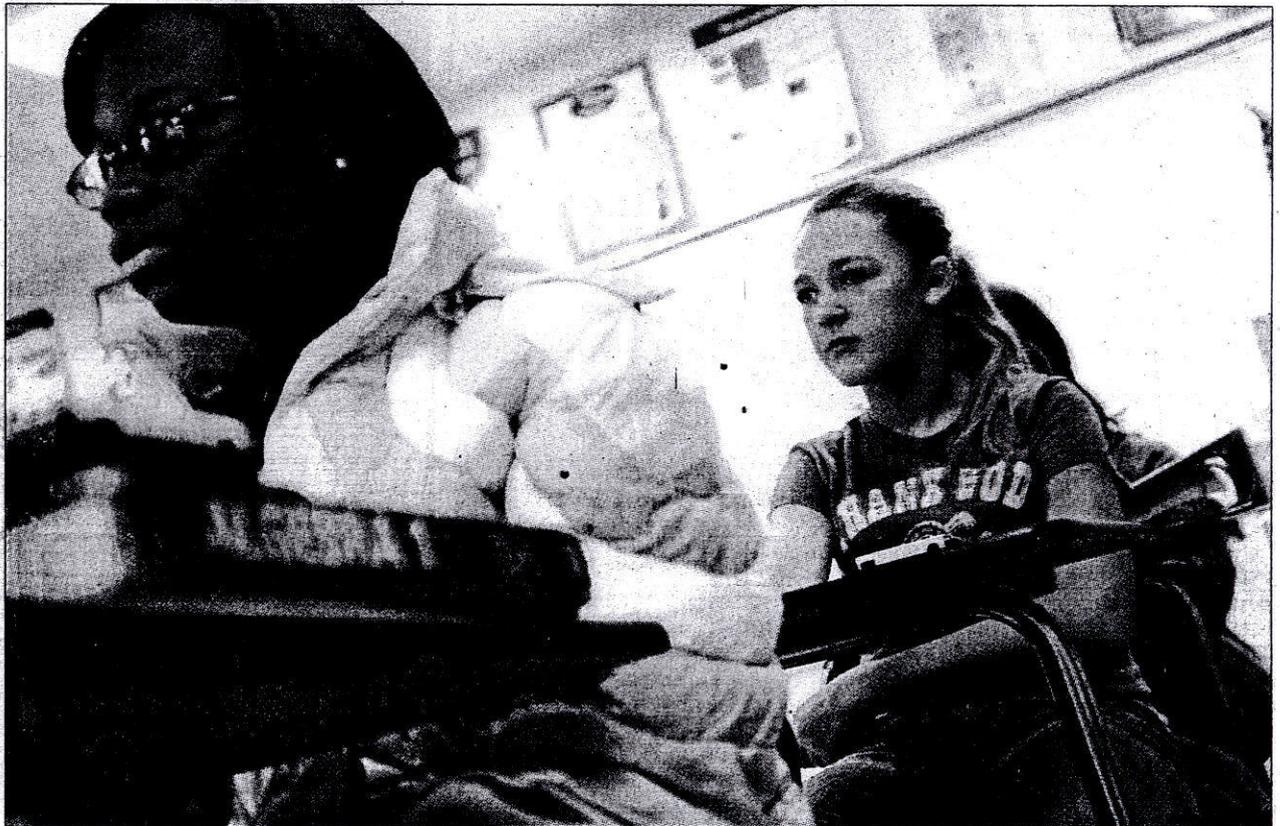


and move onto a rewarding career can make the difference in real-world success.

# GEAR UP *Att. IV*

*The Item, Feb. 12, 2007*  
*Article from*



Chris Moore / The Item

From left, classmates Dekia Daniels and Audra White listen as Jan Farmer reviews a math problem during their math honors class on Wednesday at Manning Junior High School.

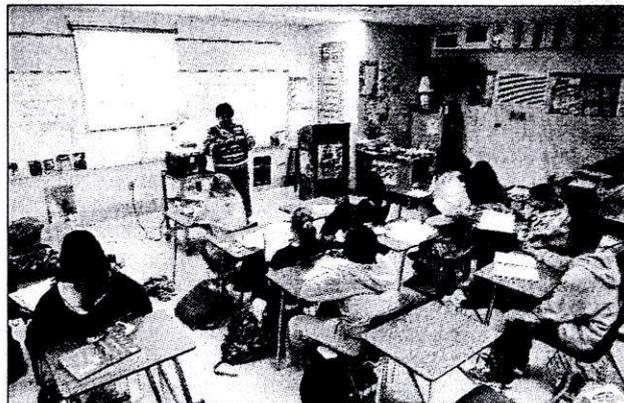
## More than 4,000 low-income students helped by statewide program

By SHARRON HALEY  
Item Staff Writer

MANNING – Manning Junior High School is one of 22 schools in the state participating in GEAR UP, a federally funded program that targets low-income students, assisting them through high school and preparing them for a secondary education.

GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, focuses on preparing students for college through mentoring and tutoring programs, financial counseling, professional development and curriculum improvement, workshops and training sessions for parents, and partnerships with businesses to provide incentives and volunteers to assist in the program.

