes ongoing training and supervision, sufficient compensation, sufficient contact time); high school program participants have become tutors for younger participants. External evaluation led to redesign at several sites.

TABLE 4: MATRIX OF EVALUATIONS AND OUTCOMES OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS — CONTINUED

STATE	NAME OF PROGRAM(S)	TYPE OF EVALUATION/ LIMITATIONS	MAJOR OUTCOMES CITED BY EVALUATIONS	OTHER CONCLUSIONS OF EVALUATIONS/ PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS
IN	21st Century Scholars	Evaluation of all of state's efforts (not Scholar's program alone) based on comparison of its ranking on various measures against other states and nation as a whole. In addition, external evaluation uses statistical models to examine Scholars likelihood of attending college (compared to non-Scholars), controlling for other factors known to affect enrollment.	State evaluation found percentage of 19-year-olds in college increased, minority enrollment has increased, interest in college prep courses and testing has increased; Indiana increased its college-going rate ranking from 40th to 17th in the nation (these changes cannot be tied to Scholars program in particular). Statistical models found direct, positive impact of participation in Scholars program on enrollment in college.	Support services have been expanded in recent years, using GEAR UP funds.
MN	Get Ready!	End-of-year evaluations by program staff, in which teachers and participants are interviewed. However, surveys had a low number of responses.	Increasing participation; both teachers and participants felt program was a benefit.	
NJ	New Jersey Callege Bound Grant Program	External evaluation (first for program as a whole in 10 years); generally, qualitative review due to differences in definitions/availability of data across program sites. Detailed data on outcomes of the program are not available, but some site-specific data are available to show evidence of progress.	At one of the programs, all graduates enrolled in college and most had enrolled in college prep math and science courses.	Evaluation made several recommendations for change: collect better data, integrate academic components with NJ/institution standards, middle school programs should be eligible only if provide additional counseling in high school, cooperate more closely with schools, increase number of students served.
NY	Liberty Partnership Program	Provides descriptive stats on participation, without comparison groups. No formal evaluation available.	Increasing numbers of students served between 1993-94 and 1998-99.	
NY	Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)	Provides descriptive stats on participation, without comparison groups. No formal evaluation available.	Majority of graduates enrolled in college, and majored in STEP-related fields.	
OK	Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP)	Annual year-end reports, which compare OHLAP students to all OK high school graduates and national averages on various indicators.	Increasing numbers of participants and program completion rates; participants have higher GPAs, test scores, enrollment rates, persistence.	Expansion of income eligibility requirements in recent years; also, move to add support services as part of GEAR UP grant (support services had been authorized but not funded).
OK	GEAR UP (incl. OHLAP-Plus)	Too new for evaluation.		

Table 4 continued on the next page

TABLE 4: MATRIX OF EVALUATIONS AND OUTCOMES OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS – CONTINUED

STATE	NAME OF PROGRAM(S)	TYPE OF EVALUATION/ LIMITATIONS	MAJOR OUTCOMES CITED BY EVALUATIONS	OTHER CONCLUSIONS OF EVALUATIONS/ PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS
RI	Rhode Island Children's Crusade	Surveys of school service providers and program participants (7th, 9th, and 12th grade cohorts), interviews with program staff, and review of documents and data system. Limitations to the quantitative data include the fact that over time the experiences of students are different. Differences should be interpreted with caution; for example, without longitudinal data, it is uncertain whether 12th graders' assessments would have been as positive when they were in 7th grade as the assessments of present 7th graders. The final report has a detailed discussion of its methodological issues.	Students in 7th grade cohort have higher rates of satisfaction, more hours of participation, and are more likely to report "big positive" effect of program. Majority of all cohorts would encourage 3rd graders to join, are taking college prep courses, and expect to graduate from a 4-year college. School officials generally want "more Crusade," not less.	Around 1996, program was restructured to cap the number of students entering in each cohort and concentrate program services (the "second Crusade"). In addition, the program was further targeted toward the neediest school districts. Evaluation also recommended improving data collection, increasing individual attention, and continuing the scholarship component.
VT	Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) Outreach	Annual survey of VT high school seniors. Since not all of Vermont's seniors completed the survey, the data may be subject to non-response bias. A detailed survey methodology and margin of error is available.	Enrollment rates have increased over 20 years; education-bound seniors have become increasingly aware of VSAC services over time.	VSAC continues to add more outreach services and further target specific groups of students over time; surveys have found that students want to receive financial aid info earlier, although most found the information they received to be useful; almost half would have liked more one-on-one counseling.
WA	Washington GEAR UP Scholars Project	Currently being evaluated.		Program is expanding to additional communities with GEAR UP funding.
WI	Early Identification Program	Not evaluated recently.		
WI	Minority Pre-College Scholarship Program	Currently being evaluated.		

Note: See appendix for more details on program evaluations and outcomes data.

3.1 PROGRAM STRUCTURES AND SERVICES

As is generally the case with other early intervention programs, state programs that combine **multiple components** appeared to be more effective than those that focus on a single component. The multiple components might be college awareness and financial aid counselling combined with academic support; the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC 1996) has noted a gradual shift in California programs from emphasizing information dissemination to promoting academic preparation through tutoring and other services. The multiple components may also take the form of support services combined with financial incentives. In this regard, the context of other state policies (i.e., financial aid programs) is particularly important; scholarship components of state early intervention programs may supplement state aid programs or, if states have strong need-based aid programs, early intervention programs may focus solely on awareness and academic enrichment.

Some state early intervention programs that are primarily focused on support services also provide small scholarships to participating students. In the New Jersey College Bound program, participants may receive a small scholarship upon completion of a summer component. The Washington Scholars Project operates with GEAR UP funding, which generally requires programs to have both awareness and financial components. Thus, Scholars participate in a range of activities, from academic planning to mentoring, and will receive scholarships for up to four years if they successfully complete the program.

Conversely, some state programs that historically focused on financial assistance have been adding support services, with the realization that financial incentives alone are not enough to assist disadvantaged students —

students and their parents need to understand at an early stage the steps they need to take to prepare for college and apply for other forms of financial aid. For example, VSAC began as a quasi-public entity administering student financial aid programs, but soon recognized that support services were an important complement. For several decades now, VSAC has been expanding and improving its outreach services, often targeting specific populations. In Oklahoma, the OHLAP program is built around the promise of tuition scholarships if participants maintain certain requirements, including college preparatory coursework. Although awareness activities had always been authorized under the program, they had not been funded until recently, when the state decided to use a portion of GEAR UP funds for awareness activities in concert with the OHLAP program.

Tutoring, mentoring, and academic enrichment also were important aspects of many of the programs. Some research has concluded that tutoring and academic support can improve students' core academic skills (although these services may not impact measured academic achievement), and our review shows increased emphasis on strengthening the academic components of safe early intervention programs (NPEC 2001). Several programs attempt to make specific linkages to college preparatory curricula, either through tutoring activities or by requiring participants to take a participant pledge. Often, these efforts are linked to broader state efforts in curriculum reform. To be eligible for the 21st Century Scholars program, for

As is generally the case with other early intervention programs, state programs that combine multiple components appeared to be more effective than those that focus on a single component.

example, students must pledge to take Indiana's Core 40 curriculum.

Tutoring services frequently make use of former or older program participants, as in Georgia PREP, as well as college students. In addition to being an effective tool for providing services efficiently and keeping older students involved in the program, these students can become mentors for younger program participants. Evaluations, however, suggest that proper training and supervision of tutors and mentors is essential; changes in some programs reflected a concern that tutors were under-trained, or that volunteers were serving only for short time periods, leading to rapid turnover and decreased program effectiveness. In the Georgia PREP program, on the other hand, ongoing training opportunities and competitive compensation for tutors is considered to be an asset of the program.

It also appears that one-on-one, ongoing contact may be the most effective approach for counselling and tutoring practices. At the heart of the AVID program, which encourages success in a rigorous curriculum, is a class in which students participate every day. On the other hand, VSAC's annual survey of Vermont high school seniors found that almost half of education-bound students would have preferred more personal advising.

Our review of programs suggests that the choice of program design is often reflected in the number of students served — there are **trade-offs involved between the extensiveness of program services and the size of program**

participation. As a result, in some states, early intervention programs fail to reach substantial proportions of the targeted population. In New Jersey, an independent evaluator of the College Bound program suggested that the program needed to serve more students and that the number of students could be increased if some of the individual sites were more cost effective. On the other hand, the Rhode Island Children's Crusade decided it needed to completely restructure its program, capping the number of students who enter the program in each cohort and targeting the neediest students, so that it could offer a more intensive level of services to students in the program (the program found it could not meet its financial and service-level commitments with the larger group of students). This restructuring appears to have had a positive effect on participants' satisfaction and perception of the program's impact. Ultimately, the trade-off depends on both commitment to funding and efficiency of activities. Some programs, such as California's AVID program, are able to afford both extensive, long-term services and a relatively large group of participants. Other programs, such as Minnesota's Get Ready! and Georgia PREP, have tried to mitigate the trade-off through the use of a tiered approach, in which a smaller, core group of students receives more extensive services while a broader group is targeted for awareness efforts.

3.2 TARGETING OF STUDENTS

Our review of programs reinforces the assertion that the timing of program interventions is important to program success. Most of the programs first targeted students in middle school or earlier. California's CRP tries to focus on the critical transition from elementary to middle school. Programs such as OHLAP and 21st Century Scholars stress the early promise of financial aid as important for students as they progress through middle and high school and into college. Providing information to high school students is not enough — in fact, VSAC's survey of high school graduates in Vermont suggested that a substantial proportion of seniors would have liked to receive information about college earlier than they did.

