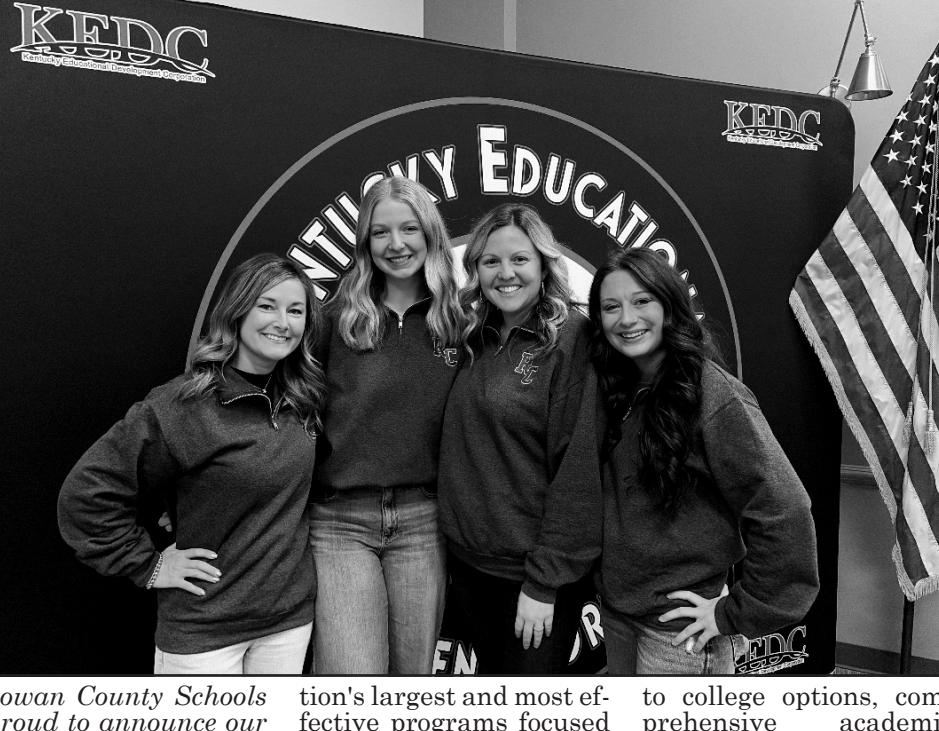


COMMUNITY

Preparing Students for Success through Mentoring, Readiness and Wellness

ROWAN COUNTY SCHOOLS JOINS GEAR UP ELEVATE: UNLOCKING POTENTIAL FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES



Rowan County Schools is proud to announce our participation in GEAR UP ELEVATE, a transformational college and career readiness initiative made possible through a competitive federal GEAR UP Partnership Grant awarded to the Kentucky Educational Development Corporation (KEDC). This multi-year program will provide our middle and high school students with unprecedented opportunities to explore pathways to college, career, and lifelong success.

What is GEAR UP?
The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative is one of the na-

tion's largest and most effective programs focused on increasing college and career readiness for students in underserved communities. Through this highly competitive grant program, KEDC has brought together a powerful partnership of K-12 schools, higher education institutions, state agencies, and community organizations.

Our Vision: ELEVATE

The overarching goal of KEDC's ELEVATE GEAR UP project is to increase postsecondary access and success for underserved students by improving their social-emotional learning, academic achievement, and career development. Through early exposure

to college options, comprehensive academic support, and financial aid guidance, we aim to inspire and equip our students and their families to pursue higher education with confidence.

Rowan County Schools is one of twelve districts across eastern and central Kentucky selected to participate in this transformative initiative. Together, we will create lasting change in postsecondary access and success for our students.

A Network of Support

ELEVATE brings together an impressive array of partners dedicated to student success. Our higher education partners include Morehead State University

Ashland Community & Technical College (ACTC), Hazard Community & Technical College (HCTC), Maysville Community & Technical College (MCTC), and Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College (SKCTC).

We are also collaborating with vital statewide and national partners including the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA), the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, NCCEP, Mastery Prep, WhyTry, Pathways, the Kentucky Writing Project, and the Kentucky Center for Mathematics. Each partner contributes unique expertise, mentorship, and resources to help our students thrive.

