

GEAR UP Coordinator Manual

A GUIDE FOR LOCAL SITE COORDINATORS



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COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

Oregon has recently defined college and career readiness as the following:

Oregonians who are College and Career Ready have the academic and workplace knowledge, reasoning and analytical abilities, as well as transition skills and professional behaviors necessary to be successful in the workplace and in postsecondary education and as contributing members to their communities and Oregon's economy.

The skills required for a successful career are for the most part very similar to the skills and attributes necessary for college entrance and success. Quite simply, college and career readiness is the knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary to be successful in postsecondary education, career and life.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The benefits of education beyond high school are numerous: increased earning potential, personal development, and preparation for careers, to name a few. Some of the most compelling benefits relate to employment. Low-income Oregonians who enroll in college as young adults are twice as likely to become middle or high income earners as those who do not. The Oregon Employment Department predicts that job growth in the state will be approximately 13% between 2021 and 2031. In order to be competitive for the majority of these openings, applicants will need some education or training beyond high school, and nearly all higher paying jobs will require a credential or degree.

Read more about the importance of college and career readiness in our [application](#) to the US Department of Education.

WHAT IS GEAR UP?

Oregon GEAR UP is a federally funded program that supports rural, low-income middle and high school schools to help students prepare for and succeed in education after high school. GEAR UP stands for **G**aining **E**arly **A**wareness and **R**eadiness for **U**ndergraduate **P**rograms. Oregon GEAR UP has also received support from community partners such as The Ford Family Foundation and is administered by Oregon State University.

The 2022-2029 grant will be administered using a two-pronged approach:

Statewide Services under the Oregon Goes To College umbrella: technical assistance to all secondary schools throughout the state to improve college going rates. Services include

supporting school-based events largely focused on supporting seniors on their path to postsecondary education (College Application Week, Spring into Action, Decision Day, College Exploration Month), a vast collection of college awareness resources and tools that can be found at oregongoestocollege.org, and professional development for educators.

School-based Services: direct services to students in grades 7-12 and the first year in college. According to a recent study by Education Northwest, rural students have lower rates of enrollment, persistence, and completion than their non-rural peers. For this reason, we partner with specific rural schools to help create a college-going culture that produces students who are college and career ready. GEAR UP uses research-based principles to inform our systemic school-wide improvement model that is easily adapted to local needs. Statewide services describe above will be implemented in these schools and Oregon Goes To College resources will be the cornerstone of activities in support of awareness of the college-going process described under our model.

OUR VALUES

Anchored by a foundation of respect, Oregon GEAR UP believes in five core values that influence how and why we do our work.

Education

We believe in the transformative power of education for individuals and communities. College (which for us means any kind of postsecondary education or training) opens doors by giving people the knowledge and skills needed for personal and professional success.

Equity

Our work aims to level the playing field for all students in access and opportunity. We have high expectations and believe in the potential of every student. We affirm all students' right to explore and pursue postsecondary education that meets their physical, social, emotional, and educational needs.

Empowerment

We build collaborative relationships to enhance the culture around going to college. Our model is not one-size-fits-all; rather, we encourage creative, adaptable solutions that empower schools and students.

Growth

We support our colleagues, partners and students in personal and professional growth and provide opportunities that encourage perseverance and possibility.

Balance

We recognize the numerous demands on our colleagues and partners and therefore are positive, practical and flexible in order to achieve balance in work and life.

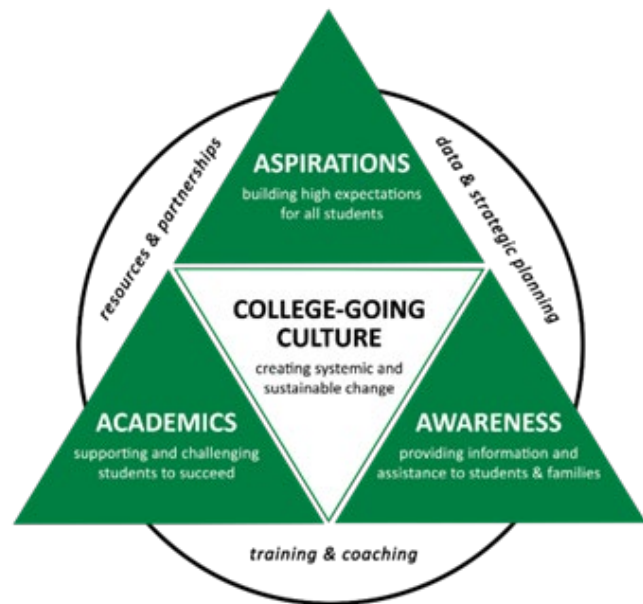
OUR MODEL

The framework for school-based services will establish college-going cultures that set high expectations for all students and give them the tools necessary to meet these expectations. Students need sufficient academic preparation, as well as awareness of and assistance with the college-going process in order to achieve their aspirations. These are the 3 As:

Academic Preparation: Students will be academically prepared to succeed in postsecondary education.