In addition, many of the programs attempt to tie the nature of provided services to the grade level of participating students. For example, program activities of the Rhode Island Children's Crusade change as participants progress in grade level. In the elementary grades, support revolves around literacy activities and assessments of students' strengths and weaknesses. In middle school, Crusade advisors monitor attendance, link students to tutoring services and help students with self-confidence and communication skills. By high school, participants receive information about colleges and financial aid, practice for college entrance examinations and help in identifying and applying to specific colleges.

Ongoing contact between program staff and participants appears to be an essential ingredient for program success — both throughout the year and extending from middle school into high school and beyond. Many programs found that adding summer activities to regular academic year services contributed to the success of the program. Continuity of support over several years is also important. As a result of the findings of program evaluations, a few of the programs have made conscious attempts to add activities for students in high school in order to sustain support until high school graduation. Several evaluations had found that high school students tended to become inactive in the program if specific efforts were not made to reach out to them. Thus, the outside evaluator of the New Jersey College Bound program recommended that middle school programs should be eligible for funding only if they ensure that participants receive additional advising in high school. Florida CROP has made concerted efforts to combat program attrition among new high school students. The result is a reversal of the trend and a high proportion of 9th graders remaining in the program.

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3.3 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND DELIVERY

In terms of program administration and delivery, the **involvement of higher education institutions** can be an asset to state early intervention programs. In many cases, colleges and universities provide matching funds. Under Florida CROP, a portion of institutional matching funds is often dedicated to tuition scholarships. Higher education institutions are well suited to offer such services as awareness and financial aid

More broadly, it is important for state early intervention programs not only to **create partnerships** with other education institutions and community organizations, but also to **coordinate their efforts with other higher education initiatives** in the state. As mentioned earlier, in some states the early intervention programs complement efforts in curriculum reform and need-based financial aid programs. In addition, state early intervention programs can work with community organizations and try to leverage multiple sources of funding, including money from private foundations, corporations and the federal government. When Indiana began its 21st Century Scholars program, for example, it was with support from the Lilly Endowment, which also had partnered with the state to commission a study of post-secondary education barriers and strategies to address them. Curricula on college awareness for the Minnesota Get Ready! program was developed with funding from American Express as well as the McKnight Foundation. Finally, several programs — including 21st Century Scholars and Get Ready! — work closely with AmeriCorps volunteers and staff in providing tutoring and mentoring to program participants.

Some program evaluations found that colleges and universities need to maintain closer ties with the elementary and secondary schools participants are attending, especially when program services are being delivered at the schools.

information, and can use college students as tutors in the program. Some program evaluations found that colleges and universities need to maintain closer ties with the elementary and secondary schools participants are attending, especially when program services are being delivered at the schools.

In a related point, some evaluations found uneven degrees of program implementation, or varying levels of service, when programs were delivered at a variety of different sites. It therefore seems important that the oversight agency periodically evaluate how the program is being administered and delivered. In addition, some programs have encouraged meetings of program coordinators at individual sites so that they can share and learn from the broad range of experiences.

CHAPTER 4 — CONCLUSIONS

While there are many state early intervention programs in the United States, this report has selected 17 “leading” programs in 12 states. Through our review, we have looked at the characteristics of the programs through three lenses — the general approach of the program (whether support services, financial incentives or both), the students targeted and the oversight and actual administration of the programs. This categorization of program characteristics is useful in describing the potential design options of early intervention programs across the United States. In addition, the report has attempted to use internal evaluations and outcomes data from these programs to propose some overarching established practices. For example, aspects of certain programs appear to encourage disadvantaged students to take the necessary steps toward college enrolment at higher rates. In general, our findings are consistent with those found in previous research on early intervention programs. Given the limitations of program evaluations, it is difficult to pinpoint the precise effectiveness of various program components.

The characteristics and established practices described in this report can be considered as a collection of possible approaches toward building future early intervention programs. In fact, some U.S. states have chosen aspects of other states’ programs as a model for the design of their own programs, adapted to their unique historical, economic and policy contexts. Similarly, the Canadian federal government, provincial governments or other entities may want to keep these characteristics and established practices in mind should they decide to implement experimental early intervention programs. As in the states, it would be important for such efforts to take the individual economic, social and policy contexts of provinces into account when designing program models.

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APPENDIX: DESCRIPTIONS OF STATE EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Unless otherwise noted, the information on “leading” state early intervention programs listed in this appendix was derived from individual programs’ Web sites, phone conversations with various program officers and directors, and e-mail correspondence with the program offices.

California

There are several different state early intervention programs in California, targeting different groups of students and providing a variety of services.¹³ The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) notes some broad trends across all programs, including a gradual shift over the years from emphasizing information dissemination and motivational activities to promoting and strengthening academic preparation. The following programs are just three examples of leading early intervention programs in the state of California. They include: **Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)**, the **College Readiness Program (CRP)** and the **California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)**.

The Regents of the University of California also administer a **GEAR UP State Grant** (FY 1999). The GEAR UP grant develops and sustains the organizational capacity of middle schools to prepare all students for high school and post-secondary education. Scholarships will be provided to students going to college,

based on academic success and need. Through the program, 250 ninth graders have Education Trust Accounts for \$2,000 for college tuition and expenses.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

AVID’s goal is to ensure that all students, especially disadvantaged students, will succeed in a rigorous curriculum and enrol in bachelor’s degree-granting institutions. The program places students into college preparatory courses and provides direct student support services through preparation for college admissions, academic support and tutoring, parent education and advising services. Students participate in an AVID class every day in both middle school and high school; at the high school level, students enrol in a *for-credit* AVID elective that meets for one period daily. Students are required to enrol in AVID for at least three years or until they complete high school. Two periods a week are devoted to academic survival and college entry skills, which concentrate on note-taking methods, time management, research skills and test-taking strategies, including ACT and SAT test preparation. In addition, college students are employed to serve as AVID tutors for two periods a week. During these tutorial sessions, students, with the help of their tutors, quiz one another, review for tests and work on homework problems. Students also

13. See CPEC 1996 for review of California programs. The programs mentioned in this section are all jointly administered by the California Department of Education. However, there are several other programs that operate on a statewide basis, but are operated by individual university systems of public school systems (CPEC 1996). Also, keep in mind that the graduation rates, etc., reported here are not necessarily comparable across programs, as they are calculated differently. In addition, methodologies are not necessarily comparable across reports, and some of the evaluation studies listed below evaluated a small number of delivery sites, creating some limitations in the validity of the data. Despite the methodological challenges — especially the difficulty in providing evidence of cause and effect relationships — the effectiveness of the programs is suggested by: 1) the extent to which the program met its stated objectives since the last report; and 2) college-going rates of program participants compared to graduates across the state.

have a choice of which subject/tutor group they would like to join (e.g., math, English). Motivational activities and career and college exploration take place one day a week and include speakers on college opportunities and career choices, field trips to businesses and on-campus lectures advising students on college-level expectations. Former AVID students also return to speak to current students about college and career experiences.

The AVID approach is a collaborative one in which the teacher serves as a facilitator and students and tutors work together. A huge emphasis is placed on writing and critical thinking skills. In addition, AVID students are expected to spend at least two hours each night working on AVID-related materials.

AVID also develops partnerships and close working relationships with post-secondary institutions. Partnerships function on many different levels — colleges providing tutors, sponsoring tours and lecturers, and for many California colleges, cooperating with regional AVID offices — to assist programs.

Eligibility: Eligible students are middle and high school students (grades 6–12) from low-income, first-generation, ethnic minority backgrounds who have average-to-high achievement scores, but average grades. Students are selected by program coordinators, and parents must sign a contract and agree to support their child in the program.

Origin and Size: The program began in San Diego County in 1980; it has since expanded to more than 800 sites in California, and to programs in 16 states (Swanson 2001). In 2002, the program served approximately 65,000 students across the United States, serving 54,538 California students, up from 25,600 in 1994–95 (Micelli, 2002).

Funding: In 1994–95, the state contributed \$100,000, institutions another \$3.5 million (CPEC 1996). In 1995, state funding increased to \$2 million to provide for statewide expansion throughout California (Swanson 2001).

Program Oversight and Administration: The program is administered by the AVID Center (a non-profit corporation) and the California Department of Education; the latter oversees the statewide expansion of the program, while the former serves as a subcontractor supporting eleven regional offices.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Based primarily on research within California, several studies have focused on AVID.¹⁴ AVID graduates were shown to have higher college-going rates for all students, and in particular, for students of colour and students whose parents had low SES, higher retention rates and lower high school dropout rates. Highlights of some of these students are presented below.

AVID graduates complete the sequence of courses necessary for four-year college acceptance at an 84 per cent rate (the California state average is 34 per cent). This could be partially attributed to the fact that AVID students are less likely to drop out of school; dropout rates among AVID students fell 37 per cent during the period 1988–1992, while the overall rate for the state declined only 14 per cent.

