ARIZONA GEAR UP
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Created April 2019
Family Engagement Toolkit

PURPOSE
This Toolkit provides a list of considerations and recommendations, checklists, and sample documents to help GEAR UP schools develop a successful strategy to engage families in fostering their high-school-aged children’s academic and career success.

"Students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, be promoted, pass their classes, earn credits, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and graduate and go on to postsecondary education."


OBJECTIVES
- Support schools’ efforts to engage families in students’ education
- Partner with families to support students’ college-going goals

STUDENT GRADE-LEVEL
This toolkit is designed for GEAR UP Coordinators serving high school students in 9th grade.

TARGET AUDIENCE FOR TOOLKIT
GEAR UP Coordinators, school counselors, family-engagement professionals (parent-liaisons), college-access professionals, high school administrators, district-level educators who work with counseling and/or college-access programs, parent groups (PTA/PTO).

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Introduction to Family Engagement

A rich body of research has shown that when schools engage the families of their students, families get more involved in their children’s education and student achievement increases. Specifically, research has shown that this “engagement-involvement” process is correlated with students having fewer absences, showing improved behavior, earning higher grades and test scores, and even having better social skills. ¹

What do we mean by Family Engagement?

Arizona GEAR UP defines Family Engagement this way:

- **Family** refers to a student’s support network outside of school, which may include parents, grandparents, other family-members, neighbors, and friends who support a student’s academic goals and behaviors.²

- **Engagement** refers to efforts the school/program sets forth to:
  - provide information to families
  - encourage participation at school-related events
  - promote a home environment in a students’ life that is supportive of academic success (It is important to be aware that *families, with many competing demands on their time, can be invested and involved in their children’s education and goals without attending school programs, meetings or activities*)

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² For ease of reading, the term “parent” or “parents” and the term “family” or “families” are used interchangeably throughout this toolkit. Both refer to the caregivers, raisers, and support network of children, whoever that may be.
Families in Schools™ differentiates Family or Parent “Involvement” which is how parents participate at home and at school in their child’s education, from Family or Parent “Engagement” which describes the work of schools and organizations as they work with parents to involve them in their child’s education. Research shows that family engagement increases family involvement, which brings about the positive results described above. The relationship between the two is depicted above. This toolkit relates to Family Engagement.

**Why Family Engagement is a critical component of GEAR UP**

The positive results of effective family engagement align perfectly with GEAR UP’s goals and objectives. Therefore, family engagement is an important strategy for achieving our goals. The GEAR UP approach – that starts early and continues through high school graduation and into college -- presents an ideal set up for successful family engagement. Starting outreach to parents early, in Year 1 of the grant, or the first month of a student’s enrollment, provides ample opportunity, over several years, for positive relationships to be created that will pay off each year, but perhaps most significantly in the senior year, when parent involvement is critical – for example in completing the FAFSA, paying college deposits, etc.

In this toolkit you will find tips and tools for successfully engaging your GEAR UP families:
- By phone
- In writing (mail, email, text message, flyers)
- Formally -- at GEAR UP events
- Informally -- meeting them where they are

In addition, this toolkit outlines a framework that empowers GEAR UP coordinators to:
- Strategically and wholistically implement a year-long plan of effective family engagement in a multi-cultural setting

Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, twitter) may also be effective methods for engaging GEAR UP families. However, creating an effective social media presence is beyond the scope of this toolkit. GEAR UP Coordinators, in communities where a large percentage of their GEAR UP families are likely to “follow” their social media accounts, and who are adept at maintaining an effective social media presence, are encouraged to use this approach as well, and may ask their Site Support Specialist for assistance.

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3 [https://www.familiesinschools.org/](https://www.familiesinschools.org/)
Check lists for family engagement

1. **Steps to take before beginning to engage families**

   GEAR UP Coordinators are encouraged to read through this list of tips and recommended best practices before beginning their efforts to engage parents, and follow the recommendations as applicable to their situation (i.e., prior experience, school demographics and culture).

   - Communicate with your principal and/or supervisor to inform them of the GEAR UP family engagement standards and your parent engagement plans for the year.
   - Read and follow your district policies and procedures, and FERPA, when making parent contacts.
     - some schools require that front office staff be notified when you are making parent phone calls and or have an auto phone message or text message scheduled in case they receive high volume return calls while you are on the phone or unavailable (many school numbers show the office phone on caller ID).
     - most schools have specific procedures for home visits
     - some districts require a parent contact log (check to see if your WISL is sufficient)
     - there may be custody/contact orders you must abide by
   - Ask your principal/supervisor to post an introduction of you (perhaps a letter from you) and the GEAR UP program on the school’s website and on the school’s social media sites to inform families of your role, and where and how they can contact you. Consider creating a GEAR UP Facebook or Instagram Page for your school.
   - Request to be notified by administration and the counseling office when issues occur that impact any GEAR UP students so that you are always up to date on any changes in student status such as suspensions, discipline, change in placement or other information that might impact your parent engagement. This might entail that you attend counseling office meetings and administration meetings to establish positive working relationships with school staff so that you are valued and viewed as an important part of the team.
   - Read Section 7 of this toolkit to ensure the appropriate strategic, wholistic, culturally-sensitive approach is taken in all your family engagement efforts.
   - If you have any issues, or need support, contact your site support specialist. They want to ensure your success!
2. Engaging parents by phone

Personal phone calls to parents, especially when you are sharing positive news, opportunities, or valuable services, are an important and effective method for engaging parents and, started early, can lead to strong, long-lasting relationships and increase the likelihood that parents will attend GEAR UP events.

Good reasons to call parents include:

- To introduce yourself and the GEAR UP Program.
- To share positive updates or potential that you witness in their child (example: calling right after their child’s PEPS).
- To ‘specially’ invite parents to an event or on a college visit (even if it’s not really ‘specially’)
- When parents missed a GEAR UP event, to let them know you missed seeing them there and to provide the information they missed.
- To address problems -- Phone calls are a requirement in the GEAR UP absence intervention and drop out retrieval standards. When calling for those purposes, refer to this checklist, as well as the applicable standards.

Tips/recommended best practices for parent phone calls

☐ Schedule Carefully

☐ Schedule at a time when you won’t be interrupted.

☐ Pick a time and date when you feel focused, positive, and ready to handle wherever the conversation may go.

☐ Try to pick dates, days of the week, and times of the day when parents are most likely to be available. Make notes if you learn time preferences about your parents as some parents work nights.

☐ Even when using the school’s “all-call” to call parents, for example, to remind of an upcoming event, think carefully about the time of day you want that call to go out -- the time that most parents are likely to listen to it.

☐ Prepare

☐ Check school records to determine what language is spoken at home; arrange for an interpreter if needed.

☐ Notify front office staff of your plans (this can also be helpful for you as they might make you aware of a possible interruption such as a fire drill).

☐ Have all information needed for the conversation at hand.

☐ Check your school’s student information system and the GEAR UP database so you are aware of:

- the students’ most recent grades, attendance and behavior data
- the relationship between the person you are contacting and the student (e.g., parent; grandparent; guardian; stepparent; foster parent; etc) and for any no-contact orders
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- if the parent/guardian has provided any communication instructions or preferences (best phone number, when to call, preferred mode of communication, etc.).

- The extent to which the student and parent have already participated in GEAR UP services and activities

☐ Review the student’s PEPS data so you are familiar with their plans, goals and needs.

☐ Have at hand a list of resources/phone numbers that parents might need (like your school’s counseling office, attendance office, or community resources such as food pantries, social service agencies, etc.).

☐ Prepare a script / call outline if needed (see samples in Attachment 1)

☐ During the Call

☐ Generally, GEAR UP = good news for parents/families! Parent contact should be positive and supportive of students and the GEAR UP goals, even when you are calling about a problem (e.g., when calling for absence intervention, or because student is at risk of losing credit, your purpose is to offer resources to get student on track, so be prepared with those resources).

☐ Solicit questions and give your parents time to ask them.

☐ If you do not know an answer to a parent’s question, it is always okay to say ‘let me find out and get back to you’. This is always better than giving out misinformation and having to correct it later. It is helpful if you can give them a time frame so they know when to expect an answer.

☐ Some of our families may have a negative association with the school. If you encounter an upset or angry parent be prepared to stay calm and listen to them. You might be the first professional that they have been able to talk to about their concern. Even though you might not be able to address their complaint, listening to them can help them feel heard which can help you develop rapport with them.

☐ Provide parents with your contact information and procedures for getting a hold of you.

☐ Follow Up

☐ If you give out information that you discover has been changed or updated, be sure to call and let the parent know as soon as this error is discovered.

☐ If you promised to get back to parents with a resource, an answer, or information, be sure to do so.

☐ After the Call

☐ Log the contact on your WISL per GEAR UP Data Documentation Standards.
3. Engaging parents through text messaging

Technology has greatly changed the manner in which people communicate. Fortunately, these technological changes have, in some ways, made it easier for school personnel to stay in touch with busy parents. For many parents (as well as students) today, text messaging is their preferred mode of communication. The vast majority of American adults own a cell phone, including more than 90% of households with children and 80.9% of Americans living below the poverty threshold. If/when you need to communicate with a parent about a topic that will require a lengthy, or in-depth conversation, a text message is often the first step to finding a convenient time for that conversation to happen in person or over the phone. **Text GEAR UP (txtGU)** is the texting program used by AZ GEAR UP, and is available free to GEAR UP schools. You should follow the txtGU Standards in all text communication using that platform. Your Site Support Specialist is able to monitor your text interactions and can step in and provide resources and support to you if the need becomes apparent.