Awareness: Students and their families will be knowledgeable about careers and the college-going process. They will also receive support and assistance with the college-going process. Oregon Goes To College activities and resources are a primary vehicle for implementing Awareness activities.

Aspiration: Students will feel supported and encouraged by the school environment, policies, and relationships that promote high expectations for all students.



The three areas around the pyramid are some of the support services provided by the central GEAR UP team. See the list of staff and their roles on the grant management page [here](#).

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

While the GEAR UP model is designed to be adaptable to the needs of different schools and communities, we do have common goals, objectives and strategies. We also offer suggested activities to help you reach those goals. In the following examples, activities in bold text are required.

Overall Goals:

1. Increase percentage of students who graduate high school.

2. Increase percentage of students who enroll in college.
3. Increase the percentage of students who persist in college.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

All students will be academically prepared to succeed in postsecondary education.

Objectives:

1. Increase the percentage of students who pass Algebra 1 or its equivalent by the end of ninth grade.
2. Increase the percentage of students promoted to successive grade levels on time.
3. Increase the percentage of regular attenders.
4. Increase the percentage of students passing their math courses.
5. Increase the percentage of students passing their English Language Arts courses.
6. Increase the percentage of students taking at least one dual credit course.
7. Each year, 80% or more of GEAR UP students in college will report they are getting Cs or better.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION STRATEGY 1: ENSURE ALL STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO RIGOROUS COURSES

Sample Activities

1. **Curriculum that gives all students the opportunity to complete coursework that meets entrance requirements for Oregon's public universities**
2. **Examine data to identify inequities in access to rigorous courses**
3. **Encourage student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework**
4. Dual credit courses
5. AP courses
6. Curriculum alignment efforts (middle school to high school grades)
7. Curriculum alignment efforts (high school to college)
8. Technology that promotes effective and rigorous teaching and learning
9. Classes, workshops, and/or curriculum that teach students how to utilize technology and the Internet
10. Content-specific and pedagogical professional development for educators

ACADEMIC PREPARATION STRATEGY 2: PROVIDE SUPPORT AND MOTIVATION FOR ALL STUDENTS TO ENROLL AND SUCCEED IN RIGOROUS COURSES

Sample Activities

1. **Explore classroom student outcome data and instructional practices to inform changes needed for effective teaching**
2. **School-wide AVID or similar program**
3. Summer academic enrichment programs

4. Tutoring and homework help before/during/after school
5. Summer school and credit recovery classes
6. Activities to help students understand their learning preferences and teach skills such as study habits, organization, and note taking
7. Student-led conferences
8. Professional development for educators on how to coach students to take the right classes necessary for their postsecondary goals
9. Professional development for educators on social and emotional learning

ACADEMIC PREPARATION STRATEGY 3: DEVELOP SYSTEMS AND PRACTICES TO IMPROVE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE IN ORDER TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Sample Activities

1. **Explore disaggregated school data for disproportionate disciplinary practices**
2. Attendance and positive behavioral activities/programs (e.g., Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, restorative justice, or other methods)
3. Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses
4. Courses that teach life skills (e.g., personal finance, resume writing, interview skills, etc.)
5. Academic co-curricular activities such as Robotics, Project Lead the Way, and clubs focused on academics
6. Mentoring from older students to younger students (e.g., Link Crew)
7. Transition events from elementary to middle and middle to high school

AWARENESS

Students and their families will be knowledgeable about careers and the college-going process. They will also receive support and assistance with the college-going process.

Objectives:

1. Increase the percentage of students who complete FAFSA/ORSAA.
2. Each year, 75% or more of students will report they have learned about careers that interest them.
3. Each year, 75% or more of students will report they know about postsecondary options and college entrance requirements.
4. Each year, 75% or more of students will report they know about sources of financial aid.
5. Increase student participation in college and career readiness activities.
6. Each year, 90% or more of alumni will report their high school helped them prepare for life after high school.