AVID program graduates enrolled in California higher education institutions at a higher rate than did their San Diego County counterparts. According to 1994–95 data, 98 per cent of AVID graduates enrolled in a California college or university, compared to 55 per cent of their San Diego county counterparts. The higher college-going rates were particularly apparent when looking at the enrolment rates in the California State

14. These studies include those listed on the AVID Center Web site (<http://www.avidonline.org>), and individual reports by Mehan et al. (1996), Guthrie and Guthrie (2000) and Guthrie and David (1994). To give an example of the methodologies used in these studies, the 1996 evaluation (Mehan et al., as cited in NPEC 2001) was based on 248 of 1,053 students who participated in the program for 3 years and 146 of 288 students who had participated for one year or less at eight San Diego high schools between 1990 and 1992. Despite some methodological issues (e.g., small sample size), the evaluation found tentative evidence of improvement, for the relatively modest sum of \$625 in annual cost per student.

University sector and independent sector. In addition, in 1995, 91 per cent of AVID graduates completed a University preparatory curriculum, compared to a 1994 statewide rate of 32 per cent (CPEC 1996).

Other studies have also found that AVID graduates are more likely to attend college, specifically four-year institutions, than students in general. Almost 80 per cent of 1996 and 1997 AVID graduates were enrolled in a four-year institution by 1999, a rate three times the state average. In addition, the AVID students had higher retention rates when in college; more than 80 per cent of AVID graduates were enrolled continuously in college two years after high school graduation (Guthrie and Guthrie 2000).

More specifically, AVID appears to increase the enrolment of underserved students in colleges and universities. African-American students who participate in AVID for three years are enrolling in college at rates that are considerably higher than national averages: 55 per cent of the AVID African-American graduates enrolled in four-year colleges, while the national average was 33 per cent. Of the Latino students who participated in AVID, 43 per cent enrolled in four-year colleges. This exceeds the national average of 29 per cent (Mehan et al. 1996).

AVID also appeared to overcome the negative effect of parents' income and education. AVID graduates from the lowest-income groups enrolled in colleges in proportions equal to or greater than non-AVID graduates from higher income groups. AVID graduates whose parents had less than a college education were more likely to enrol in four-year colleges than non-AVID students with college-educated parents.

College Readiness Program (CRP)

The College Readiness Program (CRP) focuses on promoting college preparatory math and English courses for first-generation and low-income middle school students. California State University and the California Department of Education award grants to clusters of three

to five middle schools that work with local school districts and CSU campuses. The program identifies students who are average achievers and who are in the critical phase of leaving elementary school and entering the middle grades. Students and their parents (the program includes a student/parent support component) receive a range of services, from tutoring in math and English by California State University students in small groups to campus visits to financial aid and college workshops, including information for parents.

Eligibility: Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 are recommended by teachers, and include those who are first-generation and low-income, and who are academically on grade level.

Origin and Size: The program began in 1986 and served approximately 870 students in 1994–95 (CPEC 1996).

Funding: In 1994–95, the state contributed \$420,265 and institutions contributed \$132,000 (CPEC 1996).

Program Oversight and Administration: The CRP is jointly administered by the Chancellor's Office of the California State University and the California Department of Education, with awards going to clusters of middle schools to deliver the program services.

Evaluation and Outcomes: The program has increased the number of students recommended to take college track courses, with more significant results in math than in English. In fact, CRP exceeded its goal of increasing by 30 per cent the number of first-generation and low-income 8th grade students who were recommended for 9th grade algebra; in 1993–94, 70 per cent of 8th graders in CRP were recommended for algebra, compared to 47 per cent of the 8th grade population on the waiting list for program participation. For English, the respective figures are 75 per cent and 62 per cent. In addition, middle school coordinators reported an increase in the college aspirations of program participants (CPEC 1996; see also PACE 1997).

Some reviews of CRP programs have revealed uneven degrees of program implementation in the participating middle schools (PACE 1997).

California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)

The aim of the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP) is to improve the flow of information about post-secondary education and financial aid while raising the achievement levels of low-income, elementary and secondary school students. Each consortium, comprising secondary and post-secondary schools and community agencies, designs services on the basis of local needs. Some common services are provided by the consortia, however, including advising, tutoring, parent outreach and college awareness workshops.

Eligibility: Student participation in the program is determined by need (low-income and first-generation) and by the Cal-SOAP coordinator. Students are primarily in middle and high school (grades 4–12).

Origin and Size: Cal-SOAP was established by the state legislature in 1978. Today, Cal-SOAP projects operate in 17 locations throughout the state through consortia. The projects proposed to serve about 45,000 students during 2001–02.

Funding: In 1994–95, the state contributed \$650,000 and institutions contributed \$1.05 million (CPEC 1996). The program requires matching funds.

Program Oversight and Administration: The Cal-SOAP program is administered by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). Advice from advisory committees as well as local consortium boards is provided for each project. Individual projects apply each year for competitive state funding.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Since its inception, the number of students served and the number of projects has increased. In 1994, the post-secondary enrolment rate for Cal-SOAP participants (seniors) was higher than that of their graduating classmates in counties served by the program — 71 per cent compared to 53 per cent (CPEC 1996).

Florida

College Reach Out Program (CROP)

The College Reach Out Program (CROP) is a statewide competitive grant program established to encourage disadvantaged students to seek post-secondary education. CROP was developed as a pilot program in 1983, and subsequently received appropriations from the state. After evidence of progress over the ensuing several years, the legislature increased the appropriations level, eventually placing the program into statute in 1989 and extending eligibility to independent institutions in 1990.

The program provides academic enrichment activities until high school graduation. Activities differ by site, but may include career and personal counselling, tutoring, community outreach and standardized test preparation. For example, a six-week summer program is offered to middle school students at Florida Gulf Coast University, and selected CROP students participate in a week-long summer residential program where they live in the residence halls, attend classes and work on a project. Parents and students must agree to abide by the rules and schedules established by CROP. In fact, regularly scheduled parent conferences are held with CROP staff in order to educate parents about higher education.

Eligibility: Students in grades 6–12 who meet certain economic and academic criteria (e.g., first-generation status, participation in the reduced- and free-lunch programs) are eligible to participate.

Origin and Size: CROP was developed as a pilot program in 1983. In 1998–99, it served 7,869 students (PEPC 2001).

Funding: The program continues to be funded by the Florida Department of Education through the Office of Postsecondary Education Coordination. However, it now requires matching funding from institutions/external sources. In 1998–99, the state contributed \$2.48 million; institutions, \$2.52 million; and other external funders, \$537,000. The average program cost per student was \$713 (from all sources) and \$316 (from the state CROP grants) (PEPC 2001).

Program Oversight and Administration: The program is funded by the Department of Education and evaluated by the Florida Postsecondary Commission (PEPC). It is administered by post-secondary institutions and consortia, which submit proposals for projects to an advisory council and provide matching funds.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Increasing emphasis has been placed on evaluation of the program's outcomes. Therefore, the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission conducts an annual evaluation report. The 1998–99 evaluation report compared the CROP cohort of 7,869 program participants (enrolled in one of 41 CROP projects) with a random sample of 10,000 public school students (in grades 6–12), stratified on the bases of race and income (PEPC 2001).

Their findings indicated that non-whites accounted for 87 per cent of program participants. Sixty-one per cent of participants were female; 82 per cent of new participants were potential first-generation college students;

85 per cent had low family income (as established by federal guidelines).¹⁵ In addition, for the first time, 9th graders made up the highest percentage of participants; previously, program attrition rates had been high among new high school students, and a concentrated effort was made to reverse the trend. Program retention rates are also high, with 73 per cent of all eligible students returning to a CROP project in 1998–99, reflecting an increasing trend.

CROP participants achieved at higher rates than their counterparts. Eighty-two per cent of CROP participants (grades 6–11) were academically promoted to the next grade and 87 per cent of 12th graders received a standard diploma, compared to 72 per cent and 71 per cent, respectively, of the random cohort. CROP participants generally performed better on standardized tests (FCAT) than their counterparts in the random cohort (although not as high as the state averages). Compared to all test takers, they scored lower on Florida College Placement Test (FCAT), as would be expected. Seventy-two per cent of CROP high school graduates were enrolled in higher education in 1998–99 (57 per cent for credit), compared to 44 per cent of the random cohort (33 per cent for credit).

Narrative reports and site visits also indicated that the most successful programs have a number of factors contributing to their success.¹⁶ These studies found that attendance at academic enrichment activities increases when turnover among project tutors and mentors is minimized. Parents are a key factor to program success. Maintaining contact with older students through partnerships with outreach programs, the provision of scholarships and bridges to pre-college summer programs to CROP graduates proved very effective. These summer enrichment activities are not only important for current participation, but also provide employment opportunities for former CROP participants to serve as mentors and counsellors.

15. Criteria for participation became more stringent by 1995–96, with an increased targeting of economic and educationally disadvantaged students (see NPEC 2001).

In addition to the hard data collected by the program, CROP project directors submit detailed narrative descriptions of their program activities, strengths and weaknesses.

Communication among projects was cited as being essential for assisting and tracking students who transfer from one program area to another. Financial investments in CROP graduates also had high success rates. For example, increasing numbers of post-secondary institutions are offering tuition scholarships to CROP participants as part of their required cash match. Since not all students receive these scholarships, however, it is important to note that awareness efforts regarding state and federal financial aid remain important.

Georgia

The state of Georgia established a Pre-School Post-Secondary Education (P-16) Initiative, which is designed to reduce systemic problems in public education and to increase the academic readiness of students who are in at-risk situations. Currently, there are three parallel efforts: alignment of expectations, curriculum and assessment; improving teacher quality; and providing supplemental programs for students in at-risk and gifted situations.

Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP)

As part of this initiative, the Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP) was created in June 1996 to increase college readiness for 7th-12th grade students in at-risk situations. The goals of the program are to: 1) close the gap in readiness between minority/majority and high/low income students; 2) educate parents in college-readiness; and 3) increase college success for poor and minority students. PREP provides supplementary academic enrichment programs, such as tutoring/mentoring, academic readiness, career exploration, leadership development, conflict resolution, community service and technology skill development.

In one component of the supplemental and enrichment program, for example, college students mentor PREP students. Key aspects of this component include training for tutors, provision of services through small groups and individual tutoring sessions, and the recent development of PREP students in 11th and 12th grades becoming junior tutors. Another component focuses on community service — started in 1997, funded by an anonymous foundation grant — and functions primarily through summer programs. Each summer since, the number of participants has grown. The core program is designed for a select group of students, while activities such as college campus site visits for middle school students expand opportunities to a larger group of students.

Until this year, the program was coordinated through the University System of Georgia (USG) office with a project director overseeing the work. Recently, however, the campus presidents voted to make the program institutionally based and all funds were dispersed equally to the campuses. Twenty-nine out of 34 USG institutions are currently participating in PREP.

Eligibility: Students in grades 7–12 are selected by teachers and counsellors in consultation with PREP coordinators. Students are chosen based on “at-risk” characteristics, including being behind one grade level, at risk for academic failure, suffering from low self-esteem, living in violent communities or dysfunctional family environments, and/or having parents whose SES is low. Parental consent is required for participation.

Origin and Size: The program was established in June 1996. More than 3,000 students participated in the summer program in FY 2001, while 15,000 middle and high school students participated in the FY 2000 year-round program.

Funding: In FY 2001, the state contributed \$3 million to the program, with private funding at \$550,000.

Program Oversight and Administration: The USG Board of Regents evaluates the program with individual campuses administering the program. USG institutions partner with technical colleges, school districts, businesses and non-profit organizations.

Evaluation and Outcomes: According to the Board of Regents FY 2001 Accountability Report, approximately 30,400 middle school students have participated in PREP academic enrichment programs since the program's inception. Since the community service component was funded in 1997, the number of participants has grown; during the FY 2001 summer program, 3,200 PREP students and 289 college student tutors implemented 89 service projects. Major results include: PREP students/tutors were highly satisfied by helping people, agencies/organizations said students provided the necessary help and service providers have expanded into regular school year program. The programs continue to be implemented as more collaborative relationships are developed between the 29 USG institutions that coordinate specific PREP programs, technical colleges, school districts, businesses and non-profit organizations (USG 2001).

An external evaluation of the program was conducted in 2000. To conform to the results of the evaluation, the programs were redesigned at several sites. For example, major efforts in FY 2001 targeted strategies aimed at high school students since findings indicated that high school students have the highest inactive rate in the program.

Within their evaluation, the evaluators also developed a list of established practices to guide the program's redesign efforts.¹⁷ These established practices ranged from who coordinates the program, to the program

design, to the use of partners, to multiple tutor training and mentoring opportunities.

Evaluators found that having senior faculty and administrators serve as PREP institutional coordinators was useful to the program. Within the tutoring/mentoring component, evaluators pointed to ongoing tutor training opportunities, sufficient time for tutoring in individual and small groups, supervision of tutors by the coordinating teacher at a school site and sufficient tutor compensation to make the job competitive. The relationship between college students and PREP students continues to be enjoyed by both groups. About 750 college students served as tutors during the current year.

The evaluators also indicated particular strengths within the design of PREP. For example, the curriculum design of the summer program accurately reflects the diversity of its students; some projects even include an academic enrichment component that links the academic year program with the summer program. Business partners are used for career education programs, while orientation sessions are set up to teach students the value of community service.

Indiana

Indiana's early intervention initiatives grew out of a concern in the early 1980s that the state was lagging behind other states in its production of college graduates, which in turn was creating a negative impact on the economy. Indiana decided to implement a multi-pronged approach to address these issues, involving services, scholarships, a study of attitudes toward post-secondary education in the state and a state-foundation partnership. To approach the problem systematically, the state partnered with the Lilly Endowment to commission a study on why students made specific post-secondary education choices and what the barriers to

17. The list of best PREP practices was established based on comparisons with other pre-college programs across the United States and various research finding. No further methodology is provided.

post-secondary education were. Among its major findings, the study identified a lack of information and financial resources, a system segregated into vocational and college preparatory tracks, and the difficulty of becoming college-eligible. These findings led the state to fine tune its efforts, focusing on three major strategies: a massive guidance information and awareness campaign; restructuring the secondary curriculum (known as Core 40) and encouraging students to take college prep courses; and reducing the financial barriers through state grant and scholarship programs (NPEC 2001).

As part of the strategies, the **Indiana Career and Postsecondary Advancement Center (ICPAC)** was created in 1986 by the Indiana General Assembly. Under the direction of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, the mission of ICPAC is to inform, encourage and support the education and career development of the people of Indiana. Currently, ICPAC sends education and career planning information to over 300,000 Indiana student households, beginning in the 7th grade and continuing through senior year of high school.¹⁸ It operates a hotline and provides resources through an informational Web site. In addition, ICPAC is involved in early intervention initiatives, particularly its centrepiece **21st Century Scholars Program**.

21st Century Scholars Program

The 21st Century Scholars Program broadly promises eligible and successful 21st Century Scholars a scholarship up to the cost of four years of tuition at participating Indiana colleges or universities to which a student is accepted (on a last-dollar basis). If the student attends a private institution, the state will award an amount comparable to that of a public institution. The program targets income-eligible 7th and 8th graders who enrol

in the program and fulfill a pledge to refrain from alcohol, drugs and crime; to complete high school with a 2.0 GPA; to take the Core 40 curriculum; and to apply for college admission and financial aid when they are seniors. The program also includes a comprehensive support system, including a parent education component, an outreach component and a service-learning component sponsored, in large part, by the Prudential Youth Leadership program. AmeriCorps staff provide tutoring, mentoring and monitoring of student progress in high school (NPEC 2001). Other support services include workshops, career counselling, campus visits, social/ cultural events and mailings. Such services have been expanded in recent years using funds from GEAR UP. Most of these support services are provided through 16 regional service centres, each having between six and 12 staff (including a full-time coordinator) along with AmeriCorps volunteers (St. John 2002).

Eligibility: Students must be a resident of Indiana, in the 7th or 8th grade, and eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, in addition to fulfilling the pledge noted above.

Origin and Size: The program began in 1990 under NEISP. In 1998, 8,403 students were enrolled in the program (Gillie 1999).

Funding: State funds for the Scholars program account for approximately \$2.5 million a year, including \$300,000 for administration and the remaining balance allocated to programming costs. In addition, the state appropriates an annual scholarship budget of approximately \$7 million. The program is funded biennially by the state. In addition to state funding (total funding around \$8 million in FY 1998–99), the program receives funding from a variety of sources. It received a five-year \$25 million GEAR UP State Grant that comes through the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (awarded in FY 1999), which supports both the scholarship component

18. Information from ICPAC now ranks 2nd in the top 10 sources of information about college in Indiana (Gillie, 1999).

and an outreach component. Funding from AmeriCorps (now in its eighth year) provided \$379,733 in FY 2001–02.

Program Oversight and Administration: The State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI) oversees the program. It is administered primarily through the SSACI's Office of 21st Century Scholars.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Since 1990, over 50,000 students have taken the 21st Century Scholars Pledge. The first cohort of Scholars entered college in fall 1995 (Gillie 1999). In the first cohort of 1990, 5,757 students signed up; 2,621 (46 per cent) met the conditions of the scholarship; of these, 1,421 students (54 per cent) used their award to attend college in the first year; and 1,246 (88 per cent) returned in the second year. Data for the second cohort to reach college were similar, with more students enrolling initially (6,347), 45 per cent of whom met the conditions of the scholarship; and of those meeting the conditions, about 65 per cent attended college (NPEC 2001).

Because of the original circumstances of its early intervention efforts, the state evaluates those efforts by comparing its standing on a number of measures to other states and the nation as a whole. The following findings should be viewed as the combined programmatic efforts in the state of Indiana, not confined to the success of the 21st Century Scholars Program. Several ICPAC publications document the positive "effects" of Indiana's post-secondary education encouragement programs (Gillie 1999 and 2001). Some of these positive effects included increases in the college-going rates in Indiana, particularly for minority students since 1991, and increases in the number of students opting to take college preparatory courses in high school.

For example, the percentage of 19-year-olds in college increased from 29 per cent in 1986 to 41 per cent in 1996 (a 42 per cent increase, compared to a nationwide increase

of 26 per cent over the same period). In addition, the high school to college participation rate increased from 38 per cent in 1986 to 61 per cent in 1998, a 61 per cent increase. Furthermore, the state of Indiana's actual college-going rate improved from ranking 40th to 17th in the nation from 1986 to 1998. Throughout the Indiana population (not just educationally and economically disadvantaged students), interest in college preparatory coursework and in taking college admissions tests appears to have increased over time. Between 1991 and 1998, the number of Indiana students participating in Advanced Placement (AP) courses has more than doubled, and interest in the Core 40 program and the Academic Honors Diploma has also increased over time.

