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# Family Engagement

## *Toolkit*



*"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."*

— Jane D. Hull  
First Woman elected Governor of Arizona

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Arizona GEAR UP created the Family Engagement Toolkit to provide information and resources for GEAR UP Coaches, teachers, administrators, and other college access professionals. The Toolkit provides the framework needed to create an effective family engagement plan. Sample procedures and forms are also included.

Direct any questions to [GEAR.UP@nau.edu](mailto:GEAR.UP@nau.edu). You can also find additional resources at [www.nau.edu/GEARUP](http://www.nau.edu/GEARUP).

# Introduction

*Research shows when schools engage families, they get more involved in their child's education, and student achievement increases. The engagement-involvement" process correlates with fewer absences, improved behavior, higher grades and test scores, and even better social skills.<sup>1</sup>*

## Engagement vs. Involvement

Families in Schools™ differentiates between family engagement and family involvement. Family involvement is the way parents and other family members participate at home and at school with their child's education. How schools and organizations work with parents to involve them in their child's education refers to family engagement. Research shows that family engagement increases with family involvement, which brings about positive results for students. This toolkit provides resources to address family engagement.

<sup>1</sup>See for example: 1) Đurišić, Maša; Bunijevac, Mila. Parental Involvement as a Important Factor for Successful Education. Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal, [S.I.], v. 7, n. 3, p. 137-153, sep. 2017. ISSN 2232-2647. Available at: <<https://ojs.cepsj.si/index.php/cepsj/article/view/291>>. Date accessed: 29 mar. 2019. 2) Hogg, L. (2011). Funds of knowledge: An investigation of coherence within the literature. Teaching and Teacher Education, 27, 666-677 3) Rodriguez, G. (2011). Power and agency in education: Exploring the pedagogical dimensions of funds of knowledge. Review of Research in Education, 37(1), 87-120. And 4) Vélez-Ibáñez, C.G., & Greenberg, J.B. (1992). Formation and transformation of funds of knowledge among U.S. Mexican households. Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 23(4), 313-335.

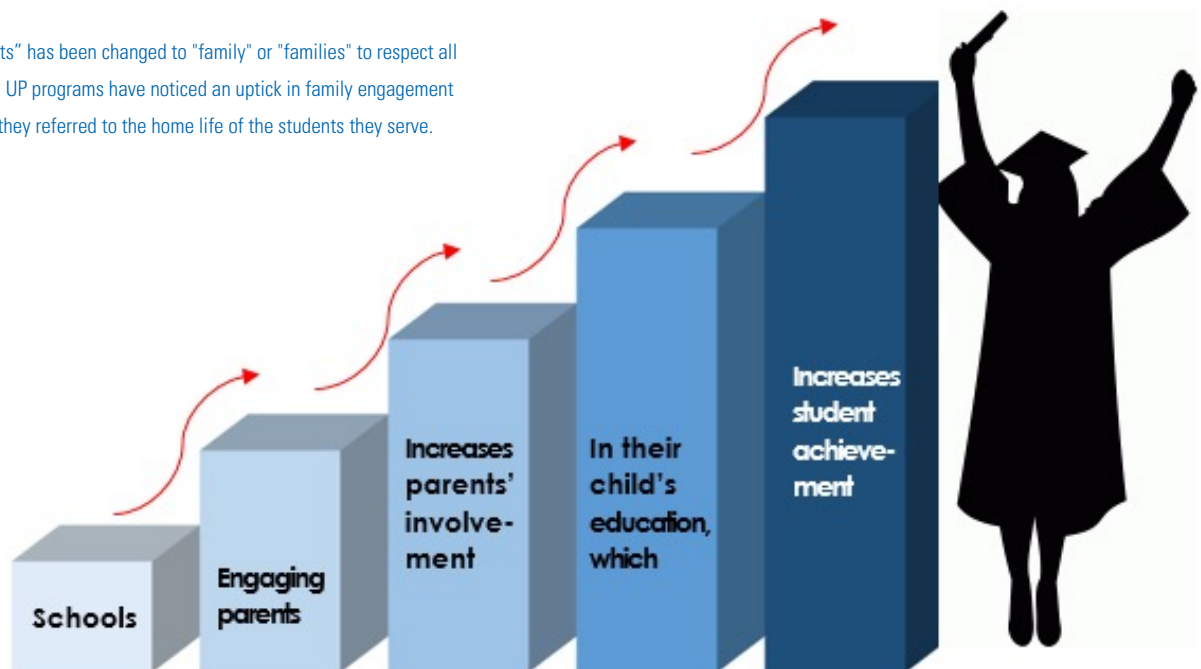
<sup>2</sup>The term "parent" or "parents" has been changed to "family" or "families" to respect all home situations. Many GEAR UP programs have noticed an uptick in family engagement when they changed the way they referred to the home life of the students they serve.

## AZGU defines family engagement:

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.

Engagement refers to efforts the school/program sets forth to:

- Provide information to families.
- Encourage participation at school-related events.
- Promote a student home environment that's supportive of academic success. (Families have many competing time demands, and they can still be invested and involved in their children's education without attending school programs, meetings, or activities.)



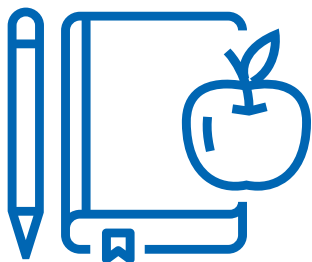


# Why Is Family Engagement Critical in GEAR UP?

The positive results of effective family engagement perfectly align with GEAR UP goals and objectives. Therefore, family engagement is an important strategy for achieving our goals.