AWARENESS STRATEGY 1: OFFER WAYS FOR STUDENTS TO EXPLORE A WIDE ARRAY OF CAREERS WITH ATTENTION TO REQUIRED EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Sample Activities

1. **Guest speakers and events related to career exploration**
2. **Dedicated career center in visible location with resources and assistance for students to research careers and required training**
3. Career interest inventories/tracking such as Career Information Systems, Career Choices, and SparkPath
4. Career or workplace visits and tours
5. Career fairs
6. Internships, job shadows, and service learning projects
7. Careers class
8. Activities for students to learn job readiness skills (e.g., workshops, advisory, student-run businesses, project-based learning)
9. Student clubs with a career focus
10. Opportunities such as industry tours and training for staff to learn career-related topics (e.g., what employers look for, how to integrate careers in the classroom)

AWARENESS STRATEGY 2: PROVIDE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE ALL POSTSECONDARY OPTIONS AND ASSISTANCE WITH TASKS RELATED TO GOING AND STAYING IN COLLEGE

Sample Activities

1. **Activities for students to use the grade-specific “It’s a Plan” checklists**
2. **Visits to a wide variety of colleges and universities for students, parents and staff**
3. **College Exploration Week**
4. **College Application Week**
5. **Family events to explore benefits of training and education beyond high school and the college-going process**
6. College fairs
7. Activities to help students “try on” the role of college student (e.g., on-college-campus experiences, especially overnight camps, using college-like practices in high school activities, etc.)
8. College center(s) where students can access information on a wide range of postsecondary institutions
9. College entrance and placement test preparation activities/classes
10. Guest speaker events focused on college-going experiences
11. Parent newsletters that focus on college-related topics (types of postsecondary institutions, the benefits of college, the admissions process)

12. Activities/supports for students during the summer between high school graduation and college matriculation
13. Regular email and text check-ins with recent alumni enrolled in college
14. Care packages for alumni in college
15. Professional development for staff regarding the college-going process (college fit, admissions, financial aid, writing effective letters of recommendation, etc.)
16. Membership in the Pacific Northwest Association for College Admission Counseling (PNACAC)

AWARENESS STRATEGY 3: HELP STUDENTS AND FAMILIES LEARN ABOUT THE COST OF COLLEGE AND THE WAYS TO FINANCE IT, AND PROVIDE ASSISTANCE WITH THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Sample Activities

1. **Age-appropriate activities to provide information about financial aid (scholarships, grants, loans, savings) to students**
2. **Activities to provide information about financial aid to families**
3. **Activities to promote participation in the Oregon College Savings Plan incentive program**
4. Activities to help students and families complete financial aid application forms (FAFSA, ORSAA, scholarships, etc.)
5. Integration of scholarship essay prompts into English Language Arts curriculum
6. Visits from college financial aid representatives.

ASPIRATION

Students will feel supported and encouraged by the school environment, policies, and relationships that promote high expectations for every student.

Objectives:

1. Each year, at least 75% of students will report that they will complete a college degree or certificate at any time.
2. Each year, the percentage of educators who believe that students would benefit from postsecondary education will increase 2 points.
3. Each year, at least 75% of school staff will report that their school's college-going culture is improving.
4. The percentage of students who talk to peers about postsecondary education will increase by 5 points by the end of the grant.
5. Each year, 60% of former GEAR UP students who are not in college will report they plan to enroll in the future.

ASPIRATION STRATEGY 1: PROMOTE THE VALUE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION THROUGH VISUALS, CUSTOMS, AND PRACTICES

Sample Activities

1. **GEAR UP Week**
2. **Decision Day**
3. **Education plans for students that include the year after high school graduation**
4. **College and career décor around the school (e.g., college door wars, college pennants and posters, displays showcasing graduates' plans)**
5. Teachers display information about their alma mater(s) in the classroom and talk about their collegiate experiences.
6. College corner in every classroom
7. Banners that celebrate academic achievements
8. Awards nights and similar activities to celebrate students' academic accomplishments
9. Grad walks where seniors parade through elementary and middle school in their caps and gowns
10. Advisory periods or class time to help students set goals that demonstrate growth and develop plans to achieve them (dream boards, family history projects, etc.)
11. Encourage local businesses to promote college awareness and celebrate going to college.
12. Professional development for staff on how to integrate college readiness into their subject matter/classroom lessons

ASPIRATION STRATEGY 2: CONSISTENTLY COMMUNICATE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Sample Activities