In addition, an external evaluation of the program was conducted recently (St. John et al. 2002), including statistical analyses that assess the program's effectiveness using data from ICPAC's annual survey of 9th graders as well as individual records provided by SSACI and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. Regression models were used to examine whether Scholars are more likely than non-Scholars to attend college, controlling for student background, academic preparation, and other characteristics known to affect enrolment.¹⁹ The models used data for the cohort that should have graduated from high school in 1999. The study found that Scholars were more likely than non-Scholars to enrol at public four-year colleges and public two-year colleges, and were probably more likely to enrol in private colleges in Indiana as well as out of state institutions. Furthermore, receiving a Scholars aid award was positively associated with continuous enrolment during the freshman year at an Indiana public college, controlling for other factors; however, this had virtually the same effect on persistence as that of students who received a financial aid package that did not include a Scholars award.

19. A detailed methodology is included in the report.

Minnesota

Get Ready!

The Get Ready! program was established in response to a 1994 study that found that students and parents must receive information about college at an early stage. Get Ready! provides counselling, information and academic support to children primarily in grades 4–6 who have parents of colour, with low income or no post-secondary education. The program works with young children and families who are not highly represented in college, to provide them with the tools and experiences to motivate and prepare them to complete high school and attend post-secondary education. Curricula that cover goal setting, career awareness, paying for college and higher education options are provided. Although a majority of the program is funded by a federal GEAR UP grant (see below), Get Ready! does not offer scholarships to its participants — the program has received an exemption from the federal government that allows it to concentrate solely on providing awareness services, without having to provide financial awards as stipulated under the GEAR UP grant.

The program is broken down into two tracts — the core program and the broader program — in order to impact a wider range of students. In the core program, education outreach liaisons provide counselling and information to participating children and their parents. These liaisons meet monthly with students individually or in small groups and with parents to present the curriculum. Students also participate in events and activities, such as a career expo, higher education night, career field trips and college visits. In the broader program, larger groups of students, who do not necessarily fit the eligibility criteria for the core program, are offered college planning presentations, and theatre performances on preparing for college are given to elementary and middle school students.

Eligibility: Minority, low-income, first-generation, those who attend Title I schools and are in grades 4–6 are eligible for the “core services” component of the program.

Origin and Size: The program was started in 1995–96. In 2000–01, 1,000 elementary students participated in the core program; in the broader program, 7,500 were recipients of educational/college planning presentations and 35,000 benefited from theatre performances on college preparation (MHESO 2001).

Funding: Initially the program as a whole was funded by NEISP; it is now funded mostly by the **GEAR UP State Grant** received by the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office in FY 1999, with some state funding. In FY 2001, the federal GEAR UP grant provided the program with \$1.7 million in funding; the state provided \$280,000. The program’s curricula on college awareness was funded by American Express and the McKnight Foundation (McKnight funding has now expired). Also, in summer 2000, the Services Office received an AmeriCorps-Youth Works grant, which will be used to recruit members in order to supplement Get Ready!’s early awareness activities (MHESO 2001).

Program Oversight and Administration: The Minnesota Higher Education Services Office oversees and administers the program.

Evaluation and Outcomes: According to a report by the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office (2001), within the past five years Get Ready! has increased its student participation levels and effectively informed students about college preparation and goals. The number of students served in the core program has increased from 166 in 1995–96 to more than 1,000 projected for 2000–01. Through its college planning presentations, the number of students reached increased from 661 in 1995–96 to 7,500 projected for 2000–01. End-of-year evaluations for 1998–99 by Get Ready! staff indicated that the program has helped students understand the importance of going to college, the impor-

tance of accomplishing a goal and different ways to pay for college.²⁰ The program has helped students learn about careers and has motivated them to attend school every day, do well in school and prepare for the future. Of teachers interviewed, 91 per cent said that all students can benefit from participation in Get Ready! (MHESO 2001).

Students who participated in the program said that Get Ready! affected the ways in which they thought about college preparation and career goals. Ninety-six per cent of participants stated the program had helped them understand the importance of college a lot, 86 per cent of participants were motivated to do better in school, 95 per cent of participants indicated that the program taught them the importance of accomplishing goals and 94 per cent of students indicated that they learned about different careers.

Several new initiatives are underway, including a middle school component, an expanded parental involvement component and development of a comprehensive database.

New Jersey

In addition to various state early intervention programs in New Jersey that target urban and minority populations, such as the **College Bound Grant Program** (see below), the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education was awarded a **GEAR UP State Grant** in FY 1999. Some of the institutions hosting individual College Bound programs are also participating in the NJ GEAR UP program. NJ GEAR UP recruits and serves students from 10 middle and seven high schools in the cities of Camden, Jersey City, Newark and Trenton. Features of NJ GEAR UP include: a six week summer program, academic instruction, after-school tutoring, college visits and tours, college application and financial aid assistance, mentoring, personal classes and field trips.

New Jersey College Bound Grant Program

The New Jersey College Bound Grant Program targets urban/minority youth in grades 6–12 and provides pre-college enrichment activities and advising, particularly in the areas of math, science and technology. Although each individual program site differs significantly, services include such activities as summer sessions, counseling/mentoring, tutoring, parent involvement and career exploration. Students may also receive a small scholarship upon completion of summer programs.

Grants are awarded through a competitive process to colleges and universities throughout the state (currently 12), which design and implement their own programs. Thus, the details of the programs vary throughout the state, including the grades targeted, eligibility criteria and services provided.

Eligibility: The programs generally target historically under-represented minorities in grades 6–12 who are located in 30 “special needs” school districts in New Jersey, as identified by 1990 legislation. The specific criteria differ according to the host program.

Origin and Size: The program was established in 1986. In FY 1998, the program served 2,279 students statewide (Stoehl 1997).

Funding: In FY 1998, the state contributed \$2.8 million to the program, institutions offered \$2 million and external sources contributed \$54,500 (Stoehl 1997).

Program Oversight and Administration: The New Jersey Commission on Higher Education conducts the grant process and oversees the funded programs, which are administered directly by the colleges and universities receiving grants.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Although the individual College Bound programs have conducted evaluations on their own, the individual program evaluations are not consistent

20. There were a low number of responses; the end-of-year student Get Ready! evaluations received 165 responses and the Get Ready! Educator evaluation received 20 responses.

or comparable with each other, or over time. An evaluation of the College Bound program as a whole was not conducted until 1997, after more than 10 years of operation (Stoehl 1997). This comprehensive evaluation found that in general, the program appears to benefit the students served and the communities in which they work. However, the evaluation also made several recommendations to improve the program. In response to the recommendations, the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education refined the program in subsequent years. For example, the College Bound program directors formed an association and meet together regularly to share knowledge and experiences (NJCHE 1997).

The evaluation found that better data collection was needed, high school academic and graduation requirements needed to be aligned with institutional requirements, criteria for including middle school students needed to be addressed, and an enhanced focus on math and the sciences was needed, among other recommendations. Specifically, the evaluation noted that individual programs should be required to collect data about participants in order to better evaluate program effectiveness through measures such as retention, graduation and enrolment in college. In order to increase the overall effectiveness of the program, the evaluation also recommended that the number of students served could be increased, if several of these steps were taken and some of the programs were more cost effective. The evaluation also recommended an open, competitive grant process in which all post-secondary institutions in New Jersey could compete. Lastly, the study recommended that an advisory group be created to guide the progress of the program.

When looking at the actual program structure, the evaluation suggested that the academic components of individual programs

should be geared to both New Jersey standards for high school graduation and the host institution's own entrance requirements. Admissions and financial aid advising, the evaluation found, should be critical parts of every program. In addition, the evaluation suggested College Bound programs should cooperate more closely with the schools from which they draw their participants, especially in terms of academic cooperation. Moreover, it recommended that the focus on math, science and technology should be stressed. Finally, the evaluation advised that middle school programs should be eligible for funding only if they ensure that participants receive additional counselling during their high school years.

Although detailed data on outcomes of the program as a whole were not available, some information is useful in this regard. For example, the number of students served by College Bound programs has increased from 874 in FY 1987 to 2,279 in FY 1998. The total cost per College Bound student ranged from \$1,512 to \$4,326 in FY 1998.

Some data are available to show evidence of progress. For example, the dropout rate from middle school through high school in New Jersey special needs districts is close to 50 per cent, while the dropout rate for participants in College Bound appears to be significantly lower (to the degree to which it can be determined). At one College Bound program (College of New Jersey), 1996 data indicated that of the 129 students who participated in the program, 98 per cent of those enrolled completed the summer program and 90 per cent completed the academic year program. Seventy-five per cent of participants were enrolled in college preparatory math and science classes. All 21 graduates of the 1996 class enrolled in college. However, the evaluator noted that this program had the highest cost per student, largely because of its residential character.

New York

The New York State Education Department has a Pre-Collegiate Preparation Programs Unit, which provides programming and supportive services to at-risk youth in more than 500 elementary, middle and secondary schools. Programs administered under the unit include the **Liberty Partnerships Program** and the **Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)**, which are listed below. In addition, the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) received a **GEAR UP State Grant** in FY 1999; under the College for Me program, sub-grants will try to create aspiration for higher education in 4,000 at-risk eighth graders beginning in September 2000.

Liberty Partnerships Program

The Liberty Partnerships Program provides fiscal and technical support for the development and implementation of 12-month programs that are intended to improve the ability of at-risk youth enrolled in grades 5 through 12 to graduate from high school and enter post-secondary education and the workforce. The program 1) identifies students who are at-risk of dropping out of school and 2) provides services to improve their ability to complete high school and advance into post-secondary education and the workforce. Through a competitive process, state funding is awarded to specific sites statewide, utilizing partnerships between schools, parents, community organizations and business. Grants are provided to these colleges and universities or consortia to administer specific programs. Programs focus on both students and parents during school and in the summer, providing activities such as academic and career counselling, skills assessment, tutoring and mentoring. In addition, day care, transportation and English as a Second Language instruction are provided.