The GEAR UP approach, which starts early and continues through high school graduation and into college, presents an ideal set up for successful family engagement.

Early parent outreach provides ample opportunity, over several years, to build positive relationships that will pay off each year, but perhaps most significantly in the senior year, when parent involvement is critical in things like completing the FAFSA, paying college deposits, etc.



## In this Toolkit you will find tips and tools to engage 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 Coaches 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 to engage GEAR UP families, but this is beyond the scope of this toolkit. In communities that have a high percentage of families who follow school accounts, Coaches may want to use these tools. The communications' staff at the state GEAR UP office can offer advice and assistance for coaches who would like to explore this. Contact [Melissa.Fast@nau.edu](mailto:Melissa.Fast@nau.edu) for more information.



# Before You Begin

## 6 Steps to Success

1. Communicate with your principal and/or supervisor to inform them of the GEAR UP Family Engagement Toolkit and your parent engagement plans for the year.
2. Read and follow your district policies and procedures, and FERPA when making parent contacts.

Some schools require front office staff notification when making parent phone calls, auto phone messages, or text messages 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 to consider.

3. Ask your principal/supervisor to post an introduction of you and the GEAR UP program on the school's website and on social media sites to inform families of your role and contact information. Consider creating a GEAR UP Facebook or Instagram Page for your school.
4. Request notification from administration and the counseling office when GEAR UP students experience unforeseen issues, so you're aware of any changes in student status such as suspensions, discipline, change in placement or other information that might impact parent engagement. You may want to attend counseling office meetings and administration meetings to establish positive working relationships with school staff, so you're considered a valued part of the team.
5. Review the entire toolkit to ensure the appropriate strategic, holistic, culturally sensitive approach to family engagement efforts.
6. If you have any issues, or need support, contact Arizona GEAR UP. We're here to help.





# Cultural Sensitivity

## *Start with teamwork.*

Creating a team now will help you reach more families and build an additional support system once the grant ends. Consider diversity, including parents/guardians, counselors, teachers, administrators, students, parent liaisons, school-based social workers, district-level staff, and other community members.

Effective family engagement requires a school-wide effort and must involve district leadership or school principals. GEAR UP Coaches may serve on the school's family engagement team to ensure GEAR UP efforts are coordinated with school efforts, so the team considers college awareness and preparation as priorities for their school-wide efforts.

## *Build on previous success.*

Talk to staff members and community members to learn about effective existing family engagement efforts and systems and build from there. This approach will also help you earn respect from colleagues, showing you respect and value them.



## *Keep staff in the loop.*

Communicating with school staff about your family engagement plans, especially those who work directly with GEAR UP students, can help you achieve your goals. Here are a few suggestions:

- Share the staff orientation for GEAR UP standards to inform colleagues of your plans for family engagement. The state GEAR UP office can provide a PowerPoint template to help with this.
- Remind teachers throughout the year to encourage families to contact you as a resource.
- Use existing school communications to keep colleagues informed 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 families." Or, "Over 100 people attended the GEAR UP Kick-Off on August 27th. Families 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, or more formal written reporting processes.
- Check in regularly with your counseling office to avoid duplication of services and conflicts in schedules.
- Teachers could offer extra credit to students to present at GEAR UP parent events. You could even collaborate with a teacher to get students to complete career exploration projects throughout a quarter that culminate in presentations by students at a parent event.
- As you develop relationships with teachers, administrators and staff at your school, don't be afraid to ask for their support, as volunteers or to speak at family events.

# Build on family strengths.

## Acknowledge and value “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). While working to engage families, it’s important to value their skills/knowledge and to view them as assets as you build upon these experiences.

## Strengthen family networks.

It’s common for families, who know each other through their children or neighborhood, to help each other as they navigate school situations and issues. During events, workshops, etc., allow time for parents to network and facilitate activities to support relationship-building among parents. You can create family/parent spaces at your school, such as, hallways with family photos at events or graduations, office waiting areas with inviting visuals in languages spoken in the community you serve. When possible, try to include toys or books for younger children.

## Ask families to volunteer at your events.

You can ask parents to help with sign-in sheets, to ensure the sign-in sheet meets GEAR UP’s data documentation

standards (legible; student name associated with each parent name, etc.). Other parents could 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, and it shows you value and trust them.

## Consider forming a family advisory board.

The board members can support you with ideas, strategies, and help get other parents involved. Again, parents are likely to be flattered when you ask. It’s also important to listen to, and heed the advice of the board if you want them to stay active and involved. Prior to forming a board, engage your supervisor to make sure you follow school rules and increase administration buy-in.

## Avoid “othering.”

“Othering” is an appearance that individuals or groups are labeled as not fitting in. Examples include describing families with phrases like “they don’t understand,” or telling someone with an ethnic name “that is a weird name.” Instead, use inclusive language such as “some of our families may not yet be familiar with...,” or “I haven’t heard that name before.”

## Alter the way you view situations.

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

| Examples of deficit model-thinking include:  | Consider a different perspective:  |
|--|--|
| Parents didn’t attend our event because they don’t care.   | The times we are available to meet with parents do not work well with their schedule. Let’s find an alternative.   |
| Parents don’t understand the US education system/values because they are from a different community/country. | Parents have experience in a different education system. What goals and values for their child do we have in common?   |
| Parents don’t speak English, so they can’t communicate with the school.                                      | 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 we can communicate with families? |

## *Build relationships and rapport.*

Generally, people are more willing to believe information and accept advice from a trusted source than from a stranger. This is particularly true when advice is about their children. Therefore, begin engagement efforts with the goal of relationship building, then share information and discuss outcomes. These efforts should start as soon as possible upon a student's enrollment in the GEAR UP school. Some ways to establish authentic relationships with families are:

- Share positive news. At the beginning of a quarter, semester, or school year call families to share positive news about their students. This ensures the first contact is positive, instead of sharing a concern.
- Conduct home visits. Visit families' homes to learn about them and find out how many family members support the child at home. Discuss their aspirations for their child, learn about any challenges you could help provide assistance. Always schedule in advance and conduct home visits with a colleague.

