

OREGON GEAR UP TOOLKIT



GEAR UP Week

10 easy and fun ways to celebrate GEAR UP
and start the school year off right

REACHING HIGHER

RIGOR

RELEVANCE

RELATIONSHIPS

RAISING AWARENESS

7 8 9 10 11 12 13+

Parents Community Teachers



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REACHING HIGHER

Create a school environment, policies, and teacher expectations that support all students' pursuit of a postsecondary education.

Strategies

- Create a college-going culture in schools.
- Consistently communicate the expectation of higher education.



DOWNLOAD PRINT-AND-USE RESOURCES: bit.ly/1WuWiNQ

Look for the printer icon and green text throughout the toolkit!

- Business Posters
- Teacher Door Posters
- Share Your Educational Journey
- Morning Announcements
- College Trivia Questions
- Student “I Have a Plan” Posters

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Sources & More Information

UC, Berkeley, [Advancing College-Going Culture](#)

Michigan State University, [School Climate & Learning](#)


UCLA, [What is a College Culture?](#)

College Board, [Creating a College-Going Culture Guide](#)

UCLA, [Creating a College-Going Culture](#)

USC Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis,
[Getting There and Beyond - Building a Culture of
College-going in High Schools](#)

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS



School culture and climate directly affect student learning and engagement as well as college aspirations and preparation. A college-going culture sets high expectations for all students and provides them with the academic preparation and other tools to meet those expectations. Students benefit from ever-present reminders of college expectations in visual reminders, verbal interactions and activities dedicated to exploring postsecondary opportunities. All school staff, plus parents and students (and even the community) play a role in consistently echoing the expectation of college.

START THE YEAR OFF RIGHT

Hold a GEAR UP Week at your school to kick off the year with fun and exciting activities (but without a lot of energy on your part!) that encourage a college-going culture in your school and community. You can use these materials during National GEAR UP Week or any time that works for you.

This toolkit has everything you need—instructions, posters, even **Morning Announcements** 📄—to put on a week of programs designed to get the word out about GEAR UP and the importance of going on to college.

Invite your mayor, school board, congressional reps, Chamber of Commerce and your [local newspaper or TV station](#) to attend one or more of the events!

National GEAR UP Week, usually held in late September, is an opportunity to raise awareness in your community about the positive impact GEAR UP is having locally.

Learn more:

edpartnerships.org/national-gear-up-week

► NEED MORE IDEAS?

Our College-Going Culture Toolkit has even more ideas and ready-to-use templates.


oregongearup.org/resources/college-going-culture-toolkit



DAILY ACTIVITIES

SHOW OFF COLLEGE SPIRIT

1. GOALS BULLETIN BOARD

Have students share their plan for after high school and their academic, professional and personal goals and display prominently in the hallway, using our fill-in-the-blank **Goals Poster** . Take a photo with students and share with the GEAR UP office and elected officials.

2. GEAR UP IN 1 WORD

Using a piece of poster board or other large paper, ask students and teachers to share what GEAR UP means to them in one word. Take a photo with students and share with the GEAR UP office and elected officials.

3. GEAR UP/COLLEGE GEAR DAY

Encourage students and teachers to wear their GEAR UP t-shirts or other gear from colleges.

TIP: Give out 7th grade GEAR UP t-shirts this day.

TIP: Take photos and create a hallway collage.

TIP: Continue the tradition all year (e.g. every Friday is College Gear Day).

MAKE IT A COMPETITION

4. DOOR WARS

Students and teachers have one week to decorate their homeroom/advisory classroom door with the college of their choice. The winning class gets a prize, like a pizza party or GEAR UP swag. A great way to get teachers excited, too.




TIP: Consider additional prizes or points for “Most Obscure School” or other criteria that will encourage students to choose schools other than those in Oregon.

TIP: Have paper, scissors, and college catalogs and posters ready for students.

TIP: Invite an elected official or local news reporter to help judge!

5. TRIVIA

Give out **College Trivia**  sheets during lunch or advisory, with basic information about college and Oregon schools. Students with the most correct answers receive a special prize.

TIP: Have students work in teams—no phones or computers allowed.



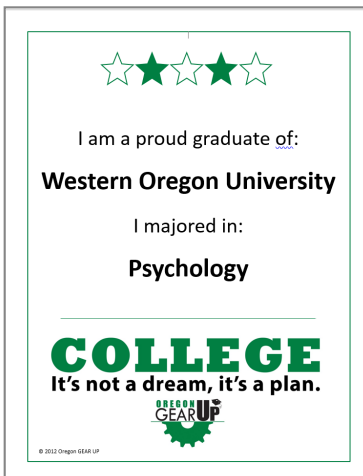
DAILY ACTIVITIES

INSPIRE & INFORM

6. GEAR UP/COLLEGE PEP RALLY

Invite a guest speaker from a local college or in the community to share their educational journey and why college is important.

7. TEACHERS TELL THEIR STORY



Teacher Poster with their college's alma mater on their classroom door.

Ask your teachers to share **Share Their Educational Journey** as part of Advisory or homeroom. Encourage them to share any challenges they faced in choosing a college or major or finishing their degree. Have them hang a

9. POSTER THE COMMUNITY

Send a student leadership group out into the community to share information about GEAR UP and hang posters in local businesses. Add your school name to our **Business Poster** so the community can show their support.

10. COMMUNITY FRIENDRAISER

Bring together the schools and the community to learn more about GEAR UP, get people excited/involved and introduce the concept of developing a college-going culture.

TIP: Combine the event with parent conference nights or before/after a school activity.

TIP: Show a video from the [Oregon GEAR UP YouTube channel](#) to help explain the program and why college is important.

TIP: Invite elected officials to speak to students and parents about the importance of higher education. Make sure the media (newspapers, radio, TV) is invited too!

SPREAD THE WORD

8. THANK YOU CARDS TO CONGRESS

Thank your federal Senators and Representatives for supporting GEAR UP and other college access programs with an oversized card or individual letters.

► ENGAGE PARENTS

See our Parent Engagement Toolkit for more information and tips.

oreongearup.org/resources/parent-engagement-toolkit

GEAR UP WEEK CALENDAR

WEEK OF:	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MIDDLE SCHOOL					
HIGH SCHOOL					
PARENTS/ COMMUNITY					



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COLLEGE. It's not a dream, it's a plan.