



ARIZONA GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs



Minimum Expectations for Postsecondary Planning Sessions (PEPS) – Year 5 Grade 11

PURPOSE

The goal of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. AZ GEAR UP seeks to achieve this goal through multiple overlapping strategies, provided by qualified providers in sufficient scale and quantity, over time. Postsecondary Education Planning Sessions (PEPS) combined with strategic follow-up actions to PEPS, are the most fundamental and intentional of these strategies. More specifically, Postsecondary Education Planning Sessions (PEPS) at each AZ GEAR UP School are intended to promote the following GEAR UP objectives:

- Improve academic performance /college & career readiness
- Keep students in school (increase graduation rate)
- Increase student knowledge about postsecondary education (costs, benefits & prerequisites)
- Increase postsecondary enrollment & completion rate

Ultimately, PEPS, PEPS follow-up actions, and the ECAP are the primary vehicles for ensuring that, on or before high school graduation, all GEAR UP students will have:

- ▶ decided upon a postsecondary plan
- ▶ identified a general career interest area
- ▶ completed and submitted at least one application to a college or university
- ▶ completed and submitted at least one scholarship application
- ▶ completed the FAFSA, if eligible
- ▶ developed an individual student portfolio to take with them at the time of graduation.

In Year 5, when students are in 11th grade, PEPS aim to:

- ★ definitively resolve student's postsecondary plan (by May 2017), with the understanding that the Coordinator is notified immediately if plan changes;
- ★ assess 'match' between student's postsecondary plan, career goal and academic record (e.g. plan for university but low GPA or plan for community college but high academic achievement and test scores); discuss what can be done this year to realize goal and/or discuss other postsecondary options;
- ★ strengthen the relationship between continuing GEAR UP students and the GEAR UP Coordinator;
- ★ begin to establish a relationship between new GEAR UP students and the Coordinator;
- ★ assess student's Academic progress towards eligibility for college admission;
- ★ assess student's awareness/understanding of topics related to college preparation (benefits of postsecondary education, types of schools, types of degrees, degree progression, cost of college and ways to pay for college);
- ★ assess student's 'connection' to school, community and GEAR UP;
- ★ increase student's awareness of how school performance and specific course completion relates to career goals;
- ★ assist the students with career exploration and identification of career interests, goal-setting and goal-attainment;
- ★ monitor the student's academic achievement and progress toward realizing postsecondary aspirations; and
- ★ address follow-up actions and interventions as necessary to promote student success.

PEPS & ECAP COORDINATION

Each school's GEAR UP Work Plan outlines the process by which the GEAR UP Coordinators(s) and High School Counselor(s) will collaborate to meet ECAP and PEPS requirements to maximize the benefit for GEAR UP students *without duplication* of services.

PEPS PREPARATION:

- The GEAR UP Coordinator(s) confer with principals and counselors to make a specific plan for completion of PEPS in coordination with ECAP, according to the approach outlined in the work plan. The plan must ensure that a system for coordinator-counselor sharing of ECAP and PEPS information is established to avoid duplication of services.
- The GEAR UP Coordinator(s) review the student's transcript, attendance data and other available information about the student, to formulate possible goals the student might establish and actions the student can take to reach their goals.

PEPS IMPLEMENTATION:

A. On or before **the date indicated on the AZ GEAR UP Coordinator Calendar**, GEAR UP Coordinators are responsible – in collaboration with counseling department staff – for conducting **one individual PEP session** with each student¹, and for ensuring that, on or before the end of the school year, each student completes, and reports on the completion, of at least **one PEPS follow up action**.

1. The meeting will focus on:
 - a. Connecting / building the relationship between the student and the Coordinator.
 - b. Exploring the student's interests, hobbies, hopes, dreams, talents, and strengths, including career interest areas and postsecondary aspirations.
 - c. Discussing student's career interest(s), and the possibilities for job shadowing (virtual or in-person), job site visits, workshops, and/or extracurricular activities aligned with that interest, based on what is available at the school and/or in the GEAR UP workplan.
 - d. Discussing the ACT – what it is and why it is important (if PEPS takes place before administration of the ACT).
 - e. Reviewing student's academic status (using transcripts, progress reports and ECAP information, as available) and college and career readiness using the student's 10th grade ASPIRE data and ACT data (if available when PEPS takes place); connecting with resources, such as tutoring, if needed/desired.
 - f. Assessing the student's understanding of the educational requirements (in high school and beyond) to reach his/her career goal.
 - g. Assessing the student's "college knowledge" (e.g., prerequisite courses, financial literacy, scholarship opportunities, etc.)
 - h. Helping the student understand the value and benefits of GEAR UP over the next few years, with a focus on what is being offered this year.
 - i. Assessing student's interest in, and ability to participate in the GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy (GUSLA) at NAU.
 - j. Reviewing students' connection with and involvement in school life, including extracurricular activities, leadership positions, and relationships with teachers and peers (sense of belonging).