1. **Assess educator expectations for students (e.g., surveys, classroom observations, meetings, etc.)**
2. **Professional development for staff to elevate and communicate their expectations for all students and create classroom environments based on high expectations**
3. Incorporate preparing students for postsecondary options into school mission statements
4. Staff book discussion on "Ready, Willing and Able; A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success"

ASPIRATION STRATEGY 3: FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS THAT CULTIVATE COLLEGE-GOING IDENTITIES AMONG STUDENTS

Sample Activities

1. **Formal opportunities for all students to have a meaningful relationship with at least one staff person**
2. Adult mentors
3. Near peer mentoring opportunities between college students and secondary school students
4. Clubs centered on the college going process/identities (first generation clubs)
5. Partnerships with postsecondary institutions that reinforce the importance of education and training beyond high school

GEAR UP COORDINATOR ROLE

In general, your role is to lead the efforts of GEAR UP in your community. This means being the champion for creating a college-going culture, adhering to all policies and procedures, and working closely with the central office staff. Refer to your specific job description for more details.

CREATE A SCHOOL-WIDE COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

According to the Center for Educational Partnerships at UC Berkeley, college-going culture refers to the environment, attitudes, and practices in schools and communities that encourage students and families to obtain the information, tools, and perspective to enhance access to and success in post-secondary education. The relationships between and among students and staff in the school are the foundation upon which the school's college-going culture is built.

GEAR UP is intended to create systemic changes to the school culture that support students' postsecondary goals. Creating systems change requires support from all levels -- the superintendent and school board, principal(s), teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals and volunteers. Here are some tips for bringing everyone on board.

SHARE INFORMATION

- Clearly show the staff what GEAR UP is all about. Share information about *why* college readiness is important and how the research-based GEAR UP model can help with student academic preparation, as well as awareness of and assistance with the college-going process in order to achieve their aspirations.

- Explain how expansive and well-rounded GEAR UP can be. Clearly explain how GEAR UP funds can be used to enhance programs in the school that are put into place to change the culture.
- Emphasize that GEAR UP provides valuable time away from school for staff to get together to evaluate and plan for the year during the annual Planning Retreat.
- Share and discuss the myriad resources on the GEAR UP and Oregon Goes To College websites:
 - Free resources: oregongoestocollege.org/resources
 - Monthly college access chats for educators: oregongoestocollege.org/educators/chats
 - Toolkits that cover college-going topics: oregongoestocollege.org/toolkits
 - Bi-monthly newsletter: oregongoestocollege.org/educators/newsletter
- Present information about GEAR UP, data gathered from surveys and your successes to the school board; stay to answer questions. (link to tools)

MAINTAIN ENGAGEMENT

- Invite staff and administrators to participate in a GEAR UP team or work to integrate GEAR UP into an existing school team (i.e., high school success, etc.). Utilize this team to build your annual plan, conduct GEAR UP activities, and champion the GEAR UP cause.
- Encourage administrators to attend statewide GEAR UP planning meetings and conferences and take advantage of networking with other school principals.
- Gather ideas and feedback from staff and administrators. After a GEAR UP activity or presentation, find out what worked and what could be improved upon.
- Rotate the staff participation to college visits so they can see students in a different atmosphere and to experience GEAR UP firsthand. Sometimes a staff member will make a connection when they see a student excited about their future.
- Ask staff about their experience in college and what advice they would give their students.
- Engage their competitive side with college door decorating challenges or other competitions with prizes as simple as having the principal or counselor cover one class period.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

CREATE A YEARLY PLAN

Each year your cluster will submit an annual plan of your GEAR UP activities. Your cluster is the group of schools that submitted an application together, usually the high school and feeder

middle schools; it may include alternative or virtual middle and high schools as well. Your annual plan is constructed around the 3 As. This data-driven process asks you and your team to review and reflect on key data points, consider your current activities, and finally to plan your GEAR UP sponsored activities for the year. The final step includes a detailed budget and questions about how you will evaluate success and sustain activities when the grant has expired.

GEAR UP is designed to bring about systemic and sustainable school change. It is therefore important to think about how you will sustain your efforts from the onset instead of waiting until the last years of the grant. If you plan to continue these activities into the future, how will you do that? Will you seek external funding? Absorb the costs internally? Partner with others who can provide the activity for you? Are there things you need to be doing now in order to gain support, either from your school board/district and/or external partners in order to sustain what you've started with GEAR UP?