## *Two-way consistency counts.*

Practice two-way communication. Use every interaction to not only provide information (about school, college, their child, etc.), but also to solicit information from them (about their questions, hopes and goals, fears and concerns, or

their expectations of you, for GEAR UP, or for the school as a whole). Invite participation by asking questions, soliciting input through surveys or evaluations, and placing a 'comment box' at your office or the front office/designated family space. Consider conducting polls or surveys via text (see Supporting Documents for samples).

- Communicate in equitable and accessible ways.
- Use multiple platforms to increase your reach, including phone calls (auto calls AND personalized calls), text messages (programmed AND personalized), emails, website announcements, social media, newsletters mailed and sent home with students, informational letters/mailers, workshops (one-time and series), one-on-one meetings, small group meetings, and home visits. (See Supporting Documents for samples.)
- 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, let parents know the best times and ways to reach you. Provide alternative contacts or numbers outside of those times.





## Create an inclusive strategy.

Every person and family has customs and beliefs that shape their perspectives. While it's impossible to become an expert in every culture, it's important to acknowledge our own culture as well as learn about the culture of our school community. Ask authentic questions in neutral ways to learn about others. Building family relationships will help you grow culturally informed practices.

### Examples of culturally informed practices include:

- Schedule events to avoid/considering cultural holidays.
- Use inclusive language (consider diversity of races, ethnicities, abilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic experiences).
- Select a space/room on the school campus for events that is accessible (close to parking, with access to ramps or elevators, etc.).
- When appropriate, select 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.
- Visit [National PTA](#) for more information.

## Link every interaction to a goal.

For every family engagement activity or communication, outside of relationship building conversations, create a clear goal with these components:

1. Share information you want families to know. Examples include, the importance of postsecondary education, career pathways, financial aid, admission requirements, student's accomplishments/goals, child's need to improve academically/behaviorally. In other words, 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 for their child to achieve success. Your objective is to demonstrate you value them and to affirm their importance. For example, "Families are so important in ensuring students take the right courses to achieve their goals."
3. Let families know what they can do at home to support their child to achieve the desired outcomes. Here, your objective is to create a call to action for families, 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 them to see if they picked the ones that I highlighted on the list. Call me with questions that may come up.")



## Think about families' needs.

- Incentivize family participation by including student presenters, greeters, volunteers, etc.
- Consider hosting the same meeting/event multiple times (morning/evening/weekends) to take into account families work a variety of hours. Also, consider seasonal workers, and 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 space, accessible to all and include necessary technology. Clearly mark reserved parking close to the meeting place; create posters/signs to guide parents to the right room; ask for parent volunteers to greet and guide families to the meeting room; arrange for child-care 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. Arizona GEAR UP Event Standards provide other relevant requirements for GEAR UP events.

## Share relevant content.

As you share information, remember GEAR UP defines 'college' as any type of education after high school, which may include a trade school, community college, or university. Here are some suggestions:

- Importance of postsecondary education.
- Admission requirements for public universities in AZ and the impact and importance of high school classes.
- Various forms of available financial aid available, college affordability, and colleges costs.
- FAFSA-specific information including technical assistance with FSA ID and FAFSA.
- Importance of grades and attendance, the GPA meaning, and how to calculate. (These things help their child get into the school of their choice, and may help earn more scholarships.)

### Most importantly, share with families:

Regardless of how much families know/don't know about their child's current school or college requirements, it's important parents share with their children every day that they value education and they have high expectations regarding their child's academic abilities, goals they will accomplish, and the positive impact they can make in their school community now and later in life.

When sharing college access information, be sensitive to the fact families might not share your enthusiasm until they understand the process and the motivation behind this goal as well as how this aligns with their values and customs. Remember families may hold down various jobs, so be careful when using examples of jobs that are more or less desirable. 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 the Supporting Documents section.



# Phone Engagement

Personal phone calls, especially when sharing positive news, opportunities, or valuable services, are an important and effective method for engaging parents, and 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 personally invite parents to an event or on a college visit.

When parents missed a GEAR UP event, let them know you missed them and provide a recap.

To address problems: Phone calls are required for 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:*

### **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 arrange calls when parents are likely to be available. Make notes about time preferences for parents.
- Even when using the school's "all-call" system, think carefully about the time of day you want that call to go out and when families are likely to listen to it.
- Student's recent grades, attendance & behavior data.
- Relationship between the person you are contacting and the student (e.g., parent, grandparent, guardian, foster paren, etc.) and any no-contact orders.
- Parent/guardian preferences regarding phone calls (time, best number, etc.)
- The extent to which the student and families have participated in GEAR UP services and activities.

### **Prepare**

- Check school records to determine language preference; arrange for an interpreter if needed.
- Notify front office staff. (You may find out about interruptions, such as, fire drills.)
- Gather everything you'll need for the call.
- Check your school's student information system and the GEAR UP database so you are aware of:
- Review the student's PEPS data, so you're familiar with their plans, goals and needs.
- Make a list of resources/phone numbers that parents might need (like your school's counseling office, attendance office, or social services).
- Prepare a script/call outline if needed. (See Supporting Documents.)