¹ PEPS with severe SPED students (non-verbal, in self-contained classrooms, etc.) with IEPs created by students' IEP Teams (which includes the students' parents) that delineates the student's postsecondary plan (e.g., will stay at high school until age 21) are not required. Coordinators must submit a list of students who meet this criteria to their Site Support Specialist at the beginning of the school year.

- k. Reviewing student's level of participation in GEAR UP activities; discuss reasons for non-involvement, if applicable, and describe opportunities for future participation (upcoming events and activities, services available, etc.).
 - l. Deciding on an appropriate follow-up action (see Standards for PEPS Follow-Up, attached).
2. The meeting **may** also include:
- a. Identifying students' fears, weaknesses and needs, referring students to appropriate services, as indicated.
 - b. Administering assessments, inventories, or personal counseling to aid in deciding upon a postsecondary plan /goal.
 - c. Counseling for students who are undecided about a postsecondary plan:
 - if student says he/she is still undecided about postsecondary plan, use the 'Undecided Student Guide' (rather than PEPS Check List) to facilitate the conversation, and code the session as 133 (Academic/College Counseling);
 - establish deadline for student to decide if he or she wishes to pursue postsecondary education, so that critical deadlines (admissions, testing, etc.) are not missed in senior year;
 - Explain that PEPS will be completed at a later date, when decision has been made about postsecondary plan.

B. Before concluding the meeting, the GEAR UP Coordinator:

- 1. Ensure the student has received a Welcome Letter and a 21st Century Certificate (if this was a new student).
- 2. Encourages and assists the student in legibly completing the **Student Decision/Plans Form**, ensuring the following are provided:
 - a. Student's Postsecondary Plan
 - b. Student's Career Interest Area
 - c. Student's top choices for postsecondary institutions, if s/he has any
 - d. Agreed upon follow up action and "due date", selecting no more than one follow up action.

****Student takes this form with them and follows Coordinator instructions for returning completed form, if applicable.**

C. When the meeting is over, the GEAR UP Coordinator:

- a. Completes the Student Decision/Plans Section on the PEPS Checklist, enters comments that will be helpful when evaluating the student's progress, including concerns (only Coordinator comments included in #6 of the Student's Decision/Plans section will be entered into the database; any comments in the margins or noted elsewhere on the form will not be entered into the GEAR UP Database).
- b. Verifies that the top of the Checklist form includes all student identifying information, and the date and duration of the PEPS.

- D.** For sites without GEAR UP Assistants, on a weekly basis, the GEAR UP Coordinator emails completed PEPS Checklists to their Site Support Specialist at NAU for entry into the GEAR UP database. The GEAR UP Coordinator follows the process developed at the schools for sharing this information with counselors, as needed. Or, for schools that have a GEAR UP Assistant, the Coordinator provides the assistant with the PEPS Checklist for entry onto the PEPS Spreadsheet maintained in googledocs.



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Minimum Expectations [Standards] for PEPS Follow-up GRADE 11

PEPS Follow-up Actions Purpose:

PEPS follow-up actions for 11th graders should prepare them for the more rigorous, and critical, follow-up actions needed in their senior year to reach their postsecondary goals. Follow-up to PEPS means arranging for students to participate in relevant activities related to their postsecondary plan. Documentation of PEPS follow-up actions is necessary, and will entail ‘follow up’ on the part of students as well, in the form of reporting back on the results or outcome of their efforts. *In some rare instances follow-up may not be necessary if student has definitively made a decision, and is on-track to accomplish that postsecondary goal.*

Suggested PEPS Follow-up Actions:

- For University/College/Trade School - bound students: College fit research.
- For Military-bound students: Research requirements for branch of interest; benefits of enlisted vs. officer; options for college before or after military; jobs and educational opportunities offered.
- For Workforce-bound students: ‘reality check’ exercise – can they live on salary possible with a high school diploma; prepare and turn in resume.

PEPS Follow-up Implementation:

On a regular basis (e.g., weekly, monthly, as determined on a site-by-site basis), run a PEPS Export from SCRIBE in excel format. Filter the spreadsheet by follow-up due dates, and take steps to ensure students complete their assigned follow up action. To help accomplish this, Coordinators may ask students to return the completed copy of the **Student Decision/Plans Action Form** (form they took with them after PEPS) to the GEAR UP Office ‘Follow-up box.’ (Coordinators may implement an alternative method of calendaring and monitoring for follow-up if desired; any alternative method must be approved by the Site Support Specialist at NAU.)

PEPS Follow-up Completion/Documentation:

Within one week of PEPS Follow-up activity completion:

Include the following information in Weekly Individual Service Logs (WISL) or participation sign-in sheets submitted electronically:

- Date of follow-up
- NOS Code for follow-up (NOS 207)
- Duration for follow-up will generally be logged as 1 minute.

****** If you assist the student with their follow-up (e.g. guiding them through their college fit research), you must also document that service with the appropriate NOS code (usually counseling or workshop) and the full duration (in addition to documenting it as a 207 for 1 minute).