Many schools have their own text messaging system, perhaps embedded in the district student information system. Inquire to see what options are available for you to use with your families, and if the school prefers that you use their system or txtGU.

**Good reasons to text parents include:**

- To welcome parents of students who enroll mid-year, to introduce yourself, and invite them to call you to learn about GEAR UP.

  **Sample:** “Hi, this is [name], the GEAR UP Coordinator at [name] high school. I just learned that [child’s name] enrolled at our school [today/this week] and I want to tell you about the GEAR UP program at our school and what we have to offer you and [child’s name]. You can call me at ###.###.####. Hope to hear from you soon.”

- To share a quick positive update or potential that you witness in their child (example: texting right after their child’s PEPS).

  **Sample:** “Just saw [child’s name] receive his attendance award this morning. I’m so proud of him!” “Just finished talking to [child’s name] about his/her future. What a great kid! So excited to help him/her achieve his/her dreams!”

- To ‘specially’ invite parents to an event or on a college visit (even if it’s not really specially).

  **Sample:** “The GEAR UP FAFSA Fiesta is this Saturday – from 8 to 3. I really hope to see you and [child’s name] there, so we can help him apply for money to pay for college next year!”

- When parents missed a GEAR UP event, to let them know you missed seeing them there and to invite them to call you to get the information they missed.

  **Sample:** “I missed you at our Financial Aid Workshop last night. Sorry you couldn’t make it. Call me so I can give you the info you missed!”

- To invite the parent to set up a time to talk with you, in person or over the phone about their child (perhaps a problem -- phone calls are a requirement in the GEAR UP absence intervention..."
and drop out retrieval standards. Texting to set up these calls is a good way to help you meet that requirement.

Sample: “I need to talk with you about [child’s name]. When would be a good time to call?”

Tips/recommended best practices for parent text messages (see also txtGU standards)

☐ Coordinate your efforts with the appropriate school staff to prevent duplication of content information.

☐ Be strategic about the time of day you send messages to families -- picking times that are best for them, but also so that you’ll be available to handle their responses.

☐ Keep your messages clear and brief.

☐ Limit the number of messages you send so that parents do not become overwhelmed or bothered.

☐ Document on your WISL per data documentation standards.

More Text message samples

• This is ______the _____ HS GEAR UP Coordinator. I hope to see you at our [name of event] on [date]______at [time]______in the [location]_______. For more details call__________.

• Tutoring is available after school Mon-Thurs. Please encourage your child to take advantage of this great resource.

• The GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy (GUSLA) will be hosted at NAU [dates]___________. Students will be given parent informational packets and applications tomorrow in their English class. Watch for it and don’t miss the deadline to apply!

• GEAR UP wants to share great news! Over 60% of parents indicated on our recent survey that childcare would enable them to attend more GEAR UP events. In response, we are adding this service when we host our next parent night! Details to follow in two weeks when the next monthly parent night is announced.
4. Engaging parents in writing

While contact by text and phone is likely to be the form of family engagement you use the most -- due to its ease and convenience for both you and the parents you’re trying to engage, written materials are still an important, and sometimes necessary, way to reach parents. Written materials may be:

- mailed to the family’s home/PO box;
- sent home with students;
- posted on your website; and/or
- sent by email

Situations when written communication is preferred or necessary include:

- information you want to share is lengthy and details may need to be referred to later (see Attachment 6 - sample parent intro letter)
- parent/guardian signature is required
- parent hasn’t responded to phone calls or text messages
- you want the communication to seem “special”
- “recurring” communications, such as quarterly newsletters or monthly postcards, that parents come to expect on a regular basis

The checklist below provides steps to take and things to consider as you reach out to your GEAR UP families in writing:

- **Formatting matters**
  Think about the purpose of the document and format accordingly (e.g., print “official” information on letterhead; make flyers about upcoming events attractive and attention grabbing/worthy of hanging on the fridge (see example in Attachment 2); documents that need signing should make that requirement bold and clear (see example in Attachment 3).

- **Information should be clear, concise, and easy to read**
  Keep sentences simple and short; get to the point. If it’s too long, it won’t be read.

- **Proofread**
  Spell check helps, but don’t rely on it completely. Make sure all needed information is included (e.g., if you’re communicating about an event, ensure it includes the name of the event, the date, time, and location, and a brief event description / purpose.) Ask your Site Support Specialist to proofread for you.

- **Print in color**
  It increases the likelihood that parents will read the material.

- **Personalize when possible**
  Even when you’re doing a mass-mailing to all GEAR UP families, there are ways to make the document seem personal. Use the mail merge function in MSWord or your email application.

- **Always include your contact information**
  Parents need to know who they can contact if they have questions about the written information. Always include your phone number at minimum, and email address as well if there is room.
Include photos of students, if possible
Even if it’s not “their kid,” it might be their kid’s friend, or they might be motivated to attend the next event so their kid’s photo will appear next issue. (See sample GEAR UP Newsletter in Attachment 4)

Bundle mailings strategically
Including important GEAR UP documents with report cards when they are mailed home increases the potential that parents will read your handout. Talk to your principal early if this idea sounds like it would be effective at your school.

PDF
If you’re attaching a document to an email, convert it to a PDF. Formatting of word documents is dependent on the computer on which the document is opened. All your nice fonts and artistic formatting could be lost when opened on a different computer.

Document all mailings on your WISL, per data documentation standards
5. Engaging parents at events

Face to face interactions, at GEAR UP events, is an important way to engage families. It may even be the most effective method – but only for those parents who attend. Obviously, it’s the least effective method for the parents who don’t attend. This is why engaging parents in writing, over the phone, by text message, and through social media is also important.

AZ GEAR UP has promulgated Minimum Standards for Events. The standards address requirements for working with outside speakers/presenters, scheduling and logistics, event promotion, materials for events, event feedback/evaluations, and required data documentation. **GEAR UP Coordinators should read these at the beginning of the year, and review again in preparation for each event.**

Parents are busy people, they may hold more than one job, have several children, and numerous other commitments. If they don’t attend your events, do **not** assume that is because they don’t care about their child’s education. When busy people have to choose between conflicting demands, they consider many factors: which event was scheduled first, which one will most meet their needs, which one is most convenient (date, time, location), which one sounds more interesting/fun, who invited them and how much do they care about their relationship with that person. This section of this toolkit supplements the GEAR UP Event Standards by providing suggestions on how to increase attendance at your events.

**What are GEAR UP Family Events?**

Each GEAR UP school has specific, required parent / family events included in it’s work plan. Each event has an associated budget. Examples of GEAR UP Parent/Family Events include:

- GEAR UP Parent and Student Kick Off Event – provides an orientation to GEAR UP the first year, and an overview of what’s to come each subsequent year
- GEAR UP Parent Financial Literacy Workshop – provides information about the value and cost of post secondary education and options for paying for it
- GEAR UP Parent GUSLA Informational Meeting – provides information about the GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy
- GEAR UP Academic Success Workshop – provides information on ways parents can support and encourage their child through high school
- Career and College Fair – provides access for families directly to admissions representatives and job recruiters so participants can learn about options available for their child after high school
- FAFSA Workshops – provides hands-on assistance to seniors and their parents in completing the FAFSA

**Strategies to increase attendance at GEAR UP Family Events**

- **Set, and communicate, the date as early as possible.**
  Read through your work plan and figure out your overall approach/master plan. Referring to the school’s calendar, schedule all your events for the semester, or even the year, as early as possible. Then send out “save the date” emails, texts, postcards, etc. If you’re the first event on a parent’s calendar, they may “work around it” as other invitations come their way later.
Develop relationships with GEAR UP parents well in advance of your events
Once they know you, and know how much you care about their child, parents will be less likely to say “no” when you invite them to an event.

Ask for input beforehand and feedback afterwards
Early in the school year, even before school starts, reach out to parents (by phone, at other school events, etc.) to tell them about the kinds of events (topics/content) you have scheduled for the year and ask them about their needs/preferences. Consider sending an e-survey to solicit planning input (if we provided X would you attend our event; X= child care, food, a distinguished speaker (by name), etc.) Read every completed event/workshop evaluation form after the event and follow up with parents either in general or specifically to let them know their concerns and or suggestions have been read and are being taken into consideration. See Attachment 5 for a Sample Parent Feedback Form

Call parents to find out why they didn’t attend
This can give you insights into adjustments you could make in the future to increase attendance. E.g., would on-site child care have allowed more parents to attend? If you had joined with another school event could you have ‘caught’ more parents?

Personalize invitations
You can use mail merge, but adding a hand written note to your form letter or flyer (e.g., “I really hope to see you there. Emily is such a great kid!”) can have even bigger payoff.

Have students make presentations at the event
If parents have to get their students to the event to make a presentation, they are likely to stay for the event themselves. Moreover, parents usually want to hear their kids’ presentations.

Ask parents to call other parents to ask them to attend
Peer pressure can work on adults too. And, if it’s their friend calling to invite them, who will “be there too” – that parent is more likely to show up.