In August 2005, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education received \$2.4 million from the U.S. Department of Education to get the program start-



Chris Moore / The Item

Manning Junior High English honors teacher Alfreda Johnson discusses a lesson with her students Wednesday.

ed. The program will target more than 4,000 students and their families in 22 schools in 15 school districts and 13 counties across the state, including Clarendon and Sumter counties.

Towanna Hicks, 28, the on-site coordinator for the program at Manning Junior High, said 146

of 255 eighth-graders are participating in the program.

"We had to have signed permission slips from their parents for them to participate," Hicks said. "We have students who need to be in the program, but their parents failed to give their permission."

Implemented in June 2006, Hicks said she has seen improvement in a variety of areas since the beginning of the current school year.

"It's made a big difference in behavior problems," Hicks said. "Now, students can come to me before going to the office and maybe heading home. I can help them work through their problems and keep them in school."

Along with in-school programs, students participating in the GEAR UP program have taken field trips to Benedict College, Morris College, Central Carolina Technical College and Columbia College, where students actually had an opportunity to sit in on classes.

Manning Junior High School Principal Preston Threatt said the program also offers students the opportunity to see what programs are offered through technical colleges.

## GEAR UP

FROM PAGE 1A

"They've been able to see through hands-on experience what's offered in technical fields," Threatt said Thursday evening following a meeting with GEAR UP students and their parents. "Some students aren't made for four-year programs. They can go to a technical college and in as little as 18 months master a skill that could pay them more than they could make with some four-year degrees. That will inspire them to stay in school and get the basic education needed to attend the technical college."

Amber Brown, 14, Student Government Association secretary and a member of the Manning Junior High yearbook staff, participates in GEAR UP.

"It's helping me on my way to college," she said last week. "We got to design a T-shirt for a college. We had to take time and do the research on the college before doing the shirt."

Brown, who wants to be a fashion designer and attend a Los Angeles design school, said she's focusing on grades and what it will take to get there.

"I'm a big clothes person," she said with a big smile. "I know what it takes now to get into the school, and that's what I'm after."

Thirteen-year-old Lemays Brown said the GEAR UP program has him "headed in the right direction."

"I'm getting ready for college," he said. "I want to go to Clemson or Duke and major in engineering."

Manning Junior High Student Government Association President Deleisha McFadden, 14, said she's preparing to go to the University of South Carolina for a degree in accounting.

"I want to do something with math," she said. "GEAR UP has helped me choose what I wanted to do."

The key to the success of the GEAR UP program lies in mentoring and tutoring, according to Tina D. Varick, the program's state parent involvement coordinator.

"We need volunteers who are good in math or good in English to come in and tutor for an hour a week," Varick said. "We need mentors. We need businesses to contribute into an incentive program, and we need to provide parent education workshops."

Varick said she and others involved at the state level are touring the schools, meeting with the families and encouraging the community to become involved in the schools.

"It has to be a partnership for it to work," she said. "The schools can't do it alone."



Existing Conditions

**Student Characteristics**

- ♦ Low test scores
- ♦ Majority African American

**School Characteristics**

- ♦ Unsatisfactory Report Card

**Neighborhood /Community Characteristics**

- ♦ High poverty rate
- ♦ High unemployment rate
- ♦ Rural

**SC Commission on Higher Education**

<b>School Services Mentor Leaders Tutor Leaders</b>	School coordination Summer camp Mentoring Tutoring Professional development	Students Parents Educators
<b>Academic and College Awareness</b>	Parent academic workshops Curriculum development Summer camps	Students Parents Guidance
<b>Research</b>	Instrument design Data collection Data management Data analysis	Oversight committee CHE management District administration School administration
<b>Marketing</b>	Materials development Web site development	Students Parents Edu Legislature Communit

**SC Department of Education**

<b>Curriculum/ Standards</b>	Curriculum development/alignment with State standards	Educators Mentor and tutor leader
<b>Training</b>	Mentor leader training	Mentor leader and vo mentors and tutors

**SC Chamber of Commerce**

<b>Community Coordinator</b>	Business organization/ coordination Community organization/ coordination	Community businesses Community and faith-b organizations
<b>Parent Involvement Liaison</b>	Parent workshops Parent assistance Partnership development	Parents Community and faith-b organizations Businesses

**SC Governor's School for Science and Mathematics**

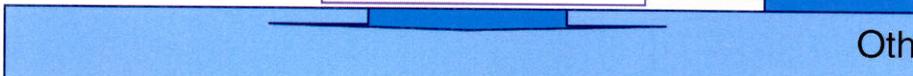
<b>Curriculum Outreach</b>	Curriculum development/delivery	Educators Students and schools
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**SC Governor's School for Arts and the Humanities**