## During Call

- Generally, GEAR UP = good news for families! Contact should be positive and supportive of students and the GEAR UP goals, even when you are calling about a problem (e.g., absence intervention, student is at risk of losing credit, etc.) Be prepared with resources since your purpose is to get the student back on track.
- Solicit questions and give your parents time to ask.
- If you don't know an answer to a question, it's always okay to say, "let me find out and get back to you." This is always better than giving out misinformation. Provide a timeframe when you'll circle back.
- Some of our families may have negative feelings about the school, so always be prepared to stay calm and listen. You might be the first professional they've been able to talk to about their concern. Even if you can't address the concern, listening 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 your error is discovered.
- If you promised to get back to them with a resource, an answer, or information, be sure to do so.
- Follow through on action steps identified in the plan.

## After the Call

- Log the contact on your WISL per GEAR UP Data Documentation Standards.



# Text Messaging

Like phone calls, texting is now a great way to reach families, and in some ways, texting is an easy way to stay in touch, and often, it's a family's preferred method of communication. More than 90% of families with children and 81% of Americans living below the poverty threshold own cellphones. Even if you need to have a lengthy conversation with a parent, texting is often the first step in finding a time to meet in person or on the phone. Text GEAR UP (txtGU) is available and free to our 5E Schools. Please follow txtGU Standards and monitor your text interactions. Since many schools have texting platforms, txtGU will focus on college readiness. Good reasons to call parents include:

**Introduction Sample:** *Hi, this is (name), the GEAR UP Coach at (school). I just learned (child's name) enrolled, and I want to tell you about GEAR UP and how we can help (child's name) soar! You can call me at (Phone). Hope to hear from you soon.*

**Positive Update Sample:** *Just met with (child's name) to talk about future plans. What a great kid! So excited to help him achieve his dreams.*

**Invitation Sample:** *GEAR UP FAFSA Fiesta is this Saturday from 8-3. 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.*

**Missed Event Sample:** *I missed you at our Financial Aid Workshop last night. Sorry you couldn't make it. Call me, so I can give you an update.*

**Set Up Appointment Sample:** *I need to talk with you about (child's name). When is a good time to talk?*

**Remember, phone calls are required for GEAR UP absence intervention, so texting can help begin the process.**

## Tips:

- 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 you'll be available to handle their responses.
- Keep your messages clear and brief.
- Limit the number of messages you send so that families don't become overwhelmed or bothered.
- Document on your WISL per data documentation standards.



## More Text Samples:

- This is \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ HS GEAR UP Coach. 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 Program will be hosted at NAU [dates] \_\_\_\_\_. Students will be given family 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 families said childcare would enable them to attend more GEAR UP events. In response, we'll add this service at our next family night! Details to follow.

# Written Correspondence

Because of ease and convenience, most of your family engagement may take place by phone and text. However, you may still find it necessary to engage through written materials, which may include:

- Letters mailed to families.
- Communications sent home with students.
- Articles on the school website.
- Emails sent to families.

## Situations when written communication is necessary or preferred include:

- Lengthy communications or something with many details that need to be referred to later. (See samples in Supporting Documents.)
- Parent/guardian signature is required.
- Family hasn't responded to calls or texts.
- Communication needs to be special/personalized.
- Recurring communications, such as, newsletters, postcards.

## Tips

### AZGU Makes It Easy.

Make sure to visit AZGU blog and MS Teams. Every month we post career-readiness articles in both English and Spanish—targeted at family engagement. Remember, AZGU communications' team can also help with templates.

### Formatting matters.

Format according to purpose. For example, place "official" documents on letterhead; flyers should be fun and worthy of hanging on the fridge. Documents that need to be signed should be bold and clear. (See Supporting Documents.)

Information should be clear, concise, and easy to read, and get to the point. If it's too long, families won't read. Color printing increases the likelihood families will read, too.

### Proofread.

Spell check helps, but ask a colleague to proofread, too. Double-check all the logistics are included (e.g., name of the event, date, time, location, and a brief event description).

### Personalize when possible.

Even when mass-mailing to all GEAR UP families, personalize with mail merge in MS Word or your email application.

### Always include your contact information.

Families need to know who they can contact if they have questions. Always include your phone number at minimum, and email address if there is room.

### Include photos of students, if possible.

Even if it's not their child, it might be their kid's friend, or it could motivate them to attend the next event, so their kid's photo will appear next issue. (See sample GEAR UP Newsletter in Supporting Documents.)

### Bundle mailings strategically.

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

### Include PDFs.

Convert documents to PDFs. Formatting in MS Word won't necessarily appear the same on every computer. All your nice fonts and artistic formatting could be lost when opened on a different computer.

### Document.

Don't forget to document all mailings on your WISL, per data documentation standards.



# Family Events

GEAR UP events are important ways to engage families. They may even be the most effective method, but only for families who attend, which is why other methods are also important.

AZ GEAR UP has created Minimum Standards for Events, which 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 Coaches should read these at the beginning of the year, and review in preparation for each event.

Families may hold multiple jobs, have several children, and have numerous other commitments. If they don't attend your events, it may have nothing to do with their commitment to their child's education. When parents 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 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 its work plan. Each event has an associated budget. Examples of GEAR UP Parent/Family Events include:

### **GEAR UP Family and Student Kick-off Event**

This meeting provides an orientation to GEAR UP at the first part of the school year and an overview of what's to come each subsequent year.