Speak their language
Ensure all communications about your event are in the language of your GEAR UP families and that it is clear that information will be presented in their native language at the event.

With State Office approval, and within federal guidelines, provide food
And make sure your invitations and reminders mention it!

Provide multiple reasons for attending
Include in your invitations, emails and marketing materials (including on your website) the valuable take-aways of the event (e.g., what attendees will learn); speakers and/or distinguished guests; the schedule/agenda; photos and quotes from past events; as well as any “extras” like food, door prizes, or games. See flyer in Attachment 2 as an example.

Multiple reminders
If you start with a “save the date” email, text or postcard early in the semester, follow up with multiple invitations and reminders. The initial invitation should go out 4 weeks in advance and
event planners recommend emailing reminders 14 days, 7 days, and 3 days prior to your event. One last reminder, the day before the event is best provided by “all-call” or text messaging. Always provide information about how parents can contact you with questions.

☐ Use incentives, if possible, and tell parents about them when you’re promoting the event
With state office approval, you may use GEAR UP funds to purchase certain types of incentives, and/or you may solicit donations from local businesses for items that could be used as door prizes/incentives. When you’re notifying parents about the event be sure to include information about anything they might “win” by attending.
6. Engaging parents informally / meeting them where they are

As noted in Section 5, GEAR UP parents, like everyone else, are busy. It would be unreasonable to expect they could make it to every GEAR UP event, or even to be available every time you call them. For some parents attending even one school event is challenging. Therefore, to the extent possible, GEAR UP coordinators are encouraged to engage GEAR UP families in a variety of ways, outside of scheduled GEAR UP events. To help ensure the connection that begins during these informal meetings continues, always have a supply of your business cards with you at these events. Two examples are provided below, but there may be other opportunities unique to your community.

- **Attend school events to engage with families**
  Parents may attend school events such as required registration events, parent-student-teacher conferences, and award ceremonies. Be visible and present as families arrive at these events to greet them, check-in, and talk briefly. Approach these interactions purposefully, with the aim to get to know your families, not just to deliver your content or information.

- **Seek opportunities to participate in informal/social activities in the broader school community**
  Parents may attend social events at school, such as after-school sporting events or tournaments, academic competitions, performances, and art shows, with which you are not formally involved, and other community celebrations, fairs or events. Attending such school and community activities can support your family engagement efforts in several ways:
  - It can increase your awareness of community norms so you can better relate to your families
  - It can create shared experiences that can serve as conversation starters or learning opportunities
  - It provides opportunities for you to chat with your families in a comfortable, non-threatening setting
  - It helps to build trust, as families see you as part of their community
7. A framework for strategic, culturally-sensitive family engagement

The considerations and recommendations listed below are intended to help schools successfully and effectively engage parents from any background, with the goal of improving student achievement.

☐ Create a team that focuses on family engagement school-wide/district-wide

Working as a team can enable you to reach more families and help ensure that family engagement strategies can be sustained after the grant ends. To form your team, consider a diverse group of individuals such as parents/guardians, counselors, teachers, administrators, students, parent liaisons, school-based social workers, district-level staff, and other community members.

Effective family engagement must be part of a school-wide effort and must involve district leadership or school principals. Therefore, GEAR UP Coordinators may serve on the school’s family engagement team to ensure GEAR UP efforts are coordinated with the school’s efforts and that the school’s family engagement team considers college awareness and preparation as priorities for their school-wide efforts. However, the focus of the GEAR UP Coordinator’s efforts toward family engagement should be on directly serving the GEAR UP cohort’s families.

☐ Identify previous and current successful family outreach at your school and build on this

Build on success. Talk to staff members and community members to learn about existing efforts and systems that are effectively engaging families at your school. You’ll earn respect by showing others you respect and value them.

☐ Coordinate and communicate with school staff regarding family engagement

Communicating with school staff about your family engagement plans, especially those who work directly with GEAR UP students, can help you achieve your family engagement goals. Suggestions for communicating with staff about your parent engagement plans and goals include:

- Standards for the required, annual “staff orientation to GEAR UP” include providing information about your plans for parent engagement. The powerpoint template provided by the state office includes a slide to be customized to describe your family engagement plans for the year, and your availability as a resource for parents.

- Remind teachers periodically throughout the year to encourage parents to contact you as a resource.

- Utilize the standard ways that your school communicates updates and information with one another to inform of your family engagement plans and outcomes (e.g., “First Tuesday of the month is next week and you know what that means – GEAR UP Taco Tuesday! Our topic this month will be ‘College Fit’. Please encourage your students to attend with their parents.” Or “Over 100 people attended the GEAR UP Kick Off on August 27th! Parents seemed very enthusiastic and eager to be involved”). Some schools communicate these types of messages
during regularly scheduled staff meetings, others use email, interoffice mail (notes left in mail slots), or more formal written reporting processes.

- Coordinate with your counseling office on an on-going basis to avoid duplication of services and conflicts in schedules.

- Teachers might consider offering extra credit to students for presenting at GEAR UP parent events. You could even work collaboratively with a teacher, having students complete career exploration projects throughout a quarter that culminate in presentations by students at a parent event.

- As your relationships with teachers, administrators and staff at your school develop, don’t be afraid to ask for their support, as volunteers or speakers at your family events.

**Actively value and build on families’ strengths**

Acknowledging and valuing “funds of knowledge” – the concept of “funds of knowledge” originally encompassed the historical accumulation of abilities, bodies of knowledge, assets, and cultural ways of interacting (Vélez-Ibañez and Greenberg, 1992). The concept has been expanded to include academic and personal background knowledge, accumulated life experiences, skills and knowledge used to navigate everyday social contexts, and world views structured by broader historically and politically influenced social forces (Hogg 2011 and Rodriguez 2011). In working to engage families, it is important to value the skills/knowledge the families you serve come with, and build upon those experiences and view them as assets.

**Strengthen parent networks** – It is common for parents, who may know each other from the neighborhood or because their children are friends, to advise one another, help each other navigate new situations and address school issues, and support one another’s goals. During events, workshops, etc., allow time for parents to network, facilitate activities that support relationship-building among parents, and create spaces at your school that are family/parent friendly – such as hallways with photos of families at events or graduations, office waiting areas with inviting visuals in languages spoken in the community you serve, and when possible, toys or books for younger children.

**Ask parents to volunteer at your family events** – in varying capacities depending on their unique strengths. You could have some parents help with the sign in sheets as people enter, to ensure the sign-in sheet meets GEAR UP’s data documentation standards (legible; student name associated with each parent name, etc.). Other parents might help with technology, or present about their careers. Some may be willing to make phone calls to encourage parents to attend your events. Most often people are flattered to be asked as it shows you value and trust them.

**Consider having a parent advisory board** -- The board members can support you with ideas, strategies, and support for getting other parents involved. Again, parents you ask to serve on this
board are likely to be flattered. It will be important to listen to, and heed the advice of this board if you want them to stay active and involved. Communicate with your supervisor prior to setting this up to solicit their suggestions, find out any requirements for establishing such a body within your district, and to ensure administrative support.

Avoid “othering” – “othering” is to view or treat a person or group of people as intrinsically different from and alien to oneself. Examples include describing families you work with, with phrases like “they don’t understand,” or telling someone with an ethnic name that “that is a weird name”. Instead, use inclusive language such as “some of our families may not yet be familiar with...”, or “I have not heard that name before.”

Practice awareness of deficit-model thinking, and replace it with empathy, asset-based thinking, unconditional positive regard, goal-oriented thinking.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of deficit model-thinking may include:</th>
<th>Consider a different perspective:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“parents didn’t attend our event because they don’t care”</td>
<td>The times we are available to meet with parents do not work well with their schedule. Let’s find an alternative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“parents don’t understand the US education system/values because they are from a different community/country”</td>
<td>Parents have experience in a different education system. What goals and values for their child do we have in common?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“parents don’t speak English so they can’t communicate with the school”</td>
<td>It must be difficult to be unable to express your questions and concerns about your child’s education. Who in our school or community can help translate and interpret so that we can communicate with families?</td>
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</table>

**Build Relationships and Rapport**

Generally, people are more willing to believe information and accept advice from a trusted source with whom they have a relationship than from a stranger. This is particularly true when it comes to advice about their children; when parents know the source of information truly knows and cares about their children, they are more willing to listen. Therefore, begin engagement efforts with the goal to establish a relationship first, then share information and discuss outcomes. These efforts should start as soon as possible upon a student’s enrollment in the GEAR UP cohort/school, as it takes time to develop meaningful relationships. Some ways to establish authentic relationships with families are:

- **Make positive calls** – at the beginning of a quarter, semester, or school year call families to share positive updates on their students. Make the first call they receive from you a positive one – rather than one of concern about the student.
Family Engagement TOOLKIT

☐ Conduct home visits – visit families homes to learn about them, who they are, how many family members support the child at home, discuss their aspirations for their child, understand any challenges you can support them with, etc. Always schedule in advance and conduct home visits with a colleague.

☐ Communication and Messaging

  - Always practice two-way communication – use every interaction you have with a family to not only provide information (about school, college, their child, etc.) but also to solicit information from them (about their questions, their hopes and goals, their fears and concerns, their expectations of you, for GEAR UP, or for the school as a whole). Invite their participation by asking questions during in-person or phone conversations, soliciting input through surveys or evaluations (see Attachment 5 for an example), and having a ‘comment box’ available in your office or the front office/designated family space. Consider conducting polls or surveys via text (one example, related to soliciting input about events, is mentioned in Section 5).

