



Appalachian State GEAR UP Partnership 2011 High School Graduates' Postsecondary Enrollment Results

Appalachian State GEAR UP Partnership: An Overview

GEAR UP (a partnership GEAR UP grant) was funded in 2005 and served 3 school districts in North Carolina, which were identified as having at least 50% of students receiving free- or reduced-price lunch at their target middle schools. The goal of the program is to increase the number of students who graduate from high school and enroll in postsecondary education. To accomplish these goals, a variety of interventions (which are outlined in Table 1 below) were provided to students and their family members. GEAR UP served students in 9th through 12th grades during the 2010-2011 academic year, the final year of the program. The first cohort of students included 599 seniors, of those 497 (83%) graduated and of those 387 (78%) enrolled in postsecondary education.

The Appalachian State GEAR UP Partnership was administered through Appalachian State University. GEAR UP contracted with Alleghany, Avery, and Burke County Schools to fund a full-time coordinator position in each school district that was responsible for providing interventions and services to students and parents. The contracts also provided funding for the intervention services. Throughout the six-year program, GEAR UP provided financial and programmatic oversight and evaluation services to the target schools. See Table 1 for a list of GEAR UP services provided to students and parents.

Table 1: *GEAR UP Student and Parent Services*

GEAR UP Student Services	GEAR UP Parent Services
1. Tutoring and academic enrichment	1. Workshops
2. Computer skills training	2. Counseling/advising
3. Mentoring	3. College visits
4. Counseling, advising, career planning, and academic planning	4. Family events
5. College visits	
6. Job site visits and shadowing	
7. Summer enrichment programs	
8. Educational field trips	
9. Workshops	
10. Family events	
11. Cultural events	

GEAR UP is based on a grade cohort approach. The program began with all 6th graders in participating middle schools in 2005. It is the school, not the student, that qualifies for the program, so all students in the identified cohort are considered GEAR UP students. However, students and parents were targeted and/or self-selected to participate in specific services. For the first years of the program, a 6th grade cohort was added to the model and, beginning in year five, as outlined below, the four cohorts were



followed through the end of the six-year project. In 2011, Appalachian State GEAR UP Partnership’s first cohort of students graduated from high school and enrolled in postsecondary education.

Grades served by year are therefore as follows:

Year 01 (2005-2006)	6 th and 7 th grades
Year 02 (2006-2007)	6 th , 7 th , and 8 th grades
Year 03 (2007-2008)	6 th , 7 th , 8 th , and 9 th grades
Year 04 (2008-2009)	7 th , 8 th , 9 th , and 10 th grades
Year 05 (2009-2010)	8 th , 9 th , 10 th , and 11 th grades
Year 06 (2010-2011)	9 th , 10 th , 11 th , and 12 th grades
No-Cost Extension (2011-2012)	10 th , 11 th , and 12 th grades

Individual student’s high school graduation status was collected through a partnership with the North Carolina Department of Instruction. Similarly, individual student’s postsecondary enrollment was analyzed through enrollment verification from the National Student Clearinghouse. Data was collected and analyzed throughout the project to ensure formative data-driven decisions were in place to drive programming. Thus, outcomes from GEAR UP could be used to drive college access programming in the region through future projects.

2011-2012 Postsecondary Enrollment Results

GEAR UP Partnership schools ultimately outpaced the state in increasing high school graduation rates during the last six years. In 2005-06, 68.7% of students graduated from high school in NC compared to 61% of GEAR UP students. By 2010-11 school year, NC averaged 77.9% students graduating compared to 83% of GEAR UP Partnership students. That is a 36 percent increase over six years, compared to a 13.3 percent increase that the state of North Carolina experienced in the same time period.

In addition to successfully increasing the percent of students who are graduating from high school, GEAR UP Partnership schools drastically increased the percent of students who are enrolling in college after high school graduation. Baseline data, collected from two years of student enrollment data before GEAR UP services began, show 63.2% of students graduated from high school and enrolled in a 2 or 4-year postsecondary education. The first cohort of students to enter postsecondary education showed an enrollment rate of 78%. This represents a 23.4% increase in postsecondary enrollment. In summary, not only has the pool of students who are *eligible* to enroll in postsecondary education increased through improved high school graduation rates, but, even with that growth, GEAR UP Partnership schools have increased the percent of students who *are* enrolling in postsecondary education.