### **GEAR UP Family Financial Literacy Workshop**

This is a perfect opportunity to provide information about the value and cost of postsecondary education and options for paying for it.

### **GEAR UP Summer Program Informational Meeting**

This meeting gives you the chance to provide information about the GEAR UP Summer Program.

### **GEAR UP Academic Success Workshop**

Give families information about ways they can support and encourage their child through high school.

### **Career and College Fair**

During this one-stop-shop event, families can talk to admissions representatives from multiple colleges and universities, as well as, job recruiters, so participants can learn about options available for their child after high school.

### **FAFSA Workshops**

FAFSA workshops will give families hands-on assistance to complete the FAFSA. It's also a great time to remind families you are here to help with questions and concerns.

# How to increase attendance at GEAR UP Family Events:

## **Early planning and 'save the dates' help.**

Review your work plan and figure out your overall approach/master plan. Refer to the school's calendar, schedule all your events for the semester/year if possible. Then, send out save-the-date emails, texts, postcards, etc. If you're the first event on a family calendar, they may "work around it" as other invitations come their way later.

## **Develop relationships early with GEAR UP families.**

Once they know you, and know how much you care about their child, families will be less likely to say "no" when you invite them to an event.

## **Ask for feedback before and after events.**

Early in the school year or before school starts, reach out to families (by phone, at other school events, etc.) to tell them about upcoming events you've scheduled for the year and ask them about their needs/preferences. Consider sending a 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 evaluation forms 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 Supporting Documents for a Sample Parent Feedback Form.)

## **Follow up with families that 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 an even bigger payoff.

## **Ask students to present during events.**

If families need to get their child to an event to make a presentation, they are likely to stay for the event. Moreover, parents usually want to hear their kids' presentations.

## **Ask parents to call other parents to invite them.**

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 in promotional materials. Let families know the event will be presented in their native language.

Also, minimize jargon and idioms during presentations, which don't translate well.

## **Provide food.**

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

## **Provide multiple reasons for attending.**

Include in your invitations, emails, and promotions (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 the sample flyer in Supporting Documents.)

## **Create 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. Deliver the initial invitation 4 weeks in advance. Send reminders 14 days, 7 days, and 3 days prior to your event. Send one last reminder via an all-call phone or text message. Always include your contact information.

## **Use incentives and promote them.**

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 promote the event, include information about anything they might "win" by attending.

# Flexibility Is Key

GEAR UP families, like everyone else, are busy. It's unreasonable to expect them to attend every GEAR UP event, or even to be available every time you call them. For some families, attending even one school event is challenging.

To the extent possible, we encourage GEAR UP Coaches to engage GEAR UP families in a variety of ways, outside of scheduled GEAR UP events. Whether it's a basketball game or band concert, these informal meetings help build relationships. Keep a supply of your business cards with you at these events. We provided a couple examples for some of these informal encounters, but there are many more ways, so be creative.

## **Attend school events to engage with families.**

Families may attend school events such as required registration events, parent-student-teacher conferences, and award ceremonies. Make yourself visible, or consider volunteering to check families in as they arrive, so you can talk briefly. Approach these interactions purposefully, with the aim to get to know your families, not just to deliver your content or information.

## **Participate in other social activities within school.**

Parents may attend social events at school, such as after-school sporting events or tournaments, academic competitions, performances, and art shows that wouldn't normally involve you. However, attending 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.





# Supporting Documents

On the following pages, you'll find extra resources and sample documents to help you with Family Engagement.

Don't hesitate to contact the Arizona GEAR UP office if you have any questions. Schools Coordinator Rebecca McIlvaine can be reached at (602) 776-4639 or [Rebecca.McIlvaine@nau.edu](mailto:Rebecca.McIlvaine@nau.edu). The Arizona GEAR UP communications' team also provides templates for all kinds of parent engagement. Additionally, they provide social media content for schools. Feel free to contact Melissa Fast at [Melissa.Fast@nau.edu](mailto:Melissa.Fast@nau.edu) for assistance with your communications needs. Other resources can also be found at [www.NAU.edu/GEARUP](http://www.NAU.edu/GEARUP).



# Phone Script for Initial Contact

Feel free to use your own scripts or change the sample below 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 Coach 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 llamara?**

Follow up notes:

If the answer is yes:

**I want to let you know that \_\_\_\_\_ is a part of an amazing program at our school called GEAR UP. The program gives students the opportunity to get additional resources and information about planning and preparing for options after high school. Hopefully, you have been able to read the letter I sent 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 Coach, 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 queria decir que ahora \_\_\_\_\_ es parte de un gran programa en su escuela. El programa se llama GEAR UP y a través de el tendrá la oportunidad de recibir apoyos adicionales y también información sobre como planear y prepararse para estudiar después de que gradue de la high school (preparatoria is common in many Spanish-speaking countries). Ojalá aya tenido tiempo de leer la carta que le envie por correo que describe el programa con más detalle. La misma información también esta disponible en nuestra pagina 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 sugerecia de como podira yo apoyarlos a ustedes y sus metas?**

Notes:

**Do you have any questions for me at this time?**

**¿hay alguna pregunta que pudiera contestar?**

If 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 gustaria tanto que nos acompañara. Ya que se acerque la fecha le voy a enviar la invitación a travez de texto y correo electronico 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.