  - Make information and opportunities to communicate accessible – Ensure all/most families receive the same type and frequency of information to ensure your outreach is equitable. Communicate with families via all platforms available to you- telephone (auto calls AND personalized calls), text message (programmed AND personalized), emails, website announcements, social media, newsletters mailed and sent home with students (see Attachment 4 for a sample newsletter), informational letters/mailer (see Attachment 6 for sample letters), workshops (one-time and series), one-on-one meetings, small group meetings, and home visits.

    - Translate all content to other languages spoken/read in your community.
    - Always follow through with parent questions, concerns, or information you commit to researching and sharing.
    - In every communication inform parents of the best times and ways to reach you. Provide alternative contacts or numbers outside of those times.

☐ Ensure your engagement strategy is culturally informed

Every person and family has customs and beliefs that shape their perspectives. While it is impossible to become an expert in every culture, it is important to acknowledge our own culture as well as learn about the culture of our school community. Learn about others by asking with authentic interest and neutral language. Note that previously listed tips in this toolkit relate to relationship-building and communication. It is through the foundation of relationships and communication with families that culturally informed practices can grow.

Some examples of culturally informed practices include:

  - Scheduling events to avoid/considering cultural holidays
  - Using inclusive language (consider diversity of races, ethnicities, abilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic experiences).
- Selecting a space/room on the school campus for events that is accessible (close to parking, with access to ramps or elevators, etc.)
- If and when appropriate, selecting meeting places for school meetings or workshops that are closer to where most families live, or close to public transportation stops. These places can include elementary schools, public libraries, community centers, etc.
- Collaborate with community members who can inform culturally relevant practices in your community.
- For more detailed information on Cultural Awareness practices visit: https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/uploadedfiles/guide-to-cultural-awareness-iii

☐ Link every interaction to a goal
Ensure that every conversation, event or activity with and for families (outside of relationship-building conversation, which has its own goal) has a clear goal and includes three components:

1. Share what you would like families to know. For example – importance of postsecondary education, career pathway information, financial aid information, admission requirements, their child’s accomplishments or goals, their child’s need to improve academically and/or behaviorally. (In other words, your objective is to provide specific content. For example, “The Sweet 16 courses your child should complete in high school are...”)

2. Inform families that their involvement is important and key to achieving the desired outcome (their child’s success). (In other words, your objective is to demonstrate you value them and to affirm their importance. For example, “As a parent, you are so important in ensuring your child takes the right courses to achieve their goals.”)

3. Inform families of what they can do specifically at home to support their child in achieving specific desired outcomes. (In other words, your objective is to make a call to action by the parent, and to clearly outline their role. For example, “Here is a list of the 16 classes. Your child will register for classes in February, so after that date, check-in with her/him to see if he/she picked the ones that I highlighted on the list. Call me with questions that may arise.”)

☐ Plan events with families’ needs in mind – their time, schedule, interests
- Incentivize family participation by including student participation as presenters, greeters, volunteers, etc.
- Schedule events during a time of day that works best for your community. Some families may work in the daytime so evening events may be best. Other communities may have evening work, so mornings are best. Consider hosting the same type of meeting/event multiple times (morning/evening/weekends). Another consideration is for seasonal work. If families typically have work seasons for some months, schedule most major meetings/events around those months.
- Consider the length of time families are available. If time is limited, schedule short check-ins during drop-off or pick-up times before and after school.
- When hosting events on campus: reserve a space that is appropriate in size, includes necessary technology, and is accessible to all; reserve and clearly mark parking that is
closet to the meeting place; create and display posters/signs that guide parents to the right
room; solicit support from greeters to guide families to the meeting room; arrange for
care for by student volunteers with an approved teacher/advisor; serve food if the event
extends over a long period of time or if the event occurs during a typical meal time, with
State Office approval. *Arizona GEAR UP Event Standards provide other relevant
requirements for GEAR UP events.*

Share relevant content with families (college-readiness)

The college-readiness topics that are most important for families to be familiar with when their
children are in 8th and 9th grade are:

- GEAR UP defines ‘college’ as any type of education after high school, which may include a
  trade school, community college, or university
- The importance of postsecondary education
- The admission requirements for public universities in AZ and that the classes students take
  in high school all matter
- The various forms of financial aid available, emphasizing that college can be affordable,
  while also covering what it costs
- Grades and attendance are important because they may help their child get into the school
  of their choice, and may help earn them more scholarships. The meaning of GPA and how to
  calculate it.

**Most importantly, share with families that:**

- Regardless of specific information parents know/don’t know about their child’s current
  school or college requirements, it is important that parents share with their children *every
day* that they value education and that they have high expectations (for their academic
abilities, the goals they will accomplish, and the positive impact they can have in their school
community now and, more broadly, later in life).

When sharing college access information be sensitive and aware that parents might not be
excited about their child going off to college until they understand the process and the
motivation behind this goal as well as how this aligns to their values and customs. Remember
that parents may have various jobs and careers so be aware when using examples of jobs that
are more or less desirable and expressing the idea that college graduates are ‘better-off.’ Use
facts to encourage a college-going culture and do not minimize experiences of those without
college-degrees.

Get More Ideas

An effective family engagement strategy that supports a college-going culture is specific to every
community. For an example of an 8th or 9th grade family engagement plan for the year, see the
outline in *Attachment 7.*
Attachments 1-7
sample forms, letters and documents
Sample GEAR UP coordinator phone script for initial contact

Feel free to use your own scripts or change to best serve your parents and school.

Student Name ________________________________  Parent/Guardian Name ___________________

Date of Contact ___________ Start Time_______ End Time_______ or Duration__________

Hello-

This is ________ the GEAR UP Coordinator from _____ High School.  May I please speak with
__________?  Is this a good time to talk to you for a few minutes about __________ and how they can
benefit from GEAR UP?

Hola –

Habla ______ la/el Cordinador/a del programa GEAR UP de la escuela ______. ¿Podría hablar con ______?
¿Es este un buen momento para hablar unos minutos sobre __________ y como el programa de GEAR UP
los podría beneficiar?

If the answer is no - What is the best time to call you back or would you like to call me when you are
available?  No hay problema. ¿A que hora le seria más conveniente que le llamará?

Follow up notes ________________________________________________________________

If the answer is yes

I want to let you know you that ______ is a part of an amazing program at our school. It is called GEAR UP
and it will allow your child the opportunity to receive additional resources and information about
planning and preparing for options after high school.  Hopefully, you have been able to read the letter I
sent to you describing the program, but if not a copy of that letter (or detailed information about GEAR
UP) is available on the school website.  As the program Coordinator, I wanted to let you know I’m here to
support you and your child.  Do you have any insights or things that you would like to share with me that
could help me best support ________?

Solo le quería decir que ahora ______ es parte de un gran programa en su escuela. El programa se llama
GEAR UP y a través de él tendrá la oportunidad de recibir apoyos adicionales y también información sobre
como planear y prepararse para estudiar después de que termine de la preparatoria (preparatoria is
common in many Spanish-speaking countries).  Ojalá aya tenido tiempo de leer la carta que le envíe por
correo que describe el programa con más detalle. La misma información también está disponible en
nuestra página de internet. Le quiero dejar saber que yo como Cordinador/a estoy aquí para servirle.
¿Tiene usted algo que quisiera compartir conmigo sobre sus aspiraciones o metas para la educación de su
hijo/a, o alguna idea o sugerencia de como podria yo apoyarlos a ustedes y sus metas?

Notes: __________________________________________________________________________
Do you have any questions for me at this time? ¿hay alguna pregunta que pudiera contestar?

No – thank you for allowing me to talk with you about GEAR UP. We are hosting a family event on [date]__________ about [topic]_______and we will have ________(e.g., resources, experts, food, childcare, etc). I’ll be sending reminders (by text/flyers home with your student/etc) so watch for those!

Gracias por darme su tiempo para poder platicar con usted sobre GEAR UP. Proximamente el DATE tendremos una reunión para las familias donde compartiremos información sobre TOPIC ___________. Habrá (comida, cuidado de niños, un/a presentador distinguido en la comunidad, experto/a en _____). Me gustaría tanto que nos acompañara. Ya que se acerque la fecha le voy a enviar la invitación a través de texto y correo electrónico con la información para recordarle y también para que la comparta con otros padres.

If they have questions listen to their questions and if needed you can always ask to call them back with an answer or have a list of numbers if you think it would be better for them to call directly.

___________________________________________________________________________________

Again, thank you for taking my call. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me –

De nuevo, muchas gracias por tomar mi llamada. Cuando usted guste me puede contactar con preguntas o sugerencias.

provide contact info, social media info or other relevant options

..........................................................................................................................................................
Sample phone script to share positive student updates

Student Name ________________________________ Parent/Guardian Name ___________________
Date of Contact ___________ Start Time ______ End Time _______ or Duration __________

Hello,
This is ______ the ______ High School GEAR UP Coordinator. May I please speak to ________?

Hola, soy (your name) el/la Coordinador/a del programa de GEAR UP en ________High School. ¿Podría hablar con______?