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

The following activities are required by the US Department of Education as part of the GEAR UP program regulations:

1. Provide information regarding financial aid for postsecondary education to participating students in the cohort.
2. Encourage student enrollment in rigorous and challenging curricula and coursework, in order to reduce the need for remedial coursework at the postsecondary level.
3. Improve the number of participating students who
 - (A) obtain a secondary school diploma; and
 - (B) complete applications for and enroll in a program of postsecondary education.
4. 21ST Century Scholar Certificates: Provide certificates, to be known as 21st Century Scholar Certificates, to all students served. A 21st Century Scholar Certificate shall be personalized for each student and indicate the amount of Federal financial aid for college that a student may be eligible to receive. We provide a template on the [Grant Management](#) page to distribute to new students each year.

In addition to these federally mandated activities, Oregon GEAR UP schools are also required to conduct several activities under each of the 3 As. Those are shown in bold in the list of sample activities in the [Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Activities section](#).

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

COMMUNICATION AND MEETING PARTICIPATION

There are several ways that we will communicate with GEAR UP schools virtually:

1. GEAR UP Coordinator Weekly Bulletin: Central GEAR UP staff will consolidate announcements and information related to grant management, events, due dates, etc. Typically this is only sent to the official coordinator.
2. Oregon Goes To College Educator Newsletter: A bi-weekly collection of news related to college access, scholarships for students, professional development opportunities and more.
3. Oregon Goes To College Events Newsletter: This newsletter with tips, tricks, and reminders about our statewide events will arrive in your inbox on the weeks you don't receive the educator newsletter.
4. The central GEAR UP office will host weekly Zoom calls with rotating themes that coordinators are required attend. Other members of your GEAR UP team or staff might also chose to participate based on the topic.
5. The Success Coach will communicate via email and phone as necessary.

The Success Coach and staff from Metis Associates, our external evaluator, will conduct formal site visits with each school in order to learn more about your successes and challenges and learn about ways we can better support your efforts.

We also host a few key in-person meetings and activities. Statewide meetings are typically held twice a year in order to facilitate learning and share best practices among GEAR UP schools as well as to provide professional development for a variety of staff. We host a Fall Statewide Meeting (usually in late September), and a two and a half day planning retreat each spring (usually in late April). The GEAR UP Coordinator is expected to attend these meetings. In addition, building administrators should plan to attend the planning retreat and other meetings with relevant topics. The Events & Budgeting document found in the [Meetings](#) section of the Grant Management page contains details and budgeting information for GEAR UP meetings and conferences.

Additional conferences, professional development, and other training sessions are offered for the benefit of participating GEAR UP schools as well as others that serve similar populations. While attendance is not mandatory, it is our hope that schools will take advantage of the opportunities that meet their needs and fit their availability.

When communicating with your school and community about the program and activities, we invite you to incorporate the GEAR UP logo into your flyers, posters, websites, and more.

Download GEAR UP logos [here](#). Please do not alter the logo or colors in any way or stretch, warp, or crop the image.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GEAR UP is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The federal policies that govern GEAR UP are the basis for the policies and procedures from the central GEAR UP office. For your reference, the following is a list of each of the major policy sources.

Statute. Title IV of the 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 [P.L. 105-244] is the federal law that authorizes and governs GEAR UP.

Program Regulations. Program regulations provide additional guidance when the statute is silent or vague on an issue. They provide detail that govern the application competition, dictate how programs will be put into action, and other implementation details. There are three types of regulations that you should become familiar with: EDGAR and GEAR UP program regulations.

[Uniform Guidance](#). Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR Part 200, referred to as Uniform Guidance.

[Education Department General Administration Regulations \(EDGAR\)](#). These are the federal regulations that govern all federal grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education.

[GEAR UP program regulations](#). Whereas EDGAR sets broad agency-wide policies, the GEAR UP program regulations address the very unique administrative matters associated with GEAR UP.

MATCHING FUNDS/COST SHARE

The U.S. Department of Education requires 100% matching contributions for this grant. This requirement is passed along to subawardees (school districts) as well. Subawardees must match 20% of their total award for the first year, 50% for the second year and 100% (dollar for dollar) for the final five years. Anything you could pay for with federal dollars can be used as match, such as

- Time and resources spent on GEAR UP activities provided by **volunteers** or **non-federally paid staff** of non-school organizations, including businesses, religious organizations, community groups, postsecondary institutions, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, and other organizations

- Non-federally paid school staff working outside their typical duties in support of GEAR UP
- Financial assistance paid to students
- The amount of tuition, fees, room, board waived or reduced for students

Generally, teacher salaries and benefits cannot count as match because they are not directly related to the GEAR UP grant. If, however, teachers are being paid by the district or are volunteering their time to conduct activities that are specifically related to the GEAR UP grant and are **outside their normal duties**, the portion of their salary and benefits related to those activities may count as match.