# Phone Script to Share Positive News

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time \_\_\_\_\_ End Time \_\_\_\_\_ or Duration \_\_\_\_\_

**Hello. This is \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ High School GEAR UP Coach. May I please speak to \_\_\_\_\_?**

**Hola, soy (your name) el/la Coordinador/a del programa de GEAR UP en \_\_\_\_\_ High School. ¿Podría hablar con \_\_\_\_\_?**

**I have good news to share. 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 \_\_\_\_\_?**

If No:

**When is a better time to reach you?**

**¿Cuándo es major tiempo para llamarle?**

If 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). I just wanted to say thank you (congratulate you) and to see if you have any questions for me 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 (felicitar-la/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.**

# Phone Script for Absence Issues

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time \_\_\_\_\_ End Time \_\_\_\_\_ or Duration \_\_\_\_\_

**This is \_\_\_\_\_ the GEAR UP Coach 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 \_\_\_\_\_?**

**Hola, soy (your name) el/la Coordinador/a del programa de GEAR UP en \_\_\_\_\_ High School. ¿Podría hablar  
con \_\_\_\_\_? ¿Es un buen momento para hablar solo unos minutos sobre los servicios que hay disponibles para  
ayudar a que [child's name] ...?**

If No:

**When is a good time to call back or would you like to call me back when it is good for you?**

**¿Cuándo es mejor tiempo para llamarle – o le gustaría mejor a usted llamarme a mi cuando pueda?**

If 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 noticed 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, they wouldn't graduate  
on time, with the Class of 20XX. I don't want that to happen, and I imagine you feel the same. I'm calling you  
now because if action is taken now, they still has the chance to catch up and stay on track. [Child's name  
\_\_\_\_\_ is passing \_\_\_\_\_ classes at this time, but their absences are affecting \_\_\_\_\_ 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. Preferiria 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 us hijo – y si hay halgo como le podamos ayudar a resolver eso?**

**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 conmigo. Esta semana voy hablar con \_\_\_\_\_. Su apoyo es lo más importante para hacer la diferencia.**

*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 the parent encourage the student to talk to their teacher(s), and if needed, follow up or ask the parent to follow up. Inform the family about the school process for family meetings.*
- *Student is not connecting with school—Provide information about school support groups, mentoring, peer mentoring, counseling office and/or 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. Ask, "How can I help? Would you like me to talk to them 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 their lunch in the GEAR UP Room?" Offer other applicable GEAR UP or school supports.*



# ***GEAR UP for Success!***

## ***Freshman Kick Off***

*and...*

***First Taco Tuesday Event of the year.***

- *Presentations by students*
- *Fabulous door prizes*
- *Child care available*

***Taco Bar catered by LHS  
Culinary Arts students***

## ***Lincoln High Welcomes You!***

*This is an exciting time  
for your family—HIGH  
SCHOOL!*

*Come hear students  
and administrators talk  
about how to make it a  
great four years.*

*Mrs. Martin is the  
GEAR UP Coach and  
she is here to help!*

*We can't wait to see  
you and your family.*



***TUES. SEPT. 5***

***5:30 - 7:30 p.m.***

*For more info:*

*[www.LincolnHS.org/](http://www.LincolnHS.org/)*

*gearup*

*Mrs. Martin: (928) 345-2314*



## Sample: Permission Slip—English

### *Student & Parent/Guardian Agreement: Signatures required below*

We (Parents/Guardians and student) have read the 2019 AZ GEAR UP Summer Program 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.

#### **Parent/Guardian:**

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

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



\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

#### **Student:**

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



\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Sample: Permission Slip—Spanish

*Acuerdo del Estudiante y del Padre o Tutor Legal: Se requieren firmas en la parte inferior*

Nosotros (los padres o tutores legales y el estudiante) hemos leído las Expectativas de Conducta Estudiantil del programa de verano AZ GEAR UP 2021, y estamos de acuerdo en que el estudiante seguirá todas las reglas y pautas de conducta. Estamos conscientes de que NAU y AZ GEAR UP se reservan el derecho de solicitarle al estudiante que abandone el programa por razones médicas, disciplinarias o de otro tipo. Si se le solicita que se retire, entendemos que el estudiante deberá retirarse de NAU dentro de las 24 horas subsecuentes, y nosotros (los padres o tutores legales) debemos organizar el transporte. Si se le pide al estudiante que se retire por razones disciplinarias, entendemos que es probable que no se le permita asistir a futuros programas de verano de NAU y AZ GEAR UP.

Entendemos que, bajo ciertas circunstancias atenuantes, puede ser necesario que NAU y AZ GEAR UP registren las habitaciones y las pertenencias de los participantes sin previo aviso, por seguridad y bienestar de su hijo y de los demás.


### Padre o tutor legal:

- Me hago responsable del costo de reparación o reemplazo de cualquier propiedad que mi hijo dañe.
- Me hago responsable de los gastos que no estén cubiertos por la matrícula, la habitación y las comidas.
- Me hago responsable de cualquier gasto médico en el que incurra mi hijo mientras esté inscrito en el programa.
- Si mi hijo es seleccionado para participar, debo tener el Formulario Médico debidamente completado antes de la fecha límite correspondiente. Entiendo que mi hijo no será admitido en el programa si no se devuelven los formularios debidamente completados.

Doy permiso a mi hijo de:

- Participar en paseos fuera del plantel patrocinados por el programa de verano, incluyendo, entre otros, las excursiones. Entiendo que mi hijo recibirá supervisión por el personal del programa. Estoy de acuerdo en que los empleados del programa de verano y de NAU, que son conductores autorizados de NAU, puedan transportar a mi hijo a las actividades del programa.
- Ser grabado en video, fotografiado y entrevistado para su transmisión o publicación, o que una muestra de su trabajo sea transmitida o publicada. Entiendo que GEAR UP ejercerá su discreción con respecto al contacto con los medios.
- Completar todas las evaluaciones y encuestas que GEAR UP considere necesarias para evaluar la efectividad del programa.