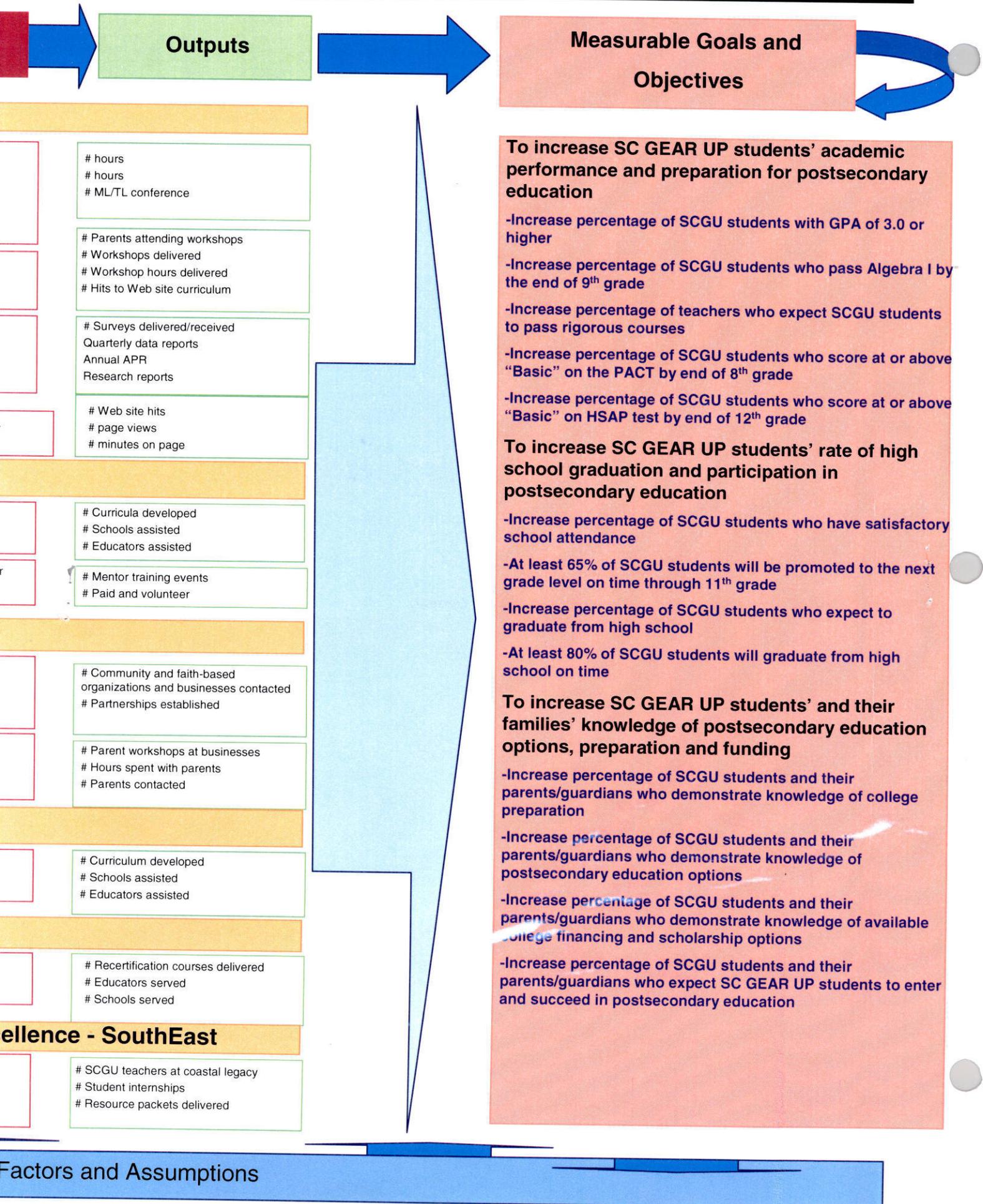
<b>Recertification</b>	Recertification course development and delivery	Educators
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**Southeast Centers for Ocean Sciences Education**

<b>Marine Science Resources</b>	Coastal Legacy Workshop Marine science student internship Marine science resources for educators	Educators Students and schools
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# Logic Model



## BY THE NUMBERS

4,000  
STUDENTS

22  
MIDDLE SCHOOLS

15  
SCHOOL DISTRICTS

13  
COUNTIES

6  
YEARS



## Mission:

to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education

## Services:

- School Partnerships
- Business Partnerships
- Community Partnerships
- Mentoring
- Tutoring
- College and Financial Aid Counseling
- Summer Programs for Students
- Professional Development for Teachers
- Curriculum Development

## BY THE NUMBERS

IMPACTING  
STUDENTS

IMPACTING  
PARENTS

IMPACTING  
TEACHERS



Has anyone from school or SC GEAR UP spoken to you about college entrance requirements or high school courses to prepare for college?

2005-06 55% said yes  
2006-07 65% said yes

Has anyone from school or SC GEAR UP spoken to you about the availability of financial aid to help pay for college?

2005-06 28% said yes  
2006-07 44% said yes

Has anyone from school or SC GEAR UP spoken to you about college entrance requirements or the courses your child needs to take in high school in order to be prepared for college?

2005-06 23% said yes  
2006-07 37% said yes

Has anyone from school or SC GEAR UP spoken to you about the availability of financial aid to help pay for college?

2005-06 14% said yes  
2006-07 29% said yes

Do you expect your students to pass rigorous courses (i.e. in ELA, Math, and Science)?

2005-06 16% said yes  
2006-07 86% said yes