Is this a good time for you to talk with me for a few minutes about___________?
¿Es este un buen momento para hablar uno minutos sobre __________?

No

When is a better time to reach you?
¿Cuando es mejor tiempo para llamarle?


Yes

The reason for my call today is I wanted to let you know... (that I am so proud, that I’ve been very impressed..., that I noticed..., that I just met with ______ to discuss his future and...) .

We really appreciate this type of (achievement, improvement, behavior). We just wanted to say thank you (congratulate you) and to see if you have any questions for us today about GEAR UP or about _________________.

Thank you for taking my call. I also want to remind you that the next GEAR UP family event is scheduled for [date and time] _____________. I hope you can make it!

La razón de me llamada hoy es para dejarle saber que ... (estoy tan orgulloso/a, estoy impresionado/a, e visto mejoramiento en, acabo de palticar con _____ sobre sus planes a futuro y...) .

Nos da tanto gusto ver este (logro, mejoramiento, comportamiento). Solo le quería dar las gracias y (felicitarla/o) pro el apoyo que le brinda a su hijo/a. Tambien quería saber si tiene alguna pregunta sobre el programa GEAR UP o algún otro asunto.

Muchas gracias por tomar mi llamada. Le quería recordar que la próxima reunión de GEAR UP esta programada para el dia DATE. Espero verla/o allí.
Sample phone script for parent contact to prevent credit loss due to attendance

Student Name ___________________________ Parent/Guardian Name _______________________

Date of Contact __________ Start Time ______ End Time ______ or Duration ______

This is __________ the GEAR UP Coordinator at _______ High School. May I please speak to
_____________? Is this a good time to talk for a few minutes about services that are available to support
[child’s name] ________ with ______________?

No – When is a good time to call back or would you like to call me back when it is good for you? ¿Cuando
es major tiempo para llamarle – o le gustaría mejor a usted llamarme a mi cuando pueda?

Follow Up Note________________________________________________________

Yes – great, first of all I want you to know that I enjoy working with ______ (or start with a strength,
achievement, or potential I am proud of _____’s perseverance in their math class). Pause for parent’s
response.

I really want ______to be successful this school year and one thing I did notice is that _____ has
____absences this semester and at 10 absences students lose credit. If that happens, ______ might
have to attend summer school or a special credit recovery class before or after school. Worst case
scenario, s/he wouldn’t graduate on time, with the Class of 20XX. I would prefer if that didn’t
happen, and I imagine you feel the same. I’m calling you now, because if action is taken now,
s/he still has the chance to catch up and stay on track. ______ is passing____ classes at this time, but his/her absences are effecting ____ classes. What are your
insights about the reasons they are missing school (or this class/these classes)?
Que bien, gracias – antes que nada le quiero compartir que me gusta trabajar con su hijo/a _____ porque (es una persona muy responsable/amigable/de buenos modales, ha logrado ____, se ha dedicado mucho a subir su calificación en matemáticas.). Pause for parent’s response.

Quisiera ver que ____ sea exitoso/a este año escolar y he notado que _______ ha faltado a clases __ veces y en nuestra escuela los estudiantes arriesgan perder el crédito en su clase si faltan 10 o más veces en un semestre. Si pierde crédito en sus clases, ________ tendrá que asistir a la escuela de verano o tendrá que inscribirse en clases para recuperar créditos que se llevan acabo antes y después de la hora regular de clases. Arriesga también hasta no poderse graduar al mismo tiempo que sus compañeros de la clase del 20XX. Preferiría que no suceda eso. Le estoy llamando porque si toma acción hoy, todavía tiene oportunidad de salvar sus créditos. Su hijo/a esta pasando la/s clase/s de __________, pero sus faltas lo/la están afectando en la/s clase/s de _____. ¿Sabe usted cuales pueden ser algunas razones porque está faltando su hijo – y si hay halgo como le podamos ayudar a resolver eso?

Possible Answers and possible solutions – check with your district to customize your script

- The student has chronic medical issues – give the parent the school’s policy and procedure for this situation.
- The student is baby-sitting younger siblings – give parent resources for community assistance. You might also say ‘Let me talk with the counseling office to see if they have any other suggestions or ideas.’ Some schools are able to allow a late start for students with special situations if they are on track credit wise.
- The student does not like school – explore more with the parent to see what the issues are and if the issues are extensive, consider scheduling a meeting with the parents and the student’s guidance counselor.
- Academic Struggles – inform of tutoring availability; help them to resolve any time conflicts. Suggest that the parent encourage the student to talk to their teacher or teachers and if needed have you or the parent follow up. Inform the parent about the school process for parent meetings.
- Student is not connecting with school – Provide information about school support groups, mentoring, or peer mentoring, counseling office and give the student a list of clubs and extra-curricular activities. Tell the parent, their child is always welcome in the GEAR UP room.
- The parent is at a loss as to how to motivate their child to attend school --provide understanding and empathy towards the parent – what can I do to help? Would you like me to talk to him/her on the phone and see if we can come up with a plan? Provide parents
with as many GEAR UP Resources and school opportunities as possible so they can encourage their child to take advantage of the opportunities. For example, Did you know that _____ can eat his/her lunch in the GEAR UP Room? Offer other applicable GEAR UP or school supports.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. I will be sure to follow up with ___________ this week, but your support makes all the difference! Gracias por tomarse el tiempo para hablar contigo. Esta semana voy hablar con ____. Su apoyo es lo más importante para hacer la diferencia.
GEAR UP FRESHMAN KICK OFF

And first Taco Tuesday Event of the Year!

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

Exciting times! Your kid is in high school! At this event you’ll hear from students and administrators about how to make it a great four years!

More info on our website: lincolnhhsaz.org/gearup

TUES SEP 3
5:30-7:00PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT MARTY AT (928) 555 5555
We (Parents/ Guardians and student) have read the 2019 AZ GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy’s Student Expectations of Conduct and we agree the student will follow all rules and guidelines for student conduct. We realize that NAU/AZ GEAR UP reserves the right to ask the student to leave the program for medical, disciplinary, or other reasons. If asked to leave, we understand the student must leave NAU within 24 hours, and we (the parents/guardians) must arrange transportation. If the student is asked to leave for disciplinary reasons, we understand that the student may not be permitted to attend future NAU/AZ GEAR UP summer programs.

We understand that under extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary for NAU/AZ GEAR UP to search students’ rooms and belongings unannounced, in the interest of your student’s and others’ safety and well-being.

Parents:

- I am responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing any property that my child damages at the site.
- I am responsible for any expenses which are not covered by the tuition, room, and meals fees.
- I am responsible for any medical costs incurred by my child while enrolled in the program.
- Should my child be selected to attend, I must have the Medical Form properly completed by the appropriate deadline. **I understand that my child will not be admitted to the program if the properly completed forms are not returned.**

I give permission for my child to:

- participate in GUSLA-sponsored trips off-campus, including, but not limited to field trips. I understand that my child will be supervised by GUSLA staff. I agree that NAU/GUSLA employees, who are NAU Authorized drivers, may transport my child to program activities while attending GUSLA.
- be videotaped, photographed, and interviewed for broadcast or publication, and/or have a sample of his/her work broadcast or published. I understand that GUSLA will exercise discretion regarding media contact.
- complete all assessments and surveys that GUSLA deems necessary to evaluate program effectiveness.

As the parent or guardian of _________________________________, I understand the conditions of the AZ GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy and consent to them as outlined. I give permission for my student to participate in the AZ GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy at NAU.

_______________________________________________________________________________

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Student:

I agree to follow all rules and expectations for participation in the AZ GEAR UP Summer Leadership Academy at NAU, and understand that my continued membership in the NAU/GUSLA community depends on my willingness to follow these rules.

_______________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature

Date
The sample family newsletter incorporates several effective strategies for maximizing positive parent engagement, including:

- Photos of students
- Article written by students
- Pleasing format -- white space, simple sans serif font, simple graphics
- Not too lengthy
"It is important to have conversations about college at home. Parents can help students set their mind on going to college and complete a college degree.”

- Anthony Soto and Nestor Tapia

Survey Finds SLHS Students Are Going to College

GEAR UP students, Anthony Soto and Nestor Tapia, surveyed 99 juniors about their postsecondary plans and general college knowledge. Students answered five questions, such as “have your parents talked to you about college” and “do you plan on going to college.” The purpose of the survey was to encourage parents to talk with, and advise, their students about their future. Ninety-one students reported that they plan to go to college and 81 students said they have had conversations with their parents about college. The survey also found that, in general, students are not aware of how much college costs and half of them do not know the requirements for the college or university they plan to attend.

It is important to have conversations about college at home. Parents can help students set their mind on going to college and complete a college degree. Parents can help students achieve greatness and become someone in life. According to ProCon.org more and more jobs are requiring college degrees. Also, on average a college graduate will earn more than people who don't graduate from college. College is important even if the value is not easily seen; four years of college can impact how you live the rest of your life.
The ACT

The ACT is a US college admissions test. The ACT measures what a student learned in high school to assess his/her academic readiness for college-level courses. The ACT scores show colleges how prepared a student is to succeed in higher education.

The ACT measures a student’s skills in four core areas – English, Math, Reading, and Science. There is also a writing section, which is optional. This year, most GEAR UP students will not take the writing section of the test.