When sub-grant invoices are received, if your cluster is 3 months or more behind in submitting Event & Cost Share reports/forms, we will not process your district's invoice(s) for reimbursement until you are caught up on your event and cost share reporting. If your cluster is in this situation, you will be notified by the Success Coach.

EVENTS AND COST SHARE TRACKER

It is critical to accurately document each partner school's GEAR UP activities and matching contribution to the GEAR UP project. An online Events and Cost Share Tracker (ECST) database is under development to assist you in documenting your contribution. This database:

- 1) Tracks all events and services provided to students, parents and staff
- 2) Tracks all cost share, whether associated with an event, staff time, purchase, etc.

Throughout the school year, all GEAR UP related events should be entered into the Events and Cost Share Tracker, in order to accurately track student, parent and staff participation. Updating the events and submitting monthly cost share reports are requirements necessary to remain in good standing and to receive continuation of grant funds. Student names are required for all events. Access the database through the [Invoices and Cost Share](#) section of the website.

ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES

GEAR UP funds may not be used to supplant existing funds or program support. They may supplement resources for existing programs in order to enhance or improve them, but not to replace current funds.

The regulations state what GEAR UP funds can and cannot be used for:

FUNDS CAN BE USED FOR:	FUNDS <u>CANNOT</u> BE USED FOR:
Compensation	Supplanting existing funds
Consultants and contracts	Advertising or public relations
Equipment (generally items over \$5,000)	Alcoholic beverages
Meetings and conferences	Capital improvements
Publications and printing	Entertainment
Supplies	Fundraising
Travel	Goods or services for personal use
Indirect costs (based on your district's approved indirect rate, and no more than 8% of direct costs)	Lobbying

All incentives for students need to have an educational purpose or connection and should be explicitly described in your plan. You may not purchase gift cards. A list of allowable incentives and prices will be updated every year and posted [here](#).

REIMBURSEMENT POLICES AND INVOICES

Once approved, your yearly plan will be the basis for a contract generated between your school district and Oregon State University. The contract states that funds for approved activities are payable on a cost reimbursement basis. **The annual budget year runs from September 1st to August 31st.** Requests for reimbursement may be sent during the year, either **monthly** or **quarterly**. Final requests for funds must be received within 60 days of the end of the contract.

At a minimum, invoices should be submitted according to the following schedule:

- September, October & November: **Due by December 31**
- December, January & February: **Due by March 31**
- March, April & May: **Due by June 30**
- June, July & August: **Due by September 30**

Institutions are required by law to keep all back up documentation to support their requests for reimbursement, per OAR 166-475-0060(7). Schools must provide an invoice expense list for the charges on all sub-grant reimbursement requests. Periodically, schools may be asked to provide additional supporting documentation for the charges on the reimbursement request. Backup documentation should include receipts or invoice copies (not just PO's) for all items or services purchased, as well as budget reports and time sheets for salaries/wages and benefits.

Each expenditure must be directly connected to an activity from the approved plan. See sample invoice on the next page. Note that the procedures in the first year of the grant are slightly different, as your first official planning document will not be submitted until after the first planning retreat. As a result, your expenditures prior to August 31, 2023, will not be tied to a specific activity number from your contract plan. Instead, they will be pre-approved using the [Activity and Expenditure Worksheet](#).

Staff attending conferences or other training should follow posted per diem rates for any expenses incurred in the course of attending/traveling to the event. Current per diem rates for the continental US can be found [here](#).

There are a number of national, regional and statewide events that the central office will help pay for. A list of those and a description of who pays for what can be found in The Events & Budgeting document found in the [Meetings](#) section of the Grant Management page. When making plans to attend conferences when the GEAR UP central office is paying for some of the related travel expenses, please make and pay for all travel arrangements following district policy and the guidance from Oregon State University below. Once the trip is over, the district may invoice us for those expenses separate from your other GEAR UP expenditures. In instances where we have offered to pay for lodging, lodging is paid based on double occupancy, when possible. Individuals requesting single rooms will be responsible for associated additional costs. GEAR UP funds cannot be used to pay those additional costs. If we are paying for airfare, that also includes any fees associated with the flight (booking, baggage, etc.). We can only reimburse economy class seats; any upgrades are the responsibility of the individual. If you are in doubt about whether something will be reimbursed, check first.

