# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents .......................................................................................................................... i  

Section 1: GEAR UP Program Administration ................................................................................ 1  

1.1 Montana GEAR UP Mission Statement and Program Overview .................................................. 1  
   1.1.1 Montana GEAR UP Schools ................................................................................................. 2  
   1.1.2 Montana GEAR UP Organizational Chart .......................................................................... 3  
   1.1.3 What can a school expect from Montana GEAR UP? .......................................................... 3  
   1.1.4 What will Montana GEAR UP expect from a school? ........................................................... 4  
1.2 Montana GEAR UP Annual Timeline* ....................................................................................... 5  
1.3 Montana GEAR UP Goals, Objectives, and Measures ................................................................. 6  
   1.3.1 GOAL 1: Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students .......................................................................................................................... 6  
      Objective 1.1: Student Performance in Mathematics (Required Objective) ................................. 6  
      Objective 1.2: Student Academic Preparation for College (Required Objective) ......................... 6  
      Objective 1.4: School Initiative  .................................................................................................. 7  
   1.3.2 GOAL 2: Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students ............................................................................................................... 7  
      Objective 2.1: Graduation Rates of GEAR UP Students (Required Objective) ............................ 7  
      Objective 2.2: Enrollment Rates in Postsecondary Education (Required Objective) ..................... 7  
      Objective 2.3: School Initiative .................................................................................................. 7  
   1.3.3 GOAL 3: Increase student and family education and knowledge of financial aid ................. 8  
      Objective 3.1: Student Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid (Required Objective) ... 8  
      Objective 3.2: Family Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid (Required Objective) ... 8  
      Objective 3.3: School Initiative .................................................................................................. 8  
1.4 Montana GEAR UP Implementation Plan (IP) ............................................................................. 8  
   1.4.1 Development ....................................................................................................................... 12  
      Planning ..................................................................................................................................... 12  
      Approval ..................................................................................................................................... 13  
   1.4.2 Reporting ............................................................................................................................. 13  
      Services ..................................................................................................................................... 13  
      Progress Reports ......................................................................................................................... 14  
1.5 Montana GEAR UP Local Management Team .......................................................................... 14  
   1.5.1 Local Management Team Responsibilities ......................................................................... 15  
      Planning ..................................................................................................................................... 15  
      Implementation .......................................................................................................................... 16  
      Monitoring/Reporting ................................................................................................................ 16  
1.6 Montana GEAR UP Liaison ........................................................................................................ 16  
   1.6.1 Required Duties of a GEAR UP Liaison .............................................................................. 17

Updated: August 2019  

1-i
SECTION 1: GEAR UP PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Montana GEAR UP Mission Statement and Program Overview

Montana GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) believes that all Montana students can gain the academic, financial, and social knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary learning, regardless of their economic background. Montana GEAR UP provides schools, students, families, and communities with resources and experiences that empower students to complete high school and attain postsecondary and career success. Montana GEAR UP brings this message through early college and career awareness activities, financial aid information, improved academic support, and social-emotional learning strategies that focus on the whole student, raising the expectations and achievement of all.

In September 2017 the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) awarded the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education a seven-year GEAR UP grant for the state to increase the number of students in low-income communities who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. This is Montana’s fourth state GEAR UP grant.

Montana GEAR UP partners with 18 middle schools and their receiving high schools from around the state to improve high school graduation and college enrollment rates. Montana GEAR UP serves students in grades seven through twelve, as well as grade thirteen (i.e., college freshmen or “7th year” students). The services of GEAR UP are many and include support for Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, STEM opportunities, ACT’s College and Career Readiness System (8th and 10th grade Aspire and ACT tests), professional development, dropout prevention, mentoring, supports to improve non-cognitive skills, transition services, college and career awareness, financial aid information, parental engagement, and student advisement. Montana GEAR UP also supports state and local summer programs.