The ACT is a ‘multiple choice’ test, which means students choose the best possible answer of choices from a list. English, Reading and Science sections have four choices of answers for each question, and the math section has five choices of answers for each question. The ACT test is ‘timed’, which means that there is a time limit to answer all of the questions in a section. For example, students have 60 minutes to answer 60 math questions in the math section.

Why is taking the ACT important?

A good ACT score gives students a greater chance of being accepted to the college of their choice.

ACT scores will highlight areas in which students may need to improve, and they can plan accordingly before taking the test again in senior year, if necessary.

Taking the ACT (and doing well on it) could lead to a full tuition scholarship at some schools and generous scholarships at many others.

What students need to know about test prep and testing at their school

The ACT will be offered to all GEAR UP students on **April 19th, 2017**. Please make sure your student is on time to school and is here all day. Students should begin preparing for this test now. Junior-level teachers are incorporating ACT preparation in some of the daily bell work during class, and test prep sessions will be offered Monday through Thursday April 10-13 after school 3-4:30 p.m. Students must sign up for the subjects they want to work on. Refreshments will be provided. In addition it is still important for students to also study on their own. Study materials are available for students at the GEAR UP office.

Parent Information Session at AZ Western College

Junior parents were invited to attend a parent information session at Arizona Western College (AWC) on October 5, 2016. Over 60 parents attended!

Marlena Navarro and Maria Guzman, both part of AWC faculty, provided valuable information for parents to help their students transition from high school to AWC. Marlena and Maria talked about the application process, cost of attending, programs offered, placement testing, scholarships, financial aid, and transition to a university.

Maria recommended that “parents should go with their kids when their sons or daughters are starting to visit the college campus. I believe their support will motivate [them] to get into college”.

THANK YOU

We would like to express our immense gratitude to Arizona Western College (AWC) for providing support to help our students more easily transition to college!
Parents can schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor or GEAR UP Coordinator at San Luis High School to discuss their student’s transition to community college or university. For more information contact NAME at XXX.XXX.XXXX

**FAFSA—Free Application for Federal Student Aid: the ticket to federal money for college and many other types of scholarships.**

The FAFSA, officially known as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is the form that families fill out to apply for federal grants, loans, and work-study funds for college students. The FAFSA is administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

A student’s eligibility for federal grants (which don’t have to be repaid) and federal loans (which do have to be repaid) will generally be based on the student’s family’s financial need, as determined by the information that the student supplies on the FAFSA. On the application, the student will be asked to report the family’s income (based on the parents’ tax records), as well as information about family size. Students typically file the FAFSA for the first time in the fall semester of their senior year of high school (the FAFSA will become available October 1st, annually), and continue filing it once per year while in college.

GEAR UP students and families can get a preview of whether the FAFSA is likely to qualify them for federal grants by using the FAFSA4caster on the US Department of Education website. Even if the FAFSA4caster indicates that your family’s income and assets put you out of the range for federal grants, it is still worth completing the FAFSA because most colleges, state scholarship agencies, and foundations use the FAFSA in deciding who gets their scholarship money, as well as how much each student will receive. Also, filing a FAFSA automatically qualifies you for low-cost federal student loans of at least $5,500 a year.

You can find out more about the FAFSA, including the deadlines for completing it, at the Financial Aid website (studentaid.ed.gov).


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**Upcoming Events**

March 8 – ASU Downtown Campus Tour – Phoenix - Permission slips due March 3

April 10-13 – ACT Prep 3 - 4:30 p.m, Students must sign up for the subjects they want to work on. Room Numbers TBA. Refreshments will be provided.

April 19 – ACT Test Get a good night’s rest and eat a healthy breakfast beforehand!

May 19 – Career Expo – details coming soon
Dear Parents,

Your students are juniors! We can hardly believe students will be walking the graduation line next school year.

As you know, we meet with every single GEAR UP student each year to check that they are on track for graduation and their own post-secondary plan. This year we are talking to students about applying to college/university/vocational programs, placement testing, financial aid, taking college courses before graduation, scholarships and so much more.

As we do every year, we are also planning and hosting many different activities with the goal of exposing students and families to postsecondary options and other opportunities. Students have participated in college and career fairs, university field trips, financial aid workshops, and a college informational workshop held in the evening at AWC so families could attend.

We will continue to work with students throughout the year to provide the information and services they need to successfully transition to postsecondary education programs after high school. See “Upcoming Events” in this newsletter.

As always, our door is open to parents of junior students. If you have any questions, please feel free to give us a call at XXX.XXX.XXXX. We are always happy to help you and your student with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Coordinator name(s)
GEAR UP Parent Feedback Form

Thank you for attending this GEAR UP event. Your involvement makes a meaningful difference in your child’s success. Please give us your feedback so we can keep improving our work.

1. Please evaluate the quality of this GEAR UP event by circling the number that corresponds to your response or filling in the corresponding bubble like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. This event gave me some help or information I needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Bad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. This event helped me to prepare my child for entering and succeeding in college or a career.

C. Overall, the quality of this GEAR UP event was

2. What did you find most helpful about this event?

3. How could this event be improved?

4. What additional information do you need from us to support your student’s success?

Your student’s name (Optional): ____________________________________

Thank you! Please return the form before you leave.
Sample letters include

- Welcome Letter English – describes program
- Welcome Letter Spanish – describes program

- Postsecondary Plan Letters English (military, workforce, continuing education) – informs parents what child’s postsecondary plan is
- Postsecondary Plan Letters Spanish (military, workforce, continuing education) – informs parents what child’s postsecondary plan is

- Text Messaging Service Letter English – informs parents of texting service
- Text Messaging Service Letter Spanish – informs parents of texting service
To: Parent or Guardian of <Student Name>
From: <Name>, GEAR UP Coordinator
Date: <Insert Date>

Northern Arizona University (NAU) / Arizona GEAR UP and <District Name> are pleased to welcome you and your child to the GEAR UP Class of 2018 at <High School Name>!

GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, is a free program that helps students succeed in school. It helps families and students learn about choices for education after high school and how to pay for it. GEAR UP believes that every student should have the opportunity to continue their education after high school, and that every student should receive the support and information needed throughout middle and high school, to successfully pursue that opportunity after high school graduation. As new students enter the Class of 2018, we welcome them and their families to GEAR UP.

What kinds of services does GEAR UP provide?

GEAR UP provides Program Coordinators at each school. My job, as the GEAR UP Coordinator at <High School Name>, is to help GEAR UP students succeed. A signature service of GEAR UP has been a Postsecondary Education Planning Session (PEPS) for every student, every year. This year, the Class of 2018 are seniors, so PEPS and PEPS follow up will focus on helping students achieve their plans for after high school graduation. I will be meeting with new students as soon as possible to help them identify their plan (University/College, Trade School, Military or Workforce) and take the steps necessary to reach their goals. If you would like more information about PEPS, please contact me.

How can families be involved in GEAR UP?

According to experts, when parents are involved in their child’s education, the student’s grades, attendance and behavior improve. GEAR UP is always interested in hearing from you about how the program is benefiting your child and any suggestions you may have to improve the program. We are all part of a team dedicated to your child’s success!

I look forward to working with you and your 12th grader throughout this year. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you would like more information. I can be reached by phone at <phone number> or by e-mail at <e-mail address>.

Sincerely,

GEAR UP Coordinator

If applicable: Follow us on Facebook - <FBPage Name>

Optional - Enc: Bio & Photo
Padre o Guardián de <Nombre del Estudiante>

De:   <Nombre>, Coordinador de GEAR UP

Fecha: <Inserte Fecha>

Northern Arizona University (NAU) / Arizona GEAR UP y <Nombre del Distrito> se complacen en darle la bienvenida a usted y a su niño a GEAR UP Clase del 2018 en <Nombre de High School> (Escuela Preparatoria)!

GEAR UP, lo que significa **Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs**, (Obteniendo Conocimiento y Preparación Temprana para Programas de Pre-Licenciatura) es un programa gratuito que ayuda a estudiantes a tener éxito en la escuela. Ayuda a familias y estudiantes a aprender acerca de opciones para educación después de high school y cómo pagar por eso. GEAR UP cree que cada estudiante debe tener la oportunidad de continuar su educación después de high school y que cada estudiante debe recibir el apoyo e información necesaria durante secundaria y high school, para proseguir con éxito esa oportunidad después de la graduación de high school. Al entrar los nuevos estudiantes del 2018, les damos la bienvenida a ellos y sus familias a GEAR UP.

¿Qué clase de servicios GEAR UP proporciona?
GEAR UP proporciona Coordinadores de Programa en cada escuela. Mi trabajo como Coordinador de GEAR UP en <Nombre de High School> es ayudar a los estudiantes de GEAR UP a tener éxito. Un servicio exclusivo de GEAR UP ha sido Postsecondary Education Planning Session (PEPS) (Sesión de Planeación de Educación Postsecundaria) para cada estudiante, cada año. Este año, la Clase de 2018 son estudiantes del último año (seniors) así que PEPS y las acciones que debe completar el estudiante después de PEPS se van a enfocar en ayudar a los estudiantes a lograr sus planes para después de la graduación de high school. Yo me estaré reuniendo con nuevos estudiantes tan pronto como sea posible para ayudarlos a identificar su plan (Universidad/Colegio, Escuela Técnica, Milicia o Fuerza de Trabajo) y tomar los pasos necesarios para alcanzar sus metas. Si a usted le gustaría más información acerca de PEPS, favor de comunicarse conmigo.