In general, you may be reimbursed for travel and meal expenses related to GEAR UP activities according to the policies and guidelines set by your district. Oregon State University (OSU) has some additional guidelines and regulations, explained below.

1. Employee Working Meals

- Allowed under certain circumstances
 - Planned, interdepartmental or inter-institutional meeting called for a specific purpose related to GEAR UP programs.
 - The meal takes place in a clear business setting.
 - Meal is included as part of the meeting's formal agenda.
Note: Best situation is when agenda shows "working lunch"
- Backup documentation should be maintained
 - List of attendees
 - Copy of agenda showing meal during meeting
 - Itemized receipt (no alcohol)
- Cost per person should not exceed the General Services Administration (GSA) meal per diem or your district's meal per diem.

2. Travel Expenses

- Expenses can be approved or reimbursed in accordance with OSU policy when it is determined the costs are:
 - necessary,
 - appropriate to the occasion,
 - reasonable in amount, and
 - serve a bona fide purpose associated with this grant.
- **Amount:** Follow GSA or your district's travel per diem rates.
- **Backup documentation:** Every effort should be made to provide an itemized receipt; however, if this is not possible, a non-itemized receipt will be accepted upon submission of a written statement specifying the expense details and signed by the grantee. Other documentation should include:
 - Who - names of the individual(s) traveling
 - What - what is being paid
 - When - date(s)
 - Where – departure and arrival destinations
 - Why - purpose of travel

3. Allowable Amounts for Non-Travel Meals, Refreshments and Hospitality Expenses

- Expenses can be approved or reimbursed in accordance with OSU policy when it is determined the costs are:
 - necessary,
 - appropriate to the occasion,

- reasonable in amount, and
- serve a bona fide purpose associated with this grant.
- **Amount:** Actual cost will be paid with documented itemized receipt. Approved GSA travel per diem rates will be used to check for the reasonableness standard.
- **Gratuities:** Reimbursement for a tip/gratuity of up to 15% of the charge is allowable when hosting groups or guests. The 15% limit does not apply when the establishment adds a service charge for larger groups in lieu of gratuity. In that case, the amount of the service charge is not within the control of the customer. Tips or fees related to alcoholic beverage service are not reimbursable.
- **Alcoholic Beverages:** Alcoholic beverages and any related expenses are not reimbursable.
- **Backup documentation:** The receipt must separately itemize meals, gratuities, alcoholic beverages and any charges for room use. A "tear tag" showing only the total charge is inadequate for reimbursement. Every effort should be made to provide an itemized receipt; however, if this is not possible, a non-itemized receipt will be accepted with a written statement specifying the expense details and signed by the grantee. Other documentation should include:
 - Who - Names of the individuals attending and individuals doing the hosting (An announcement or agenda may be substituted for individual names when paying expenses of a large group gathering.)
 - What - What was the nature of the event? Was it lunch, dinner, breakfast, entertainment, or something else?
 - When - The dates and times of the events.
 - Where - location of the event
 - Why - purpose and reason the event

Sample Project Budget/Invoice



Expenditures

Grant Invoice – Subaward # ED185C-xyz

Oregon GEAR UP Network

SUBGRANT BUDGET YEAR: 09/01/2022-08/31/2023

From: 2/15/2023 To: 4/30/2023 Invoice #: 2023-004

Contact(s): John Jones Phone: 541-867-5309

School District [School(s)]: School District

REMIT ADDRESS: 123 Main Street

Attach a [detailed list of expenses](#) and add total value for each category in table below.

	Expense Total
Salaries/Wages	\$2,000
OPE/Benefits	\$800
Travel	\$50
Materials & Supplies	\$52.64
Consultants/contracts	
Other, specify	
Sub-total	\$2,902.64
Indirect costs	\$116.11
Equipment (items over \$5000)	\$6,500
GRAND TOTAL:	\$9518.75

Check here if there are -0- grant expenses this reimbursement period.

Cathy Coordinator

5/1/2023

GEAR UP Coordinator Signature

Date

John Jones

5/1/2023

Business Manager/Accountant Signature

Date

Sample Invoice Expense List

Subaward #:	ED185C-xyz	School District [School(s)]:	School District
From:	2/15/2023	Invoice #:	2023-004
To:	4/30/2023	Remit Address:	123 Main Street
		Contact(s):	John Jones
		Phone/Email:	name@school.edu

Submit this document with your GU Reimbursement Invoice.

