



## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a federally funded, competitive grant program designed to increase the number of economically disadvantaged students who are equipped to enter and succeed in postsecondary education; and

**WHEREAS**, GEAR UP serves historically marginalized students and their families from various communities throughout the country who might be the first person in their family to go to college; and

**WHEREAS**, GEAR UP provides six- or seven-year grants to districts to deliver support and resources to students and their families, starting no later than the 7th grade (middle school), through high school and onward to fulfill their dreams of attaining a postsecondary education; and

**WHEREAS**, GEAR UP includes interventions such as tutoring, mentoring, rigorous academic preparation, financial education and college scholarships to improve access to higher education for cohort students, future first-generation college students and their families; and

**WHEREAS**, GEAR UP is built around public-private partnerships, enlisting the formidable resources of government, business, and community groups to support assigned cohort students as they prepare to enter and succeed in college; and

**WHEREAS**, **Next Generation GEAR UP** cohorts of 2024 and 2025 and **College Driven GEAR UP** cohorts of 2028 and 2029 are on track towards graduation while continuing to achieve outcomes in preparation for a successful post-secondary education experience; and

**WHEREAS**, **Next Generation GEAR UP** is a partnership of the DeSoto ISD and the University of North Texas at Dallas, University of Texas at Dallas, and Prairie View A&M University; and

**WHEREAS**, **College Driven GEAR UP** is a partnership of the DeSoto ISD and the University of Texas at Austin, University of Texas at Arlington, University of North Texas at Dallas, Prairie View A&M University, Texas Southern University and Dallas College; and

**WHEREAS**, **Next Generation GEAR UP** serves students in the classes of 2024 and 2025 and **College Driven GEAR UP** serves students in the cohorts of 2028 and 2029 at DeSoto ISD through graduation and into their first year of college; and

**WHEREAS**, the week of September 22, 2025 has been declared National GEAR UP Week; and

**WHEREAS**, DeSoto ISD in partnership with **Next Generation GEAR UP** and **College Driven GEAR UP** is committed to providing a quality education for every student, helping them to achieve at their highest potential: The DeSoto Independent School Districts proudly supports positive educational opportunities for the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Usamah Rodgers, on behalf of the DeSoto Independent School District, do hereby proclaim the week of September 22, 2025, as **National GEAR UP Week in the DeSoto Independent School District** and I urge all citizens to join me in this special observance.

Signed this \_\_\_\_ day of September, 2025

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Dr. Usamah Rodgers, Superintendent of Schools (DeSoto ISD)