See Figures 1-7 below for results on Overall Postsecondary Enrollment, The University of North Carolina Postsecondary Enrollment, North Carolina Community College System Postsecondary Enrollment, and comparisons within Burke County.

Of the 2011 high school graduates that enrolled in postsecondary education, 61% enrolled at a 2-year institution and 39% enrolled at a 4-year institution. In addition, 91% of students who enrolled in postsecondary education enrolled in North Carolina. Finally, 90% of students enrolled in a public institution vs. a private.

Figure 1: *Postsecondary Enrollment 2-year vs. 4-year*

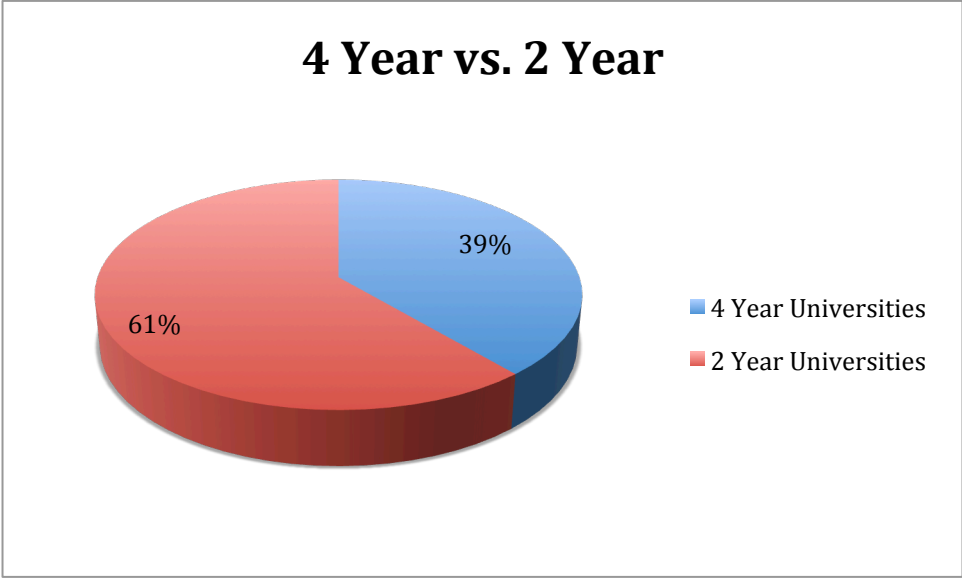


Figure 2: Overall Postsecondary Enrollment Public vs. Private

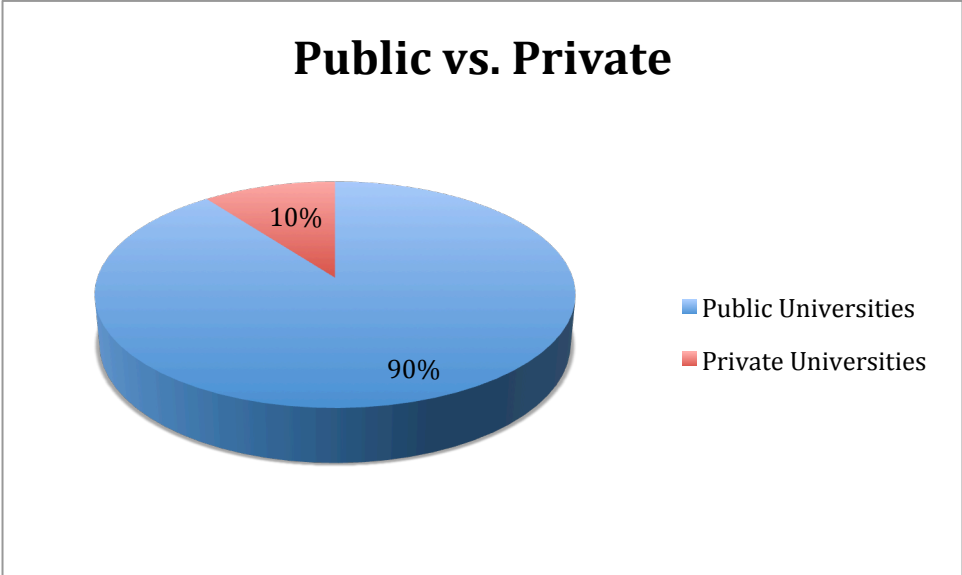


Figure 3: Overall Postsecondary Enrollment In-State vs. Out-of-State

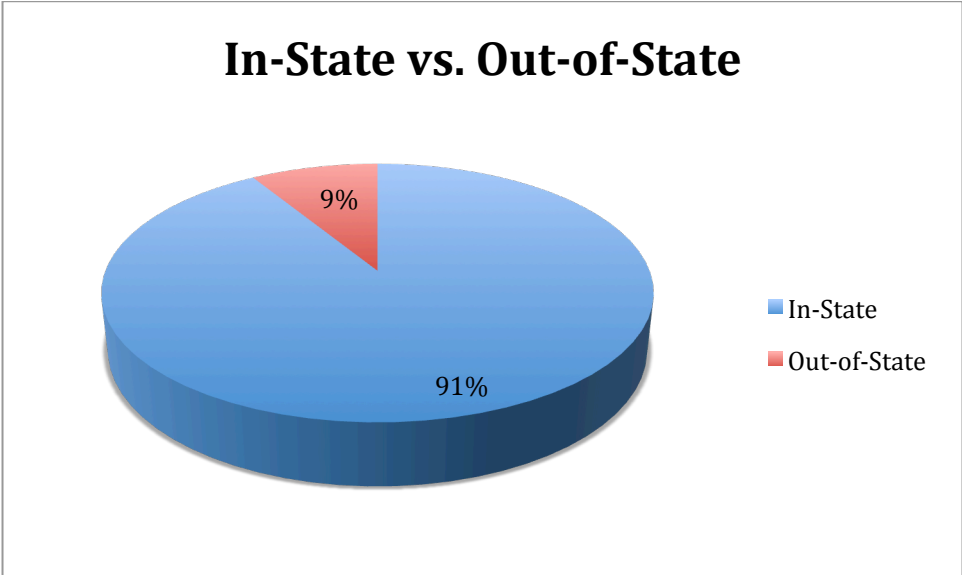




Figure 4 illustrates the breakdown of GEAR UP Partnership student enrollment, by institution, for the University of North Carolina System. Of the 39% of students attending a 4-year university 57.6% attended a UNC system school.