SALARIES/WAGES				Salary/Wage Total:	\$2,000.00
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
2/30/23	Cathy Coordinator	4.1	Monthly salary	\$2,000.00	
BENEFITS				Benefits Total:	\$800.00
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
2/30/23	Cathy Coordinator	4.1	Monthly benefits	\$800.00	
TRAVEL				Travel Total:	\$50.00
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
4/23/2023	Cathy Coordinator	4.2	Travel to planning retreat	\$50.00	
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES				Materials & Supplies Total:	\$52.64
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
3/1/2023	Costco	2.1	Decision Day supplies	\$52.64	
CONSULTANTS/CONTRACTS				Consultants/Contracts Total:	\$0.00
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
OTHER				Other Total:	\$0.00
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
				Subtotal:	\$2,902.64
INDIRECT (if applicable)				Indirect Total:	\$116.11
Date	Vendor/Payee	Description of Expense/Purchase		Amount	
4/30/2023	School District	Approved Indirect of 4%		\$116.11	
EQUIPMENT (any single item over \$5,000)				Equipment Total:	\$6,500.00
Date	Vendor/Payee	Activity Number	Description of Expense/Purchase	Amount	
3/15/2023	Scientific Instr.	1.1	3D Printer	\$6,500.00	
				Grand Total:	\$9,518.75

RECORD RETENTION

All records that are fiscal in nature, as described in OAR 166-475-0060(7), need to be retained for 5 years after the final annual financial report is submitted for the GEAR UP grant. It is currently anticipated that the final report will be submitted in December 2029. Therefore, these records would need to be retained until a minimum of December 2034. These records need to be accessible during that entire period in the event there is an audit. Note that sometimes there are extensions to grants, in which case the final report would be submitted even later.

DATA COLLECTION

Annual Performance Report (APR)

The APR is used by the Department of Education to determine whether substantial progress has been made toward meeting our project objectives as outlined in our grant application or work plan. As required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, the APR is also used to collect data addressing the performance of the GEAR UP program on a national level. Annual submission of the APR is a requirement of our grant and will be used to determine continuation of funding.

In order to complete this report, we rely upon accurate data collection from all partner schools. All GEAR UP related events should be entered into the Events and Cost Share Tracker throughout the year to accurately track student, parent and staff participation. Student names are required for all events, so please upload a current list of students to the tracker at the beginning of each school year, and update the list as needed. Additionally, we may survey schools and/or ask for data from your student information systems to capture the remaining required information. Submission of this data and updating the events are required to remain in good standing and to receive continuation of grant funds.

Surveys

To assess the impact of GEAR UP, you will administer surveys to your students, parents and staff to gauge their attitudes, expectations and knowledge about postsecondary education.

Metis Associates, GEAR UP's external evaluator, will provide you with online versions of the surveys for students and staff, and both online and paper versions for parents. Surveys of students and educators will be conducted in the winter/spring each year, and parent surveys every other summer/fall.

SURVEY TIPS

- Administer surveys to receive the best response rate:
 - **Parents:** Include in registration packets; during parent-teacher conferences, open houses, sporting events or other school events
 - **Students:** During advisory period, as part of regular testing schedules, or in class.
 - **Educators:** During regular staff meetings or as part of scheduled professional development.
- Incentivize completing surveys with a small prize drawn randomly.
- Share survey results with staff and parents. The central GEAR UP office will provide help with this.

PHOTO RELEASE

We love to use student photos and quotes in our annual report and on our website to highlight successes of the GEAR UP program, so please collect photos, quotes, or stories during the school year. A provision in your contracts allows you to use your school's media releases when submitting photos and videos of your students to Oregon GEAR UP. If your school does not have a media release form that parents sign, please add this photo release language to your school registration packets or download separately [here](#).

STUDENT'S NAME _____ **SCHOOL** _____

PROGRAM: GEAR UP **ACTIVITY:** Camps, Workshops, College Visits, School Programs

MEDIA RELEASE

I recognize and acknowledge that the University may record my child's participation and appearance on any recorded medium including, but not limited to video, audio, photos (collectively, "recordings") for use in any form (including, but not limited to print, websites, blogs, internet, social media). I authorize such recording and release the University to use my name, likeness, voice, and biographical material to exhibit or distribute such recordings in whole or in part without restrictions or limitations for any educational or promotional purpose. If you would like to opt out of this section, please request the Photo Opt Out Release from your child's school.

DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____

Alternatively, if parents or guardians would like to opt out of having their student recorded, please use the Photo Opt Out Release found here: <https://youth.oregonstate.edu/waivers>