Eligibility: Students in grades 5–12 who are at high risk of dropping out of school.

Origin and Size: The program was created in 1988. In 1998–99, the program served 12,672 students. Fifty-seven programs were funded across the state in 2000–01.

Funding: The program is entirely state funded. In 2000, the state contributed \$11.5 million to the program.

Program Oversight and Administration: The New York Education Department's Pre-Collegiate Preparation Unit oversees the program and provides grants to colleges and universities or consortia to administer regional programs that coordinate the activities of various local organizations.

Evaluation and Outcomes: The Liberty Partnership program has seen increases in the number of students served between 1993–94 and 1998–99. In 1998–99, the Liberty Partnerships program served 12,672 students, 2,236 in grade 12. Of these, 1,561 graduated (70 per cent), and 1,149 (74 per cent) of graduates were accepted into college (Brendese 2001).²¹

Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)

The Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) awards competitive grants to higher education institutions, which in turn administer projects in schools and districts. The program's intention is to increase the number of historically under-represented students entering college and improve their participation rates in math, science, technology and health-related fields. The program provides year-round (academic year and summer) enrichment activities, such as core subject instruction and Regents exam preparation, college admissions and career counselling, and research training. STEP provides in-school tutorials and a Saturday Enrichment

21. No formal evaluation was available.

Program, which includes such enrichment activities as academic instruction, computer science enrichment and field trips and workshops.

Eligibility: The program serves students in grades 7–12 who are in schools where at least 20 per cent of the student body are either low-income or students of colour.

Origin and Size: The program began in 1986. In 1999–2000, the program served 5,347 students through more than 40 funded programs.

Funding: This program is entirely state funded. In 2000, the state contributed \$6 million in funding. The average cost per student was \$761.

Program Oversight and Administration: The New York Education Department's Pre-Collegiate Preparation Unit oversees the program and provides competitive grants to higher education institutions to administer the program.

Evaluation and Outcomes: Between 1986 and 1996, there were 56,441 students served under STEP. In 1999–2000, 5,347 total students were enrolled in STEP. In 1999–2000, 89 per cent of 12th grade STEP students graduated — almost all (95 per cent) enrolled in college. Sixty-seven per cent of STEP graduates were pursuing college degrees in math, science and technology (Brendese 2001).²²

Oklahoma

An aggressive plan called Brain Gain 2010 was developed by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to increase the percentage of students in the state attending and graduating from college (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education 1999). Several aspects of the plan involve various intervention strategies, from strengthening secondary core curricula to increasing test preparation to linking student preparation to college performance. Most aspects of the plan involve collaboration at various levels among educators in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma's primary early intervention program, the **Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program** (see below), was well established at the time the state received a **GEAR UP State Grant** (see below); therefore, the state decided to design its GEAR UP program so that it was highly integrated with OHLAP. The two programs complement each other to a high degree, with the GEAR UP program promoting awareness of OHLAP and OHLAP students being eligible for the scholarship component of GEAR UP, known as OHLAP-Plus. In fact, Oklahoma was one of the few states able to administer GEAR UP scholarships in FY 1999 — the first year of the GEAR UP program. As a result, Oklahoma's GEAR UP program is included in our review as a separate program.²³

Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP)

The Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP) helps pay for Oklahoma students' college education at an Oklahoma university if their family income is \$50,000 or less. The program pays full tuition at an Oklahoma public two-year or four-year college for up to five years; the equivalent award amount may also be used toward tuition at an Oklahoma accredited private college. Students sign up for the program in grades 8, 9 or 10. The program requires that students meet certain high school requirements, including taking 17 core courses in high school, achieving a 2.5 GPA or better, attending class regularly and staying out of trouble. The program was authorized to include support services such as college awareness counselling, however, such services were minimal until recently, when the GEAR UP grant was used to provide them in concert with OHLAP (see below).

Eligibility: Students in grades 8, 9 and 10 whose family income is \$50,000 or less and

22. No formal evaluation was available.

23. In other states, GEAR UP State Grants are mentioned in the detailed program descriptions if the reviewed program receives funding through GEAR UP. Otherwise, the fact that a state has received a GEAR UP grant is noted but not addressed as a separate program, as the programs are generally too new to have results.

who meet certain high school requirements (see above description) are eligible to participate in OHLAP.

Origin and Size: The program began in 1992. In 2000–01, 9,468 students (in all grades) were enrolled in OHLAP.

Funding: The OHLAP program is entirely state funded. In FY 2000–01, the state contributed \$1.9 million to the OHLAP program. Costs are projected to increase to \$4.1 million in 2002–03, \$7.9 million in 2003–04, \$11.8 million in 2004–05 and \$15.7 million in 2005–06.

Program Oversight and Administration: The Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education oversees and administers the entire program.

Evaluation and Outcomes: In order to consistently gauge the scope of its program and the success of its participants from year to year, OHLAP conducts an end-of-the-year overview of the program. Data and findings from the most recent *OHLAP Year-End Report (2000–01)* are presented below (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education 2002).

Enrolments

Program enrolments have been increasing steadily, largely due to recent increases in the family income limit and assistance in awareness efforts through the GEAR UP program. In 2000–01, total enrolments were 9,468, more than double the previous school year's enrolments of 3,509 (Mize 2001). Among the high school graduating class of 2001, 1,442 high school students were enrolled in OHLAP and 884 students completed the program (61 per cent). The completion rate is up from 40 per cent in 1996. In addition, in 2000–01, there were 1,689 OHLAP scholarship recipients, up from 463 in 1996–97.²⁴

Student Demographics

High proportions of the participants are female and non-white, and have higher GPAs

and ACT scores (in comparison to the entire state). Sixty-three per cent of OHLAP high school graduates in 2001 were female, compared to 50 per cent of all Oklahoma high school seniors in 2000–01. Racial/ethnic breakdowns were very similar between the two groups, with about 40 per cent of OHLAP high school graduates in 2001 being non-white. The high school GPAs of OHLAP participants are higher, on average, than those of Oklahoma seniors in general; in 2000, the figures were 3.47 and 2.99, respectively. Similarly, the average ACT scores of OHLAP participants are higher than both the state and national averages.²⁵

College-Going Rates and High College Success

OHLAP high school graduates enrol in college immediately following graduation at a higher rate than do all Oklahoma graduates — 80 per cent (2000) compared to 55 per cent (1999). OHLAP participants who enrol in college also appear to have lower rates of remediation, higher college GPAs and higher rates of persistence (although the effect of the latter drops off over time) than all students.

While the numbers are preliminary, college completion rates of prior OHLAP participants appear to indicate high completion rates. Forty-seven per cent of the 1996 OHLAP class completed baccalaureate and/or associate degrees within five years; this compares to about 33 per cent of all students that begin as first-time, full-time freshman.

Oklahoma GEAR UP Program

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education received a **GEAR UP State Grant** in FY 1999. The state GEAR UP program has several components, including an Early Intervention Component, which provides funding to local schools to increase capacity building and technical assistance efforts,

24. Numbers differ between completion rates and scholarship awards since students have three years to enrol in college and receive a scholarship.

as well as partnerships to enhance college preparatory services; and a Public Awareness Component, through which students, parents, school officials and the public are working to plan for college. The college readiness component of GEAR UP builds upon the implementation of the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) for test preparation (in collaboration with ACT, Inc.). In addition, part of the GEAR UP program is a supplemental scholarship for students who enrol in and complete the OHLAP program, called **OHLAP-Plus**. OHLAP-Plus allows eligible OHLAP students (i.e., those who receive a federal Pell grant and have remaining unmet need) to double the amount of their regular OHLAP scholarship.²⁶

Eligibility: The GEAR UP program as a whole targets students in grades 5–12. To be eligible for OHLAP-Plus, students must receive a regular OHLAP award, a Pell grant award and have remaining unmet need. In addition, the student must enrol in college within three years of high school graduation and maintain good grades.

Origin and Size: The GEAR UP program began in FY 1999. Almost 800 students received the supplemental OHLAP-Plus scholarship. A much larger number of Oklahoma students and parents are affected by the awareness and support activities.

Funding: The OHLAP-Plus GEAR UP scholarship represents roughly one half of the total \$20.5 million GEAR UP grant (over five years).

Program Oversight and Administration: The Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education oversees the entire program. There are five regional coordinators assigned to assist school districts in the implementation of the program.

Evaluation and Outcomes: In 2000–01, nearly two-thirds (68 per cent) of OHLAP students received an OHLAP-Plus award; Pell-eligible OHLAP students attending higher priced

institutions were most likely to receive the OHLAP-Plus awards (Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education 2002).

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education

The Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education aims to encourage low-income students to stay in school and prepare for higher education. It is one of the state early intervention programs administered by a non-profit organization in a public/private partnership. The Crusade targets elementary school students, beginning in the third grade. Crusaders are expected to avoid drugs, early parenthood and any problems with the law. The program provides long-term support programs (3rd through 12th grade) and scholarships to all who financially qualify as incentives for at-risk students to stay in school. It has partnered with the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority to administer these scholarships. The first class of Crusaders enrolled as third graders in 1991 and graduated high school in 2001.