¿Cómo pueden las familias involucrarse en GEAR UP?
De acuerdo a los expertos, cuando los padres están involucrados en la educación de su niño, las calificaciones, asistencia y comportamiento del estudiante mejoran.
GEAR UP está siempre interesado en oír de ustedes acerca de cómo el programa está beneficiando a su niño y cualquier sugerencia usted pudiera tener para mejorar el programa. Todos somos parte de un equipo dedicado al éxito de su niño!

Estoy en espera de trabajar con usted y su estudiante del 12vo grado durante todo este año. Siéntase libre de ponerse en contacto conmigo con cualquier pregunta o si le gustaría más información. Yo puedo ser contactado por teléfono al <número telefónico> o por correo electrónico al <domicilio electrónico>. 

Sinceramente,

Coordinador de GEAR UP
Si aplica: Siganos en Facebook - <Nombre de la Página de FB>
Opcional – Incluya biografía y Foto
Dear Parent of <studentfirstname> <studentlastname>,

The GEAR UP mission at <SchoolName> High School is to increase the number of students who continue their education beyond High School. A signature service of GEAR UP is a Postsecondary Education Planning Session (PEPS) for every student every year. Last year, when the GEAR UP students, including <studentfirstname> were in 11th grade, I worked with each student to decide on their specific plan after high school. This year I am meeting again with each GEAR UP senior to provide assistance with the steps needed to achieve their plan.

According to our records, <studentfirstname> plans to enter the military after high school graduation. A military recruitment officer can best guide your <son/daughter> through this process. If your <son/daughter> has changed plans, and decided to attend a university, college or vocational school, please contact me as soon as possible, and I will be happy to provide financial aid information and assist with applications.

Sincerely,

GEAR UP Coordinator

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
Dear Parent of <studentfirstname> <studentlastname>,

The GEAR UP mission at <SchoolName> is to increase the number of students who continue their education beyond High School. A signature service of GEAR UP is a Postsecondary Education Planning Session (PEPS) for every student every year. Last year, when the GEAR UP students, including <studentfirstname>, were in 11th grade, I worked with each student to decide on their specific plan after high school. This year I am meeting again with each GEAR UP senior to provide assistance with the steps needed to achieve their plan.

According to our records, <studentfirstname> plans to enter the workforce full-time after high school graduation. I can help <studentfirstname> prepare a resume or fill out job applications if that would be helpful. Or, if <she/he> has changed plans, and would like to combine work with community college, vocational school, or to attend a postsecondary education program full time, please contact me as soon as possible, and I will be happy to provide financial aid information and assist with applications.

Sincerely,

GEAR UP Coordinator

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
Dear Parent of <studentfirstname> <studentlastname>,

The GEAR UP mission at <SchoolName> is to increase the number of students who continue their education beyond High School. A signature service of GEAR UP is a Postsecondary Education Planning Session (PEPS) for every student every year. Last year, when the students, including <studentfirstname> were in 11th grade, I worked with each student to decide on their specific plan after high school. This year I am meeting again with each GEAR UP senior to provide assistance with the steps needed to achieve their plan.

According to our records, <studentfirstname> plans to attend <first choice college> after high school graduation. This year will be a very busy and exciting time for your family and I want to be as helpful as possible in guiding <studentfirstname> through the application process and assisting with exploring financial aid opportunities. If <studentfirstname> has changed plans for education after high school, please contact me as soon as possible, so I can provide the proper assistance.

To be considered for financial aid, you and <studentfirstname> must complete a “FAFSA” (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Completing and submitting the FAFSA is the only way to access federal grants, loans and work-study jobs to help pay for college so it is extremely important. The application window for filing the FAFSA opens on October 1, 2017. Students and parents are required to create an FSA (Federal Student Aid) ID, made up of a username and password, to access certain U.S. Department of Education websites such as the FAFSA online. If you and/or your student have not yet created an FSA ID, please visit INSERTLINK to create one before October 1st. Please contact me if you are unable to create an FSA ID. I will be in contact with you in the coming weeks and months with more information about the FAFSA.

Please contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to working with you and <studentfirstname> throughout this exciting year.

Sincerely,

GEAR UP Coordinator

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
Estimado Padre de <nombre del estudiante> <apellido del estudiante>,

La misión de GEAR UP en <Nombre de la Escuela> High School es el aumentar el número de estudiantes quienes continúan su educación más allá de High School. Un servicio destacado de GEAR UP es la Sesión de Planeación de Educación Postsecundaria (Postsecondary Education Planning Session) (PEPS) para cada estudiante cada año. El año pasado, cuando los estudiantes de GEAR UP, incluyendo <nombre del estudiante> estaba en el 11º grado, yo trabaje con cada estudiante para decidir en su plan específico después de high school. Este año me reunirá de nuevo con cada estudiante GEAR UP para proporcionarles ayuda con los pasos necesarios para lograr su plan.

De acuerdo a nuestros récords, <nombre del estudiante> planea entrar a la milicia después de graduarse. Un oficial militar de reclutamiento puede guiar mejor a su <hijo/hija> a través de este proceso. Si su <hijo/hija> ha cambiado de planes, y decide asistir a la Universidad, Colegio o escuela vocacional, por favor póngase en contacto conmigo tan pronto como sea posible. Yo estaré feliz de proporcionar información de ayuda financiera y ayudar con solicitudes.

Sinceramente,

Coordinador de GEAR UP

*Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*
*(Obteniendo Conocimiento y Preparación Temprana para Programas de Pre-Licenciatura)*
Estimado Padre de <nombre del estudiante> <apellido del estudiante>,

La misión de GEAR UP en <Nombre de la Escuela> High School es el aumentar el número de estudiantes quienes continúan su educación más allá de High School. Un servicio destacado de GEAR UP es la Sesión de Planeación de Educación Postsecundaria (Postsecondary Education Planning Session) (PEPS) para cada estudiante cada año. El año pasado, cuando los estudiantes de GEAR UP, incluyendo <nombre del estudiante> estaban en el 11º. grado, yo trabajé con cada estudiante para decidir en su plan específico después de high school. Este año me reuniré de nuevo con cada estudiante GEAR UP para proporcionarles ayuda con los pasos necesarios para lograr su plan.

De acuerdo a nuestros récords, <nombre del estudiante> planea entrar a la fuerza trabajadora de tiempo completo después de graduarse. Yo le puedo ayudar a <nombre del estudiante> a preparar un Currículum o llenar solicitudes de trabajo si eso va a ser de ayuda. O, si <él/ella> ha cambiado de planes, y le gustaría combinar trabajo con colegio comunitario, escuela vocacional, o asistir a un programa de educación post-secundaria tiempo completo, por favor póngase en contacto conmigo tan pronto como sea posible y yo estaré feliz de proporcionar información de ayuda financiera y ayudar con las solicitudes.

Sinceramente,

Coordinador de GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
(Obteniendo Conocimiento y Preparación Temprana para Programas de Pre-Licenciatura)
El Plan del Estudiante es continuar su educación

[MEMBRETE DE LA ESCUELA]

Estimado Padre de <nombre del estudiante> <apellido del estudiante>,

La misión de GEAR UP en <Nombre de la Escuela> High School es el aumentar el número de estudiantes quienes continúan su educación más allá de High School. Un servicio destacado de GEAR UP es la Sesión de Planeación de Educación Postsecundaria (Postsecondary Education Planning Session) (PEPS) para cada estudiante cada año. El año pasado, cuando los estudiantes de GEAR UP, incluyendo <nombre del estudiante> estaban en el 11º grado, yo trabajé con cada estudiante para decidir en su plan específico después de high school. Este año me reuniré de nuevo con cada estudiante GEAR UP para proporcionarles ayuda con los pasos necesarios para lograr su plan.

De acuerdo a nuestros records, <nombre del estudiante> planea asistir a <primera opción de colegio> después de graduarse. Este año va a ser un tiempo muy ocupado y emocionante para su familia y a mí me gustaría ofrecer tanta ayuda como sea posible en guiar a <nombre del estudiante> a través del proceso de llenar solicitudes y ayudar con explorar las oportunidades de ayuda financiera. Si <nombre del estudiante> ha cambiado sus planes de educación después de high school, por favor péngase en contacto conmigo tan pronto como sea posible, para que yo le pueda proporcionar la ayuda apropiada.

Para ser considerado para ayuda financiera, usted y <nombre del estudiante> debe completar un “FAFSA” (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) (Solicitud Gratuita para Ayuda Federal al Estudiante). Completar y remitir el FAFSA es la única forma de accesar concesiones federales, préstamos y trabajos de estudio-trabajo para ayudar a pagar por el colegio, así que es extremadamente importante. La ventana para solicitudes al FAFSA se abre el 1o. de octubre, 2017. Los estudiantes y sus padres son requeridos en crear una Identificación para FSA (Federal Student Aid) (Ayuda Federal al Estudiante), hecha de un nombre de usuario y una clave, para entrar a ciertos lugares de la red del Departamento de Educación, tales como el FAFSA en línea. Si usted y/o su estudiante no han creado una identificación FSA, por favor visite https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm para crear una antes del 1o. de octubre. Por favor péngase en contacto conmigo si usted no puede crear una identificación FSA. Yo estaremos en contacto con usted en las próximas semanas con más información acerca de FAFSA.