Como padre o tutor legal de \_\_\_\_\_, entiendo las condiciones del Programa de Verano AZ GEAR UP y otorgo mi consentimiento según se indica. Doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el Programa de Verano AZ GEAR UP en NAU.

 Firma del Padre o Tutor \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Estudiante:

Estoy de acuerdo en seguir todas las reglas y expectativas para la participación en el Programa de Verano AZ GEAR UP en NAU, y entiendo que mi membresía continua en la comunidad del programa de verano y de NAU depende de mi voluntad de seguir estas reglas.

 Firma del Estudiante \_\_\_\_\_ Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

## Newsletter Sample

(Spanish translation is available)

### Talk about College Now

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.



#### Upcoming Events

- Sept. 15: ASU Campus Tour  
Downtown Phoenix
- Oct. 1: FAFSA Application Opens
- Oct. 15: FAFSA Friday  
Join us in the Cafeteria  
3:45 - 5 p.m.  
Complete your FAFSA.  
Earn \$\$ for college.
- Nov. 15: Midterms
- Nov. 25: Thanksgiving Break
- Dec. 1: Career Expo.  
Details coming soon.



## Save the Date: Tues. 9/03/2021

### Freshman Kick Off

and... First Taco Tuesday of the Year

Presentations by students  
Fabulous door prizes  
Child care available

# Eliminate Stress: Test Prep Tips

## Show up and pay attention.

Class time also provides a chance to ask questions if you need help. Take notes, too. This helps you retain new material.

## Study the material.

Next, complete all assigned reading, which is key to learning new material. It takes time, but content from reading assignments will likely appear on your test. Find a quiet place to study without distractions. If that's impossible, grab some headphones and plug in (a playlist with no lyrics works best). This will help you focus on the task at hand. Next up, find a study strategy that works for you. Don't have one? Try the Pomodoro Technique—uninterrupted study for 25 minutes and a 5-minute break, repeat.

## Get a good night's sleep.

According to the CDC, 7 out of 10 high school students get less than the recommended 8 – 10 hours of sleep on school nights. While “just one more episode” may sound like a good idea, save it for later, so you'll be fresh for exam day.

## Eat a wholesome meal.

Nutrition plays a big role in energy and alertness, so try a wholesome breakfast. One of the best things you can do to prepare for an exam is to go in well-nourished. A wholesome combination of carbs and proteins will keep you fueled and energized throughout the test. Examples include:

- Oatmeal with low-fat milk and fruit
- Whole-grain cereal with low-fat milk
- Eggs and toast

Some exams, like the SAT, even give you a snack break. Try and pack a yogurt, apple, or granola bar to help keep you going. Remember to also stay hydrated and drink your water!

## Take a moment to relax.

Take a moment to breathe and relax to let go of the unease and anxiety. Walk around the block or close your eyes and take three deep breaths. There are even free apps designed to help you relax. If you feel like you could use some help with your stress, ask for help. Check out more tips on how to reduce test anxiety.

Tests may cause stress, but with preparation and support, you can achieve anything!



## FAFSA Ready

Paying for college may cost a lot less than you think, but first you need to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Based on FAFSA applications, students receive over \$120 billion of funding each year. The application opens in October. Many scholarships and grants, which don't need to be repaid, are based on a first-come, first-served basis, so the earlier you submit your FAFSA, the more money your child may receive.

Here's what you need to complete the FAFSA:

- Student's Social Security Number (SSN)
- Parents' SSN if they have one
- Income information from 2019 tax records
- Information about untaxed income (like child support and interest income)
- Record of savings and checking account balances
- List of colleges that interest the student



**Dear Parents,**

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,**  
**Mrs. Hammel and Mr. Jenkins**  
**Arizona GEAR UP Coaches**

-----

*Fold Here*

-----

*Fold Here Name*

*Mailing Address*

Arizona GEAR UP is a project of  
Northern Arizona University.

It's supported by the US  
Department of Education.

*Mailing Label Here*

## Family Feedback Form—English

| 1. Evaluate the GEAR UP Event by circling the number that corresponds to our thoughts.        | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| • The event gave me help or information I needed.   | 5              | 4     | 3       | 2        | 1                 |
| • The event helped me to prepare my child for entering and succeeding in college or a career. | 5              | 4     | 3       | 2        | 1                 |
| • Overall, the quality of this GEAR UP Event was great.                                       | 5              | 4     | 3       | 2        | 1                 |

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 this form before you leave.**

# Family Feedback Form—Spanish

## Participación familiar: formulario de comentarios de la familia

| 1. Evalúe el evento GEAR UP encerrando en un círculo el número que corresponda a lo que piensa.           | Total-mente de Acuerdo | De Acuerdo | Neutral | En Desacuerdo | Muy en Desacuerdo |
|---|------------------------|------------|---------|---------------|-------------------|
| • El evento me brindó ayuda o información que necesitaba.   | 5                      | 4          | 3       | 2             | 1                 |
| • El evento me ayudó a preparar a mi hijo para ingresar y tener éxito en la universidad o en una carrera. | 5                      | 4          | 3       | 2             | 1                 |
| • En general, la calidad de este evento GEAR UP fue muy buena.  | 5                      | 4          | 3       | 2             | 1                 |

2. ¿Qué fue lo que le resultó más útil de este evento?

3. ¿Cómo se podría mejorar este evento?

4. ¿Qué información adicional necesita de nuestra parte para apoyar el éxito de su hijo?

