

# GEAR UP CONSENT FORM & SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS & TIPS



## OVERVIEW

The purpose of the GEAR UP Surveys is to gauge the knowledge, attitudes, and experiences of families in order to measure and increase the effectiveness of GEAR UP at your school and around the state. The Consent form is required to survey students. Note: Consent forms from previous years are admissible for the current school year. Surveys are anonymous but include an optional space for PARENT/GUARDIAN or FAMILY MEMBER NAME so that the GEAR UP liaison can help schools keep track of which families have/not been surveyed. The name will be used ONLY for this purpose. Liaisons can obtain this list from Education Northwest.

- 1. Family Consent forms should be dispersed at the start of the school year.**
- 2. Family Surveys must be completed between February 15th and April 15th.**

FAMILIES ONLY NEED TO COMPLETE ONE SURVEY AND ONE CONSENT FORM PER HOUSEHOLD. The survey and consent form instructs them to name all students in their household. **NOTE: If Montana GEAR UP meets its target completion benchmark for the FAMILY survey of 50%, the survey will not be required the following year.**

## INSTRUCTIONS

GEAR UP Liaisons will receive all survey/consent materials needed to administer paper and/or online surveys available on our website [mus.edu/gearup/liasons.html](https://mus.edu/gearup/liasons.html). These include:

### Surveys

- Online link to Family Survey:
- PDF versions of surveys for printing:

### Consent Form Options (Choose an option that works best for your school)

- Online: <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5755926/Montana-GEAR-UP-Evaluation-Consent-Form-2020-2021>
- 1: Opt Out Form. 2: Universal Permission Form. 3: Teleform. 4: Paper Form.

Note: If you are administering paper surveys or consent forms, please mail paper surveys back to Education Northwest (the external evaluator).

Set a location in each school where completed paper surveys are to be returned and inform applicable school staff of its whereabouts – plan a secure location and receptacle such that no one is able to view completed surveys. Surveys must be treated as confidential!

Using the Tips & Strategies Guide (see below), as well as your team's resources, provide the online or print survey/consent form to families of all current GEAR UP students and make every effort to maximize number of surveys completed and returned.

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## **Administration & Printing**

Paper surveys must be printed by your school, according to each school's needs. If you wish to use your GEAR UP budget to pay for this, you must have this cost included on your school's approved GEAR UP budget. PLEASE NOTE YOU MAY ALSO BUILD SURVEYING TIME/COST INTO YOUR BUDGET FOR STAFF WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPORTING THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS OUTSIDE OF THEIR CONTRACT DAY. Another option is to use district funds which may then be counted as in-kind match. If there are any issues please contact [kwilson@montana.edu](mailto:kwilson@montana.edu).

For paper surveys and consent forms, please mail them to Education Northwest after each big event or once you have collected a good number of surveys. Education Northwest will provide return envelopes with UPS labels to each liaison so you can mail back surveys.

## STRATEGIES FOR MAXIMIZING RESPONSE RATE

- **Include consent form in the student registration process:** Put paper consent forms in the school registration packets, along with other required paperwork. Alternately, have computers or tablets on site during school registration and make the consent form a "required station" as part of the registration process. Administering the family consent form during registration was the MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR ENSURING HIGH RESPONSE RATES AND REDUCING THE ADMINISTRATION EFFORT TIME.
- **Collect consent and surveys with other events:** Hand out the paper consent or family survey or have computer stations available during parent-teacher conferences, open houses, sporting events, or when registering parents for conferences or other events.
- **Share the link for the survey in multiple ways:** Post the link on your school website or Facebook page, send out the link via a parent email list or text list, or communicate using other media types your school uses. When possible, use a personalized greeting, vs. "Dear Parent", "Dear Family of".
- **Keep track:** Keep a list of which households have/not completed the survey (attaching raffle ticket or incentive coupon to surveys facilitates this name-collection) so that you can target your efforts toward these families.
- **Follow up:** Remind families who have not turned in the survey or completed a consent form. DOE requires an 85% response rate from the student survey. This can only happen when the majority of families have given their consent.