

**Agenda Item:** IV.

**DATE:** January 29, 2009

**SUBJECT:** GEAR UP TN Status Report

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Information

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** In September 2005, the state of Tennessee was awarded a \$21 million federal discretionary grant by the U.S. Department of Education, known as Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). GEAR UP provides resources to assist state efforts to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Partnering together in the development and implementation of GEAR UP Tennessee (GEAR UP TN) are the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Board of Regents, University of Tennessee System, along with a host of other consultants and local/regional partnerships. GEAR UP TN funds are also used to provide incentive awards to students graduating from the high schools served and scholarships to low-income students in the cohort.

GEAR UP TN staff will provide a summary of the grant and updates of direct services and statewide activities. Staff will also provide an update on the College Access Challenge Grant.