



GEAR UP

(Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs)

Beginning with the 2021 – 2022 school year, Project GRAD Akron will be supporting all 6th and 7th grade students at **Buchtel, East, Innes, and Jennings CLC as they** begin their **GEAR UP** journey through **AIM HIGH AKRON/GEAR UP**. For 7 years, this cohort of approximately 1,500 students will be provided with numerous programs and services throughout middle and high school in preparation to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. AIM HIGH AKRON GEAR UP will follow the students to the following high schools, Buchtel, East, Garfield, and North, and their first year of college or post-secondary institutions.

Project GRAD Akron is the **Lead Partner** with **Akron Public Schools** for the GEAR UP Program, which is a federal program through the US Department of Education, and the third highest grant in the history of the Akron Public Schools. More than \$7 million has been earmarked in the grant to support the students, families, and schools with this program.

As the Lead Partner, Project GRAD Akron will begin working with students in 6th Grade (2021 – 2022) through an exciting program called **Kids2College** (K2C). Beginning in 7th grade and each year following through 12th grade and freshman year in college, students will participate in **College and Central**, (Project GRAD Akron’s signature college readiness and access program), for 7th through 12th grade students and **GRADs Persist** for postsecondary students.

Kids2College: This program is provided by **Project GRAD Akron** as a component of **AIM HIGH AKRON/GEAR UP**. As a part of this program, students will learn about different education and career options and the steps they need to take to prepare themselves for college.

College and Career Central: College and Career Central (7th – 12th grades) will provide students and families with the information, knowledge, resources, and skills to be **READY** for life after high school graduation.

The program model is designed to prepare all students grades 6th through 12th with college and career readiness services incorporating interconnected key concepts utilizing

evidence-based practices. From early outreach to high school graduation, students work through the key concepts and gain more exposure and greater understanding each year as they develop and refine their “My Plan”. The program design is based on best practices in the area of college and career readiness and success.

GRADs Persist, provides continuing outreach and support services to college students to assist them in achieving their post-secondary pursuits.

Mentoring: Beginning in 8th grade, AIM HIGH Akron GEAR UP students will begin receiving mentoring services. Over the GEAR UP years students will receive group mentoring, peer mentoring, and in 11th and 12th grades, students will be matched with a community volunteer mentor for traditional mentoring services.

College Visits, Summer Programs, and Cultural Events: Throughout the seven years, students and families will have many opportunities to engage with auxiliary services and programming, including: family college visits, summer programming for students with parent engagement activities both school-based and community-based offerings, and numerous cultural events hosted by community arts and cultural organizations.

For more information about PGA’s involvement, please contact Project GRAD staff at 330-761-7952 or via email at info@projectgradakron.org.