Figure 4: *The University of North Carolina Enrollment*

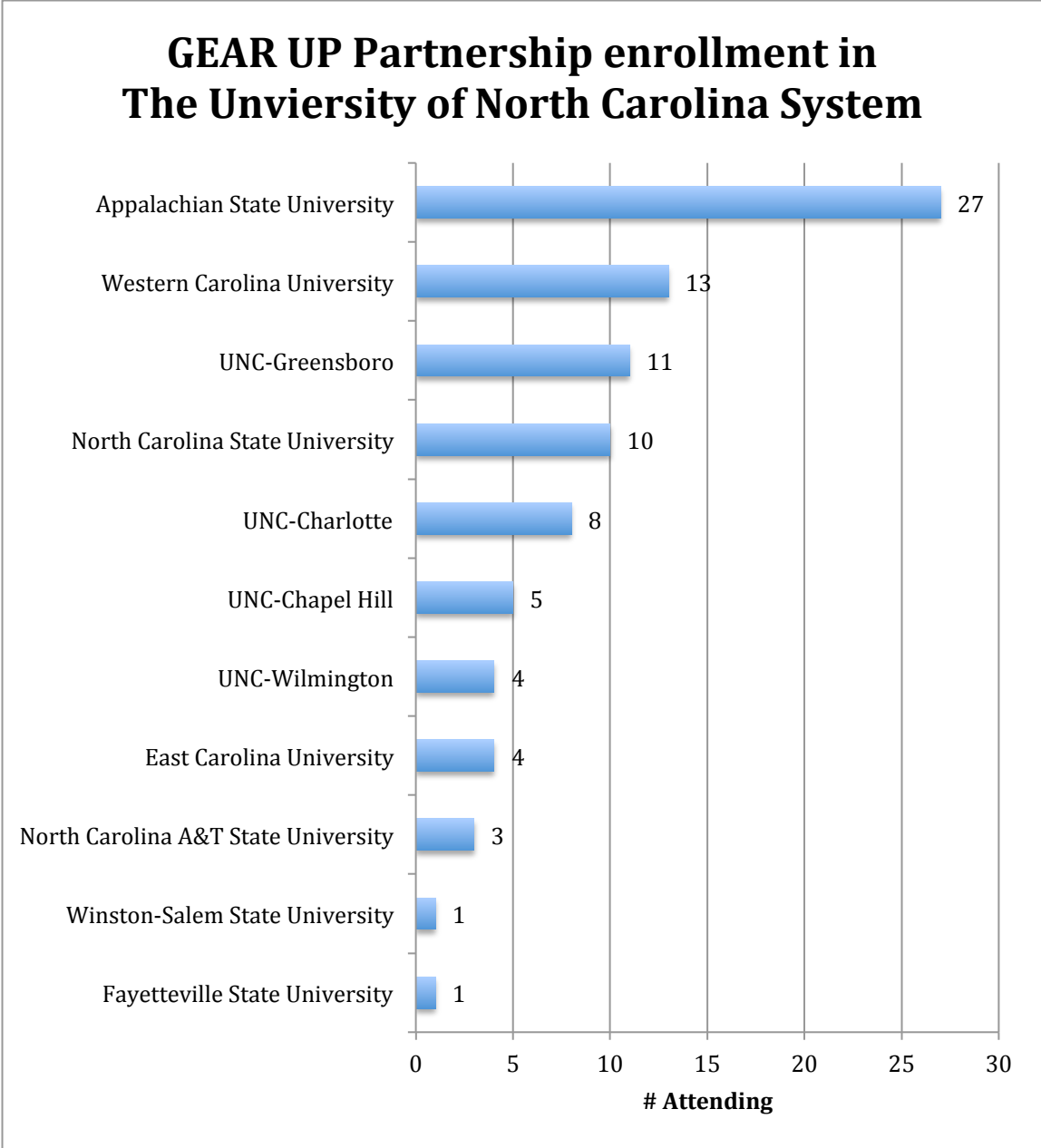


Figure 5 illustrates the breakdown of student enrollment, by institution, at the North Carolina Community College System.

