



ARIZONA GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs



Minimum Expectations for Postsecondary Planning Sessions (PEPS) – Year 3 Grade 9

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 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

PEPS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

In Year 3, when students are in 9th grade, PEPS aim to:

- ★ 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
- ★ facilitate students' transition to high school
- ★ facilitate student's exploration and understanding of his/her interests, strengths, and educational options;
- ★ increase student's awareness of how school performance, and specific course completion relates to career paths;
- ★ assist the student with goal-setting and goal-attainment;
- ★ monitor the student's academic achievement and postsecondary plan progress; and
- ★ address follow-up actions and interventions as necessary to promote student success.

PEPS IMPLEMENTATION

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:

- A. 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.
- B1. If PEPS is a separate individual meeting conducted after the ECAP process, the Coordinator(s) review the student ECAP, academic record, attendance data and other available information about the student, including prior PEPS information, and use the information to reinforce ECAP student goals and follow-up activities.

- B2. If PEPS is completed *before* the ECAP process, the Coordinator(s) review the student academic record, attendance data and other available information about the student, including prior PEPS information, and use the information to formulate student goals and follow-up activities.
- B3. If the counselor and the coordinator meet *together* with the student (and, if applicable his/her family) to jointly complete PEPS/ECAP, then the sharing of information will be integral to the process.

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 student, **and** for ensuring that, on or before the end of the school year, each student completes **at least one PEPS/ECAP follow up activity**. The primary purpose of this meeting in Year 3 is to strengthen the relationship between the student and the Coordinator or, for new GEAR UP students, to begin to establish a relationship with the Site Coordinator.
1. Additionally, the meeting will focus on:
 - a. Exploring the student’s interests, hobbies, hopes, dreams, talents, and strengths, including career interest areas and postsecondary aspirations (using EXPLORE results and ECAP information, as available to avoid duplication).
 - b. Discussing student’s career interest(s), including his/her EXPLORE Career Interest Inventory results, and the possibilities for job shadowing, job site visits, workshops, and/or extracurricular activities aligned with that interest.
 - c. Reviewing student’s academic status (using progress reports and ECAP information, as available) and college and career readiness (using the student’s EXPLORE data); connecting with resources, such as tutoring, if needed/desired.
 - d. Assessing the student’s understanding of the educational requirements (in high school and beyond) to reach his/her career goal.
 - e. Assessing the student’s “college knowledge” (e.g., course requirements, financial literacy, scholarship opportunities, etc)
 - f. Helping the student understand the value and benefits of GEAR UP over the next four years, with a focus on what is being offered this year.
 - g. Assessing student’s interest in, and ability to participate in the GEAR UP Summer Program at NAU.
 - h. Reviewing students’ connection with and involvement in school life, including extracurricular activities, leadership positions, relationships with teachers and peers (sense of belonging)
 - i. 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.).
 - j. Deciding on an appropriate follow-up activity (see Standards for PEPS Follow-Up, attached).
 - k. **Only for schools where EXPLORE administration for 9th grade students is included in the Work Plan and for PEPS that take place before the EXPLORE test date:* Discussing the EXPLORE – what it is and why it is important.
 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 (preliminary) postsecondary plan /goal.

- B.** Immediately following this meeting, the GEAR UP Coordinator:
1. Legibly summarizes the PEPS conversation on the PEPS Checklist form, ensuring the following are provided:
 - a. Date and duration of meeting
 - b. Student's Career Interest Area
 - c. Student's Preliminary Postsecondary Plan
 - d. Student's top choices for postsecondary education, if s/he has any
 - e. Agreed upon follow up work and "due date", selecting no more than one follow up task in each area – career, academics and engagement. (Students do not need to have a follow up task in each area, only if the discussion indicates it is needed.)
 - f. Comments that will be most helpful when evaluating the student's progress, including concerns (only comments included in #5 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).
- C.** On a weekly basis, the GEAR UP Coordinator emails completed PEPS Checklists to the NAU GEAR UP Office 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, providing the assistant with the PEPS Checklist for data entry and scanning / emailing to the GEAR UP Office.



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Minimum Expectations [Standards] for PEPS Follow-up GRADE 9

PEPS Follow-up Purpose:

Like PEPS, PEPS follow-up during the students' ninth grade year will include service and support to students in three areas:

- ▶ Participation / Engagement / Leadership;
- ▶ Career Exploration & Identification; and
- ▶ College Preparation

Follow-up to PEPS means arranging for students to participate in relevant postsecondary preparation activities, or assigning students – through encouragement, creativity, direction, and support – to undertake relevant postsecondary preparation activities, tasks, etc. In both manners of follow-up – arranging or assigning – documentation is necessary, and may actually entail ‘follow up’ on the part of students as well, in the form of reporting back on the results or outcome of their efforts, turning in documents that evidence assignment completion, etc. If ECAP follow-up is sufficient in scope, the Coordinator may choose to assist students with the completion of their ECAP follow-up activities and document it accordingly for the Counselor (s) and for the GEAR UP database.

Note: Specific examples of PEPS follow-up activities/assignments are included in the PEPS Checklist.

Portfolio Requirement:

In conjunction with the annual PEPS and PEPS follow-up, every GEAR UP student will be aided, additionally, in their creation of a **portfolio** throughout his or her high school career. At minimum, by the time they are seniors, each student's portfolio will include a copy of his/her: **education and career action plan; resume; a writing sample** (this could be a personal statement, scholarship essay, graded essay, etc.), and a **letter of recommendation**, ideally from a teacher or an adult other than the GEAR UP Coordinator who has knowledge of the student. The portfolio may also include a variety of other documents (see *Possible Portfolio Contents*, below). For students with who create online portfolios (e.g., in AzCIS) as part of their ECAP process, that includes at least these four documents, a separate portfolio is not required.

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. (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/ECAP Follow-up activity completion

- A. File / Record outcome of the follow-up

- B.** Include the following information in participation sign-in sheets or Weekly Individual Service Logs (WISL) submitted electronically:
- Date and duration of follow-up
 - Type of Follow-up
 - NOS Code for follow-up (NOS 207)

POSSIBLE PORTFOLIO CONTENTS:

- Resume and cover letter
- Writing samples
- ECAP
- Letters of recommendation and testimonials
- Personal Statement
- Scholarship Essay
- Exemplary class assignments
- Drawings
- Logs of books read
- Photographs of large projects
- Work samples
- Problem solving scenarios
- Summaries of performance events
- Service learning reports/reflections
- Cooperative learning projects
- Copies of awards, certificates
- Demonstration of technology skills on disk
- Videos of work tasks being accomplished or other simulations
- Job application form
- Academic test results (e.g., PSAT, ACT, SAT)
- Career assessments (interest inventories, work values, learning style, etc.)
- Report cards/transcripts
- Employability skills (SCANS) documentation
- Samples of art work and or performance
- Field trip summaries
- Worker interview sheet (business speakers)
- Autobiography
- Balanced budget
- Check writing and account balancing skill documentation
- A Day in My Life – demonstrating time management
- Sample “contract” for assignments or behavior modification
- LinkedIn Profile
- Professional on-line personal page (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, etc)