Long-term support differs by educational level (elementary, middle and high). In the elementary grades, Crusaders participate in a number of in-school and after-school literacy activities. They are supported by Crusade AmeriCorps members who are assigned to their schools, and who offer assistance in classes, organize community service and other activities, and remind Crusaders of their pledge and college opportunities. AmeriCorps staff conduct assessments of sixth grade Crusaders' strengths and weaknesses in preparation for middle school.

In middle school, the Crusade places advisors to support and encourage Crusaders to do well in school and plan for college.

26. Due to the growth of the OHLAP program, beginning in Fall 2002, the OHLAP-Plus Award will be limited to OHLAP/Pell students with an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of \$1,000 or less.

These advisors monitor attendance and grades and link students to tutoring and other academic support programs. Special programs that help students with self-confidence, communication and interaction are also offered at this level.

In high schools, advisors distribute information, connect Crusaders to programs (i.e., tutoring, college entrance exam practice, college visits and career option workshops), and instruct them in choosing college preparatory courses. During their junior and senior years, advisors help Crusaders and their families identify colleges and apply for admission and financial aid.

Eligibility: Third graders in designated “Crusader” schools are eligible to participate in the program. Crusaders must take a pledge (see above). Each year a new class is added.

Origin and Size: The program started in 1989. Five hundred students a year (maximum) are added in the 3rd grade.²⁷ In 2000–01, 17,000 students between grades 3 through 12 participated in the program.

Funding: The Crusade received funding under NEISP and now receives GEAR UP funding.²⁸ It is estimated that federal funding for the program is \$2.1 million, state funding is \$1.7 million and other external private funding around \$1.6 million.

Program Oversight and Administration: The Rhode Island Office of Higher Education oversees the program. It is administered by the Rhode Island Children’s Crusade and the Rhode Island Education Assistance Authority.

Evaluation and Outcomes: The Nellie Mae Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation funded an evaluation study of the Crusade,

which was conducted by a team of researchers at Brandeis University’s Centre for Youth and Communities between November 2000 and December 2001. Data was collected by reviewing Crusade documents (including previous evaluations), through interviews with Crusade staff, Board members and school system representatives, surveys of school personnel, a survey sent to approximately 2,000 Crusaders (25 per cent responded), the Crusade’s Management Information Services (MIS), the Rhode Island schools data (SALT) and literature reviews of college access programs.²⁹ The following information, data, recommendations and established practices come from the final evaluation report (Stone et al. 2002).

The report looks at two distinct time periods within the Crusade — from 1989 to 1994 (the “first Crusade”), and from 1994 to the present (the “second Crusade”). Between 1994 and 1996, the Crusade was redefined and restructured under the new leadership of the current executive director, Mary Harrison. In order to “save” the program, which had promised to do “too much with so little in the bank,” the Crusade decided to change its framework in three substantial ways: it limited the number of children enrolled annually in the 3rd grade to 500 students, students would be targeted in the most economically in-need school districts (those schools that had the highest rates of students qualifying for the school lunch program) and the program would provide enriched and targeted services that were oriented to students’ changing academic needs as they moved from elementary to middle school to high school

27. The actual number of Crusaders enrolling each year has varied from 50 to 200 students since the Crusade attempts to enrol and service entire grades of students.

28. The Rhode Island Office of Higher Education received a GEAR UP State Grant in FY 1999. The grant also supports the growth of the College Access Alliance of Rhode Island, a new organization that will coordinate activities of the state’s various college access programs.

29. The MIS provides data on random samples of 200 target-district Crusaders from each of the three cohorts (7th, 9th and 12th graders). Since there were limitations to this data, the evaluators followed a jointly developed list of variables to “fill in the blanks” as best as possible. The SALT data are limited in their usefulness for the current evaluation.

completion.³⁰ For example, the Crusade provided 34 hours per year of activity participation to those in the current 7th grade cohort — three and a half times as many hours per year in comparison with those currently in the 12th and 9th grade cohorts (9.5 and 9.6 hours, respectively).

In evaluating the “new” Crusade, service providers were surveyed in 17 elementary and 36 middle and high schools. They indicated that the Crusade was beneficial to their schools, and even though there was some criticism, overall, “they wanted more Crusade,” and not less. One of the main concerns of the service providers was the inclusion of AmeriCorps program volunteers. Since these volunteers were temporary, but needed to be trained appropriately to the high standards of the Crusade, it put an administrative burden on the advisors in the schools responsible for the training. In addition, advisors are responsible for the “front-line” attention, assessment and support to Crusades — a daunting task especially in middle school where the Crusaders are more dispersed throughout the schools. Steps have been taken by the Crusade to remedy this problem, including the hiring of eight more advisors for the 2001–02 school year and two MIS staff who will handle the bulk of the data collection responsibilities.

The evaluation targeted three cohorts of Crusaders: students who entered 7th, 9th and 12th grades in the 2000–01 school year.³¹ According to the Crusader’s survey responses by cohort, almost all students were in their expected grades, and the majority of Crusaders in all cohorts were female. The

minority participation rate ranges from 63 per cent in the 12th grade cohort to 67 per cent in the 9th grades and 79 per cent in the 7th grade cohort (there has been a shift toward greater minority representation in more recent cohorts, primarily due to an increase in Hispanic representation). Between a third and a half of all Crusaders live in homes where English is not the primary language, and the group as a whole is quite mobile, especially the 7th grade cohort, in which 37 per cent have moved twice in the past four years.

The evaluation found that 7th grade survey respondents — the lead cohort of the “second Crusade” and therefore the cohort experiencing the new framework for the longest period of time — were more likely to say that they were active in the Crusade, were satisfied in the program and would encourage 3rd graders to join the program, compared with their 9th and 12th grade counterparts. For example, when students were asked to assess their activity in the program, only 17 per cent and 16 per cent of 12th and 9th grade respondents, respectively, reported that they were very active Crusaders, compared to 44 per cent of their 7th grade counterparts. Similarly, when students were asked whether they were satisfied with the program, almost half (46 per cent) of 7th graders reported that they were “very satisfied” with the program, more than twice as high as the percentages of 9th and 12th graders. Nonetheless, the majority of students across all cohorts said that they would encourage 3rd graders to join the program (95 per cent of 7th graders, 86 per cent of 9th graders and 81 per cent of 12th graders).

30. Prior to the final reorganization in 1996, the program served a substantially larger number of students. For example, in 1991, approximately 2,800 3rd graders signed up for the program and after that, annual enrolment was over 3,300 until the 1995–96 school year. Around the same time as the reorganization, the Crusade was awarded a federal NEISP grant in 1995–1996 and a GEAR UP grant in FY 1999, which provided a “federal boost” to the programmatic elements to the program and enhanced the program’s status in the eyes of the state and private funders. In fact, the Crusade was one of 12 programs used as model for GEAR UP.

31. There are limitations to the quantitative data. Services to students vary over time and the experiences of the students are different. Therefore, the study diversified its data collection methods in order to assess the program properly. The differences reported below should be interpreted with caution, for example, without longitudinal data, it is uncertain whether 12th graders’ assessments would have been as positive when they were in 7th grade as the assessments of present 7th graders. See the final report for more discussion of methodological issues.

With respect to college attendance, 89 per cent of 12th graders have taken the SAT, with 89 per cent of them reporting having applied to one or more two- or four-year colleges. Seventy per cent of 12th graders and 53 per cent of 9th graders are earning As and Bs, and most report that they have taken college preparatory classes. Eighty-nine per cent of 12th graders and 83 per cent of 9th graders expect to graduate from a four-year college.

The students also were asked about the effects of the program on school success (i.e., doing well in school, graduating from high school), college plans (i.e., likelihood of attendance, application for scholarships) and life skills (i.e., self-confidence, leadership, being a team player and decision making).³² Approximately 82 per cent of 7th graders said that the program had a “big positive” effect on their ability to do well in school, compared to around 58 per cent of 9th graders and 38 per cent of 12th graders. Similarly, 84 per cent of the 7th grade cohort responded that they were likely to go to college compared to 65 per cent of the 9th grade cohort and 46 per cent of the 12th grade respondents. Again, the 7th grade cohort responded that the program had a “big positive” impact when compared to the 9th and 12th graders. Three-quarters of 7th graders responded that the program had a “big” effect on their self-confidence compared to 54 per cent and 37 per cent of the 9th and 12th grade respondents, respectively.

Furthermore, Crusaders were asked what factors influenced their level of participation in the program. Both 7th and 9th graders rated scholarship availability (around 95 per cent) as their number one influence, while 12th graders indicated that encouragement from their family was the biggest influence, with scholarship availability following close behind (83 per cent and 81 per cent, respectively).

The evaluation made the following recommendations, among others: continue with a capped-enrolment, targeted approach; increase individual attention; continue the scholarship incentive; alter the language of the pledge to reflect achievement and eliminate proof of compliance for scholarship eligibility; and continue to improve data collection.

Vermont

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)

The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) is a quasi-public, non-profit organization established by the state legislature in 1965. VSAC provides state financial aid (including need-based grants, loans and scholarships), career and education planning, and general information about how to obtain higher education and training. In 1969, VSAC recognized that support services were needed in addition to financial aid, resulting in the **Outreach Programs** to help all Vermonters pursue educational training beyond high school. Over the years, the Outreach Programs have grown to not only offer help to all Vermonters, but also target economically and educationally disadvantaged adults and students through federal funding that supports specific portions of its outreach activities. These intervention programs are state-directed but primarily federally funded.