Figure 5: North Carolina Community College System Postsecondary Enrollment

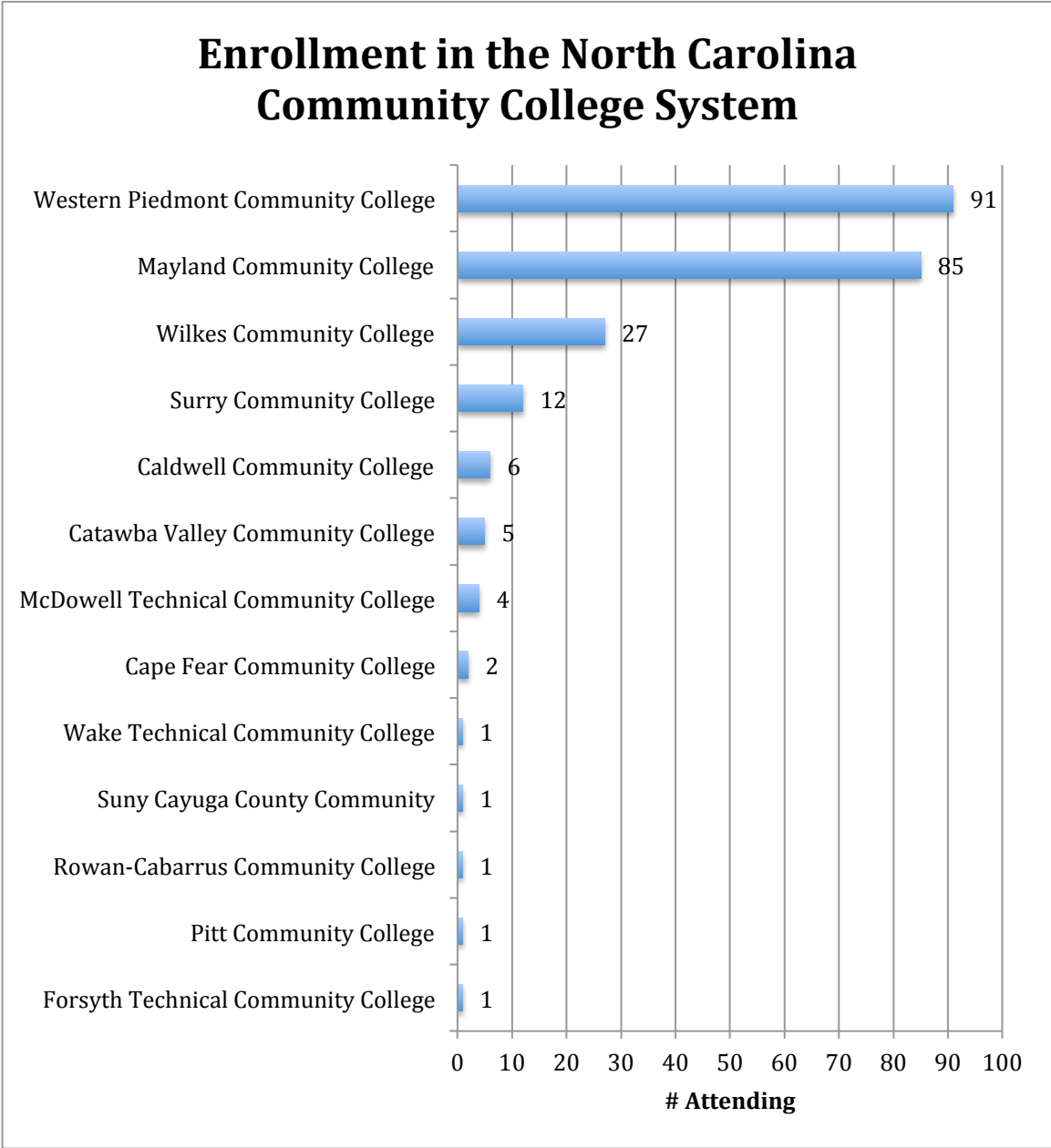




Figure 6 illustrates even further a comparison between a GEAR UP Partnership school and a non-GEAR UP Partnership school within the same county. Burke County has four high schools but only Freedom High was served by GEAR UP. Both East Burke High School (EBHS) and Freedom High School (FHS) have similar demographics as well as similar graduation rates.

Figure 6: *GEAR UP vs. Non-GEAR UP Postsecondary Enrollment Rates*

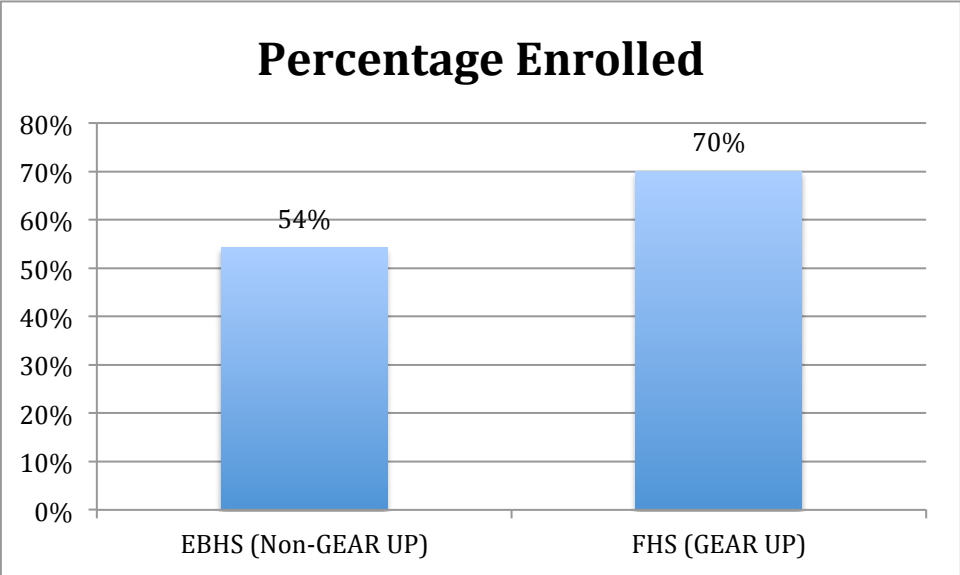




Figure 7 also illustrates differences in college application during NC College Application Week within Burke County. Note Freedom high school is a GEAR UP Partnership school while GEAR UP did not serve the others.

Figure 7: *College Application Comparison in Burke County*