Por favor péngase no dude en contactarme si usted tiene algunas preguntas. Estaré en espera de trabajar con usted y <nombre del estudiante> a través de este año tan memorable

Sinceramente,

Coordinador de GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
(Obteniendo Conocimiento y Preparación Temprana para Programas de Pre-Licenciatura)
May 2018

To the parents/guardians of:

Student name
Address

Dear Parent/Guardian of Student Name

We in the Arizona GEAR UP State Office have truly enjoyed working with the GEAR UP staff and others at Name of High School to support you and student’s first name, who have been a part of GEAR UP since 2015.

As graduation approaches, GEAR UP recognizes that the transition to life after high school is a critical period -- whether a student is planning to go to college, university, or trade school, enlist in the military, or enter the workforce. A parent’s role and positive influence is a key part of that successful transition. That is why we are happy to inform you of a service through the State GEAR UP Office that will continue to be available to you and student’s first name-- and all students in the Class of 2018 – whatever their plans after high school.

That service is text messaging and we are writing to tell you how you can take part. By joining the parent GEAR UP Text Message service, txtGU – available at no cost -- you will have a valuable resource at your fingertips over the next year. The service can benefit you in one of two ways: one, for getting answers to questions that come up (whatever they may be), or two, to simply help you stay informed with information specific to your child’s plan (whether that be college, military, workforce, etc.). If you sign up for the texting service you can expect to receive no more than one text per week, and if you don’t sign up, you will not receive these general, ongoing messages from txtGU, but can still text questions to us at any time and receive a response.

**To sign-up to receive ongoing messages, simply text “Yes” to XXX-XXX-XXXX.**

Enclosed you will find a magnet and two key cards with the txtGU number. We hope you will place the magnet on your fridge, and one key card on your key chain and one on Dorothy’s key chain, so you will have our number at hand when questions or concerns arise.

We hope that you will invite us to continue to support you in 2018-19 via txtGU. We look forward to texting with you! If you have questions about this service, please feel free to contact Name of Contact at email or number.

Sincerely,

*The txtGU Team*

Arizona GEAR UP State Office

* GEAR UP does not charge for this service; if your cell phone service provider charges, their standard text messaging rates will apply.
Para los padres/tutores de:

Student name
Address

Estimados padres/tutores de Student Name,

A sido un placer para nosotros en la Oficina Estatal de Arizona GEAR UP trabajar junto al personal de GEAR UP y otros en Name of High School para apoyarlos a ustedes y a student’s first name, quien han formado parte del programa de GEAR UP desde el año 2015.

La graduación de su hijo/a se acerca y GEAR UP reconoce que la transición después de la preparatoria es una etapa crítica para todos los estudiantes independientemente de si planean ir al colegio, Universidad, escuela técnica, entrar al ejército, o trabajar. Los padres de familia y su influencia positiva forman una gran parte en hacer esta transición exitosa para los jóvenes. Por esta razón, con gusto les informamos de un servicio que continuará por parte de la Oficina Estatal de GEAR UP para ustedes y para student’s first name – y para todos los estudiantes de la Clase del 2018 - sin importar cuáles son sus planes después de graduarse.

El servicio que seguiremos ofreciendo es de mensajes de texto y hoy le escribimos para decirle cómo puede participar. Si usted se inscribe al servicio de mensajes de texto para padres, txtGU – disponible sin costo5 --tendrá un recurso valioso en la palma de su mano. El servicio le puede beneficiar de dos maneras: una, usted podrá recibir respuestas a cualquier duda, o dos, usted puede mantenerse enterado con información específica al plan de su hijo/a (ya sea Universidad, servir en el ejército, o trabajo, u otros). Si usted se inscribe para participar en el servicio de texto, recibirá mensajes con información específica al plan que su hijo/a haya elegido una vez por semana. Si no se inscribe, no recibirá estos mensajes regularmente, pero, de cualquier manera, cuando tenga cualquier duda, usted podrá mandar sus preguntas y recibirá una respuesta.

Para inscribirse a este servicio de texto (txtGU), solo mande “SI” al XXX-XXX-XXXX

En esta carta, está usted recibiendo un imán y dos tarjetas para su llavero con el número de teléfono de txtGU. Esperemos que coloque el imán en un lugar visible, y una tarjeta en su llavero y la otra para el llavero de Dorothy para que tengan nuestro número a la mano para cuando tenga preguntas o quieran enviarnos un mensaje.

Esperamos que nos invite a seguirlos apoyando durante este próximo año 2018-19 a través de txtGU. Esperamos estar en comunicación a través de texto con ustedes en el futuro. Si tiene preguntas, no dude en contactar a name of contact por correo electrónico email o por teléfono number.

Sinceramente,

*El Equipo de txtGU*
Oficina Estatal de Arizona GEAR UP

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5 GEAR UP ofrece este servicio sin costo; si su servicio de celular tiene un costo asociado con mensajes de texto, las tarifas de mensajes de texto estándar se aplican.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Outreach Effort</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Date(s)/range it will be offered</th>
<th>Responsible Person/Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration stop</td>
<td>Tabling. Display photos, books, college-going materials, hand-out snacks and magnets with contact info</td>
<td>Relationship building</td>
<td>GEAR UP families (9th graders)</td>
<td>July, 20XX</td>
<td>GEAR UP Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Visits</td>
<td>Visit families homes for 'Parent PEPS&quot;</td>
<td>Relationship building and establish/share Postsec goal with fam</td>
<td>All GU families will be asked by phone if they'd like a visit. Visit only those who agree</td>
<td>July – June</td>
<td>GEAR UP Coordinator + GEAR UP Assistant or Parent liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence Intervention Letters</td>
<td>Tiered approach per GEAR UP Minimum Standards- auto calls, personal calls, mailings, and home visits</td>
<td>Promote attendance, provide resources support to solve issues causing absences, relationship building</td>
<td>GEAR UP families of students with students who have 3, 5, 10 consecutive absences/chronic absences.</td>
<td>August – May plus summer school</td>
<td>Attendance Clerk, GEAR UP Assistant, GEAR UP Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-Knowledge Workshops</td>
<td>Series of 4 consecutive workshops covering: Intro/value of ed + intro to GU and our school; college pathways+ college admissions; college affordability/cost/ROI/Fin aid; guest/speaker (parent of a first gen) and grad</td>
<td>Share college-knowledge information; Help parents see their importance in process; Build parent network</td>
<td>All GU families will be invited. Workshops are for families who sign up</td>
<td>One series in fall semester, one in spring</td>
<td>GEAR UP Coordinator and HS Counselors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-min Presentation and greet</td>
<td>Give 5-minute presentation on GEAR UP and greet parents at Parent-teacher conferences</td>
<td>Relationship building</td>
<td>Families who attend parent-teacher conferences</td>
<td>Once in fall, once in spring</td>
<td>GEAR UP staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall festival</td>
<td>Attend with business cards</td>
<td>Relationship building</td>
<td>Any GEAR UP families who attend festival</td>
<td>October 22, 20XX</td>
<td>GEAR UP Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>Articles on college-readiness topics</td>
<td>Disseminate event info and college-related info</td>
<td>All GEAR UP families with mailing address on file</td>
<td>Once in the fall, once in the spring</td>
<td>GEAR UP staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
<td>Quick-monthly emails that include three tips, and a list of upcoming events at school that month</td>
<td>Share tips on ‘one thing to do with your child this week to promote college readiness’</td>
<td>All GEAR UP families with emails on file</td>
<td>Monthly starting in August- May</td>
<td>GEAR UP Assistant + GU Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Outreach Effort</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Date(s)/range it will be offered</td>
<td>Responsible Person/Group</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Posts</td>
<td>Post on – student stories, college visits, GEAR UP mission, college-readiness tips, career ideas, parent tips to support college-readiness, GEAR UP events, etc.</td>
<td>Relationship building; share information; encourage a home college-going culture</td>
<td>All GEAR UP families will be encouraged to follow page.</td>
<td>Twice per week on Facebook</td>
<td>GU Assistant with support from GU Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Calls</td>
<td>Advisory Teachers make 3 calls per week – during first 10 weeks of school. To share one positive skill/ability/trait/improvement for child</td>
<td>Relationships building</td>
<td>All GEAR UP families</td>
<td>First three months of school</td>
<td>Homeroom teachers with GEAR UP Assistant, Parent Liaison, and Interpreter for interpreting support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Registration check-in</td>
<td>Mailer and phone calls home after HS course registration. Share the Sweet 16 and how their child’s classes for 9th grade meet do/not meet requirements. Add actionable tips to letter/call</td>
<td>College-readiness info</td>
<td>Mail all GU families. Make calls to any families whose mail is returned to sender</td>
<td>March/April</td>
<td>HS Counselors and GU staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Art Show</td>
<td>Students present their goals for their future – career, or purpose, or educational by way of art – paintings/drawings, photography, spoken word, dance, song, instruments, essays(reading),</td>
<td>Relationship building; celebrate students; college-going culture</td>
<td>All GEAR UP families with special invitations to families of students presenting work.</td>
<td>April, 20XX</td>
<td>Art teacher, AVID teachers, English teachers, Social Studies teachers + GEAR UP staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>