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**Minimum Standards & Guidelines for GEAR UP Newsletters**

Purpose: Newsletters, individualized for each GEAR UP School, for distribution to parents, are intended to increase student and family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation and financing. To that end, the frequency, content and format covered must meet the following minimum standards:

1. Frequency

At minimum, one newsletter is mailed each semester.

1. Format & Content Provided By NAU GEAR UP Office:

The newsletter template with standard articles (in English and Spanish) is developed by the NAU GEAR UP Office each semester incorporating grade-appropriate articles and/or graphics that address at least 3 of the following topics:

1. Financial Literacy / Financial Aid / Scholarships
2. “College Knowledge” e.g., information about high school prerequisites/requirements for college admission; the college admissions process, types of postsecondary institutions and degrees/credentials
3. Student Success Strategies
4. Parental Involvement / Support
5. Expect More Arizona articles or graphics
6. A specific major, career area, or Institution of Higher Education, or combination thereof
7. Content Provided By GEAR UP Site Coordinators:

Required:

Each issue of the newsletter must include the following content[[1]](#footnote-1) prepared by Site Coordinator(s), bearing in mind that the audience for the newsletter is comprised of GEAR UP Parents:

* 1. A letter to GEAR UP Parents from the GEAR UP Coordinator(s)
	2. A “Lead” story that highlights a recent GEAR UP event or success, or a timely topic, e.g., ACT Testing, summer programs, course selection and registration
	3. A list of upcoming GEAR UP events & important dates at the school
	4. The name of an individual community member, organization, or group of people who recently supported GEAR UP and what the contribution/support entailed
	5. One photo of the school’s GEAR UP staff

Optional:

1. Photos with captions are optional, but encouraged. Any photos submitted should connect with content in the newsletter (typically ties to the Lead Story). It is important that you ensure you have a photo release /permission before using any person’s photo. Check your district’s policy for obtaining such permission for students and/or use the GEAR UP photo release form.
2. A second shorter story1, up to approximately 250 words may be submitted, if desired.
3. Submission of Articles Prepared by Site Coordinators to the NAU Office:
	1. Content prepared by Site Coordinators are submitted to the NAU GEAR UP Office by email in the Newsletter table format or a Word document with clear titles noting the type of articles included (for example, “lead story,” “community thank you,” “secondary article,” “coordinator letter,” etc.). Photos that Coordinators want to add to the newsletter will also be emailed as attachments. Captions and photo details will be clearly noted along with the content of the newsletter, or in the body of the email. Articles and photos must be emailed at least one week before printing, for review and approval.
	2. The NAU Site Support Specialists will edit articles, consulting with coordinators as needed, and format the final newsletter into the template. If necessary, the revised English articles will then be emailed to the Coordinators for translation. The Coordinators will email the translated articles to the Site Support Specialist to be formatted and added to the newsletter template.
	3. The Site Support Specialists will email a pdf version of the final newsletters to Site Coordinators for printing and distributing.
4. Publication/Distribution
	1. Newsletters are printed in color on 11 x 17 paper, with a bond weight between 20 and 28 pounds. For additional mailing information, please refer to <http://www.ehow.com/list_6147108_post-mailing-folded-taped-newsletters.html>
	2. Newsletters are sent “to the family of” every GEAR UP student each semester.
	3. Each edition is also sent to the NAU GEAR UP Office in the same format and manner, and on the same date as it is sent to GEAR UP families.
	4. Mailing labels are prepared through a merging function with the GEAR UP database, or your district’s Student Information System.
	5. Newsletters that are ‘returned to sender,’ are researched for current address and re-mailed. Corrected addresses are provided to the NAU GEAR UP State Office (Site Support Specialist)
5. **Logging /Documenting /Reporting Service**

Once your newsletter is approved, printed and mailed to your GEAR UP families:

* + - 1. Coordinators must enter it on the GEAR UP Weekly Individual Services Log (WISL) with the appropriate NOS code (411) with a copy of the mail merge list or enrollment roster for the school on the date the newsletter was mailed, attached.
			2. The Weekly Individual Services Log (WISL) is emailed to the NAU GEAR UP Office weekly.
1. Where 25% or more of parents do not speak English as their primary language, content provided by Site Coordinators must be prepared in English as well as the secondary language, translated by someone identified at the school/district. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)