VSAC provides education and career information and counselling in many areas, all under the banner of the Outreach Programs. The Outreach Programs provide services for students, families and adults looking to pursue higher education or develop their careers. For example, post-secondary education preparation services are available for students in grades 6–12 and their families. Early college planning services for parents of

32. Ratings on a five-point-scale ranged from “big positive” to “big negative.”

young children and for middle school students and their families are provided. Low-income, first-generation college students receive special assistance via federal TRIO and GEAR UP programs. A lending library is available with more than 2,100 books, videos, periodicals, tapes and computer software to assist with financial aid, college and career decisions.

In addition, career development services are offered to adults and training for school counsellors and other professionals all under the Outreach Programs. Career, educational, and financial aid counselling and information services for adults are available through individual appointments and workshops. Statewide career development sessions are offered, which are held through curriculum and workshops for students and professionals as part of the Vermont School-to-Work initiative. Regional career fairs are also held with schools and businesses.

VSAC received a **GEAR UP State Grant** in FY 1999 to provide early intervention, school improvement strategies, mentoring, support services and scholarships to needy Vermont students and schools. The grant has since been supplemented with a grant from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation to create an Academic Enhancement Program (designed by the Vermont Department of Education, including academic tutoring to middle school students), since academic deficits among many GEAR UP students were preventing them from taking full advantage of GEAR UP resources and services.

Eligibility: Any resident of the state of Vermont, particularly low-income, first-generation students and their families (depending on the specific service).

Origin and Size: VSAC was established in 1965. In FY 1999, VSAC had "contact" with 8,049 middle school students, 19,359 high school students and 16,075 adults.

Funding: Funding is derived primarily from the federal government and private foundations.

Program Oversight and Administration: VSAC and the Vermont legislature oversee the programs, while VSAC administers them.

Evaluation and Outcomes: VSAC has conducted a survey of Vermont high school seniors since 1978. The graduating high school class of 1999 was most recently surveyed.³³ The survey found increases in the number of students wanting to pursue higher education and high rates of college participation. In addition, the graduates expressed their opinions on the effectiveness of VSAC Outreach programs (VSAC 2000).

The percentage of all seniors who planned to continue their education within six months after graduation (aspiration rate), as well as the percentage of seniors who actually do continue their education (continuation rate), increased by about 20 percentage points between 1978 and 1998. In 1998, 73 per cent of seniors planned to continue, and 65 per cent of seniors did continue. In addition, 79 per cent of Outreach students graduating from high school in 1998 did in fact continue their education.

Fifty-two per cent of seniors who planned to continue their education reported that they first received post-secondary education information in the 10–12th grades. Sixty-three per cent felt they would have benefited from receiving this information earlier (prior to 10th grade). Among career-bound seniors, 19 per cent reported they never received any information about post-secondary education. Ninety-two per cent of education-bound seniors rated the information they received as "very" or "somewhat" useful, though 48 per cent would have liked more one-on-one counselling.

33. More than 5,600 Vermont seniors (84 per cent) completed the survey; since not all Vermont's seniors completed the survey, the data may be subject to non-response bias. An analysis of non-responding seniors in the class of 2000 is planned and has been done in prior years. A more detailed survey methodology and margin of error is available in the Vermont Senior Survey report.

Evidence shows that education-bound seniors are becoming aware of VSAC at earlier ages; in 1999, 16 per cent first learned of VSAC prior to high school, compared to six per cent in 1988. Only seven per cent of education-bound 1999 seniors had never heard of VSAC. Among career-bound seniors, 21 per cent had never heard of VSAC.

Washington

The Governor of the state of Washington received a **GEAR UP State Grant** in FY 1999, which is administered by the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board in partnership with the University of Washington (UW) and several local organizations. The state GEAR UP grant includes two components:

- The **GEAR UP Scholars Project**³⁴ (see below), which began in 1994 with funding from NEISP and is now partially funded through GEAR UP; and
- The **State and Partnership Coordination Project**, which provides a variety of services to support the efforts of local GEAR UP programs, including: annual week-long summer institutes at UW for up to 1,000 GEAR UP participants, administrators and partners; providing students with exposure to campus life; curriculum transformation to improve teaching and increase academic performance at the K-12 level; college planning publications; professional development activities; and UW outreach partners — graduate and undergraduate assistants who will provide year-round support to GEAR UP students, parents and professional staff.

GEAR UP Scholars Project

The GEAR UP Scholars Project provides long-term, year-round support to motivate and prepare students to enrol in post-secondary education. All successful Scholars will receive scholarships for up to four years

at a Washington State institution. The GEAR UP Scholars participate in 150 hours or more a year in program activities, such as academic planning, tutoring, advising, awareness activities and mentoring. A family sponsor component is also required in order to encourage parent or program sponsors to take part in activities at a minimum of 40 hours a year. In addition, 320 students from the 10th to 12th grades are selected as GEAR UP Scholars Project Ambassadors, assuming leadership and service responsibilities within the program (HECB 2001).

Eligibility: Most participants in grades 7–12 are classified as “priority” students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, or are low-income. The rest are teen parents, limited English proficient, first generation or are at least one grade level behind in math or reading. Scholars are located in partnering schools and communities that demonstrate the most need.

Origin and Size: The program started in 1994. It operates in five former NEISP sites and seven newly identified communities and serves 1,200 low-income middle and high school students in grades 7–12 (up to 150 in each community).

Funding: Federal funding is \$15.5 million over 5 years for both the Scholars Project and the State and Partnership Coordination Project (through a state GEAR UP grant in FY 1999), and is matched by state funding averaging \$15.8 million (over 5 years).

Program Oversight and Administration: The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) oversees and administers the program on behalf of the Governor, with sub-awards being allocated to the University of Washington and the seven local entities that administer local Scholars Projects in 12 communities.

Evaluation and Outcomes: The program is currently being evaluated.

34. The GEAR UP Scholars Project should not be confused with the Washington Scholars Program. The Washington Scholars Program is not an early intervention program, but rather a merit-based scholarship program for high achieving students.

Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Education Opportunity Programs (WEOP) section of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction seeks out students with college potential and encourages them to continue on to higher education. This is achieved through statewide aid programs, academic counselling, setting educational goals, applying for pre-college programs and identifying college information. Assistance comes through the programs listed below (among other programs administered by WEOP). Some of these programs started under NEISP, and are now funded through GEAR UP; the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction was awarded a GEAR UP State Grant in FY 1999. WEOP has seven statewide offices: Ashland, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee, Racine and Wausau.

Early Identification Program (EIP)

The Early Identification Program (EIP) works to provide educationally and economically disadvantaged students with the necessary information and skills to graduate from high school and enter college. The program concentrates on academic enrichment and curriculum guidance, skill building, career development and preparation, and opportunities to develop talents and abilities that might otherwise go unnoticed. In addition, information about financial aid and assistance with the college application process is provided. WEOP counsellors are assigned to assist students with academic problems at an early stage and parents are also involved early on to discuss their children's educational and career aspirations. Students of colour and economically disadvantaged students are involved with EIP for four to five years and receive additional support throughout high school.

Students who graduate from high school and who have participated in EIP are given higher consideration for the state Talent Incentive Program (TIP) grant. TIP provides grant awards to low-income/disadvantaged students with limited financial resources. Through WEOP, TIP awards of \$600 to \$1,800 are made to first-time post-secondary education students. For 2000–01, 68 per cent of students who received awards were dependent students, the average award was \$1,324 and approximately 78 per cent of students awarded were minority students.

Eligibility: Students in grades 6 through 12 (in a targeted school) are selected from all academic levels (high potential group: 4.0 to 3.0 GPA, marginal group: 2.99 to 2.00 GPA, and probationary group: lower than 2.0 GPA but who show potential). The greatest portion of students selected by guidance counsellors are found in the marginal or probationary group.

Origin and Size: Approximately 4,000 students participate in EIP, which was established in 1982.

Funding: The program receives primarily state funds, in addition to support by private businesses. It also receives some money under the federal GEAR UP and Talent Search programs.

Program Oversight and Administration: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction oversees and administers the program.

Evaluation and Outcomes: According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, evaluations have been done in the past, but the data are now outdated and do not provide an accurate portrayal of the program's success.

Minority Pre-college Scholarship Program

The Minority Pre-college Scholarship Program provides funding for minority students in grades 6 through 12 to attend pre-college courses at post-secondary campuses throughout the state in order to encourage them to begin thinking about college. The student's scholarship pays the cost of the course, books, supplies and room and board. The post-secondary pre-college programs are aimed at increasing academic skills, building self-confidence, increasing the ability to manage new challenges, and showing how to be successful in college and a career.

Eligibility: Minority students in grades 6 through 12 must be accepted first in one of the pre-college post-secondary programs in Wisconsin to be eligible.

Origin and Size: This program, started in 1985, funds approximately 6,600 students per year; more than 40,000 students have "enjoyed their first taste of higher education" since the program's inception.

Funding: In FY 2000–01, it is estimated that the state contributed \$2 million to the program, the federal government (through GEAR UP), \$100,000; and institutions, \$1 million.

Program Oversight and Administration: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction oversees and administers the program. The pre-college programs are delivered on site at post-secondary institutions.

Evaluation and Outcomes: The program is in the process of being formally evaluated by the University of Wisconsin system. Currently, the state office in Milwaukee is the only WEOP office that has evaluated its programs.

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