El nombre de su hijo (opcional):

**¡GRACIAS! Devuelva este formulario antes de irse.**

# Welcome Letter Sample—English

Insert School Letterhead

To: Parent or Guardian of <Student Name>  
From: <Name>, GEAR UP Coach  
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 2021 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 2021, we welcome them and their families to GEAR UP.

What kinds of services does GEAR UP provide?

GEAR UP provides Program Coaches at each school. My job, as the GEAR UP Coach 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 2022 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 families 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 benefits 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 email at <e-mail address>.

Sincerely,

GEAR UP Coach

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

Optional - Enc: Bio & Photo



# Welcome Letter Sample—Spanish

Insert School Letterhead

A: 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 2021 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 2021, 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 2021 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: Síguenos en Facebook - <Nombre de la Página de FB>

Opcional – Incluya biografía y Foto

## PEPS: Military—English

Insert School Letterhead

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 Coach  
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

## PEPS: Military—Spanish

Insert School Letterhead

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 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 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)

## PEPS: Workforce—English

Insert School Letterhead

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 Coach  
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs



## PEPS: Workforce—Spanish

**Insert School Letterhead**

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 Post-secundaria (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 trabaje 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)

## PEPS: College—English

Insert School Letterhead

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, 2021. 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 <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm> 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 Coach  
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

## PEPS: College—Spanish

Insert School Letterhead

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 póngase 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 acceder 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, 2020. 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 póngase 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 póngase 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)

# Texting Summer Melt—English

May 2022

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 2019.

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 2022—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.

We hope that you will invite us to continue to support you in 2021-22 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.



# Texting Summer Melt—Spanish

mayo 2022

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 2019.

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 2022—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 como puede participar. Si usted se inscribe al servicio de mensajes de texto para padres, txtGU—disponible sin costo—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. Esperamos 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 2021-22 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

\*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.

## Sample Family Outreach Plan

| Outreach Effort              | Description   | Purpose  | Target Audience   | Date(s) Offered                            | Responsible Parties                                 |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| Registration Stop            | Tabling. Display photos, books, college-going materials, hand-out snacks and magnets with contact info.   | Build relationships.   | GEAR UP families (9th graders)  | July 20XX                                  | GEAR UP Staff                                       |
| Home Visits                  | Visit families' homes for 'Parent PEPS.'  | Build relationships and establish/share Postsec goals with family.                                       | All GU families will be asked by phone if they'd like a visit. Visit only those who agree.          | July – June                                | GEAR UP Coach + GEAR UP Assistant or Parent liaison |
| Absence Intervention Letters | Follow tiered approach per GEAR UP Minimum Standards—auto calls, personal calls, mailings, and home visits.   | Promote attendance, provide resources and support to solve issues causing absences. Build relationships. | GEAR UP families of students with students who have 3, 5, 10 consecutive absences/chronic absences. | August – May plus summer school            | Attendance Clerk, GEAR UP Assistant, GEAR UP Coach  |
| College Knowledge Workshops  | Plan 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. | Share information; help families see their importance in process; build family network.                  | All GU families will be invited. Workshops are for families who sign up.                            | One series in fall semester, one in spring | GEAR UP Coach and HS Counselors                     |
| 5-min Meet & Greet           | Give 5-minute presentation on GEAR UP and greet parents at parent-teacher conferences.  | Build relationships.   | Families who attend parent-teacher conferences  | Once in fall, once in spring               | GEAR UP staff                                       |
| Fall Festival                | Attend with business cards.   | Build relationships.   | Any GEAR UP families who attend festival  | October 22, 20XX                           | GEAR UP staff                                       |
| Newsletters                  | Send articles about college-readiness.  | Disseminate event info and college-related info.   | All GEAR UP families with mailing address on file   | Once in the fall, once in the spring       | GEAR UP staff                                       |
| Emails                       | Send monthly emails that include three tips, and a list of upcoming events at school that month.  | Share tips on 'one thing to do with your child this week' to promote college readiness'.                 | All GEAR UP families with emails on file  | Monthly starting in August–May             | GEAR UP Assistant + GU Coach                        |

## Outreach Plan Cont.

| Outreach Effort              | Description   | Purpose   | Target Audience  | Date(s) Offered              | Responsible Parties  |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|------------------------------|--|
| Social Media Posts           | Post student stories, college visits, GEAR UP mission, college-readiness tips, career ideas, parent tips to support college-readiness, GEAR UP events, etc. | Build relationships; share information; encourage a home college-going culture. | All GEAR UP families will be encouraged to follow page.                    | Twice per week on Facebook   | GU Assistant with support from GU Coach  |
| Positive Calls               | Advisory Teachers make 3 calls per week during first 10 weeks of school to share one positive skill/ability/trait/improvement for child.                    | Build relationships.  | All GEAR UP Families   | First three months of school | Homeroom teachers with GEAR UP Assistant, Parent Liaison, and Interpreter for interpreting support |
| Course Registration Check-in | Plan phone calls and mailer to share Sweet 16 and how their child's classes meet (or don't meet) requirements. Add actionable steps.                        | Promote college readiness.  | GEAR UP families (If mail is returned, make sure to call families.)        | March/April                  | HS Counselors and GEAR UP Coach  |
| Student Art Show             | Students present their goals for their future through art—paintings, drawings, photography, spoken word, dance, song, instruments, essays (reading).        | Build relationships; celebrate students; create college-going culture.          | All GEAR UP families with special invitations of students presenting work. | April 20XX                   | GEAR UP Coach and HS Counselors  |