Three Strategic Goals

GEAR UP ELEVATE is built around three core objectives:

Goal #1: Increasing Postsecondary Expectations and Readiness.

We will help students develop the academic skills, confidence, and mindset needed to succeed in college and career.

Goal #2: Improving High School Graduation and Postsecondary Enrollment Rates.

Through targeted support and mentoring, we will guide more students across the graduation stage and into their next chapter.

Goal #3: Raising Knowledge of Postsecondary Options,

Preparation, and Financing. Students and families will gain crucial information about college choices, preparation strategies, and financial aid resources, removing barriers to higher education.

What ELEVATE Means for Our Students

Through GEAR UP ELEVATE, Rowan County students will benefit from:

• College and Career Exploration:

hands-on experiences that help students discover their interests and potential career paths

• Financial Literacy Awareness:

practical knowledge about managing money, understanding financial aid, and planning for college costs

• Increased Postsecondary Enrollment:

personalized support to help students take the crucial step from high school to college

• Increased Postsecondary Completion:

ongoing resources and mentorship to ensure students don't just start college, they finish it

Meet Our GEAR UP ELEVATE Success Coaches

At the heart of the ELEVATE program are dedicated Success Coaches who will work directly with 6th and 7th grade students, providing personalized guidance, mentorship, and support. Rowan County Schools is fortunate to have four ex-

ceptional Success Coaches leading this initiative:

- Chelsea Burton
- Casey Razor
- Jaiden McKenzie
- Deanna Kissick

These coaches will serve as trusted advisors and advocates for our students, helping them navigate the path to college and career readiness. Whether students need help exploring college options, preparing for standardized tests, understanding financial aid, or simply finding encouragement along the way, our Success Coaches will be there every step of the journey.

Growing Together

GEAR UP ELEVATE represents an extraordinary opportunity for Rowan County Schools. It's more than a grant; it's a commitment to our students' futures and a promise that with the right support, guidance, and opportunities, every student can achieve their dreams of higher education and career success.

For more information about GEAR UP ELEVATE and how your student can get involved, please contact your school counselor or visit the KEDC ELEVATE Website - elevategearup.kedc.org/

Together, we are elevating expectations, expanding opportunities, and empowering the next generation of Rowan County leaders.

UK Healthcare
cont. on pg. 6

UK HealthCare highlights 18 months of UK St. Claire integration, expanding care and workforce

After more than six decades of collaboration and 18 months as part of UK HealthCare, UK St. Claire's integration into the University of Kentucky health system continues to expand access to care, strengthen the health care workforce and help families across eastern Kentucky receive high-quality care close to home.

Over the past three years — which includes significant growth during the last 18 months — UK St. Claire has recruited 43 physicians and added nine specialty service lines, increasing access to high-demand care across its eight-county primary market.

New services include endocrinology, infectious disease, nephrology, neurology, orthopaedic spine surgery, plastic and hand surgery, and vascular surgery.

"Integrating UK St.

Claire into UK HealthCare strengthens our ability to advance the health of Kentucky," said Eric N. Monday, executive vice president for finance and administration and co-executive vice president for health affairs at the University of Kentucky. "UK St. Claire plays a critical role in expanding access to high-quality care and opportunity across the Commonwealth."

As part of UK HealthCare, UK St. Claire has expanded workforce development and education efforts. The organization now collaborates with all University of Kentucky health colleges to support clinical education and training opportunities and help build sustainable pipelines into high-demand health care careers.

"Here in Eastern Kentucky, that impact is

tangible," said Donald H. Lloyd II, president and CEO of UK St. Claire. "Being part of UK HealthCare means more services, more physicians and the ability to care for our neighbors close to home while remaining connected to

the Commonwealth's flagship university."

Through the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education's Healthcare Workforce Investment Fund, UK HealthCare and UK St. Claire have supported approximately \$1.53

million in postsecondary workforce investments, including training for nursing, imaging and physician assistant programs and a recent

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