GEAR UP in Montana is not a one-size-fits-all program. Upon approval, Montana GEAR UP schools receive a sub-grant from the state office to implement their plan and services. Using school specific data, each school evaluates their unique strengths and needs to develop a plan of services that addresses GEAR UP goals and objectives. To maximize the benefit and effectiveness of GEAR UP, a local school management team consisting of at least a school administrator, counselor, GEAR UP liaison, core content teacher, student, and parent will develop the school’s tailored program in collaboration with the Montana GEAR UP school grant manager (SGM). Other key personnel should be encouraged to participate on the GEAR UP team.
### 1.1.1 Montana GEAR UP Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>School Grant Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arlee MS/HS</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Elder MS/HS</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browning MS*</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browning HS*</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardin MS*</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardin HS*</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlem MS/HS</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Butte MS/HS*</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lame Deer MS/HS</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libby MS/HS</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodge Grass MS/HS*</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pryor MS/HS</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Boy MS/HS</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ignatius MS/HS*</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Regis MS/HS</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior MS/HS</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson Falls MS/HS</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy MS/HS</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyola MS/HS</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Karen Wilson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ETS school
1.1.2 Montana GEAR UP Organizational Chart

1.1.3 What can a school expect from Montana GEAR UP?

- A Memorandum of Agreement outlining commitments of both Montana GEAR UP and the school.
- An annual and summer sub-grant to operate the school’s local GEAR UP program.
- A SGM assigned to work closely with the school and serve as a school’s main point of contact with the Montana GEAR UP state team.
- Guidance, resources, support, and technical assistance in the implementation and operation of GEAR UP at the school.
- Technical assistance in completing program, fiscal, and match reports.
- Technical assistance in entering data into GEARS (Montana GEAR UP’s online data management system).
- School-specific performance information from the outside evaluator (TBD) for Montana GEAR UP.
- One or two school visits each year from assigned members of the state team.
- Coordination with the Montana GEAR UP college access manager for financial aid guidance and deadlines for GEAR UP students and families.
- ACT’s College and Career Readiness System assessments and results.
- State-sponsored summer academic enrichment programs for students.
• Professional development opportunities, including but not limited to the Montana College Access Network (MCAN) conference and Montana School Counselor’s Association (MSCA) spring conference.

1.1.4 What will Montana GEAR UP expect from a school?

• Commitment to utilize and support a GEAR UP local management team to implement goal-driven GEAR UP services with fidelity and provide leadership in preparing students to be college and career ready. The team must meet at least monthly and include a school administrator, counselor, GEAR UP liaison, core content teacher, student, and parent. SGMs will use GEARS service entries to verify that team meetings are occurring monthly and that core team members are attending meetings regularly. Monthly meeting minutes must be documented and may be requested by state staff.
• Designation of a lead staff person to serve as the GEAR UP liaison. The liaison is the primary contact for the state GEAR UP office on day-to-day program operations. The liaison is required to attend state liaison meetings and provide feedback to state staff in a timely manner.
• Attendance by the GEAR UP local management team at the annual Spring Planning Meeting to develop an Implementation Plan (IP) and budget.
• Completion of an IP and budget, as well as submission of mid-year and final year program reports and quarterly and final fiscal reports by assigned deadlines (see GEAR UP calendar).
• Collection of required school-specific data, to be entered into GEARS for analysis and data sharing.
• Administration of GEAR UP surveys to students, parents, and educators.
• Commitment to match GEAR UP sub-grant award funds dollar-for-dollar. This match may be in the form of an in-kind contribution.
• Tracking of GEAR UP graduates’ postsecondary plans.

Finally, by accepting GEAR UP funds schools agree to the responsibilities and provisions outlined in the Montana GEAR UP Memorandum of Agreement signed in Year 1 of the grant.
# 1.2 Montana GEAR UP Annual Timeline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Quarterly Tasks</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Monthly Tasks</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FALL</td>
<td>• School year IP and budget approved by state GU team</td>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>• GU year/annual grant award period begins</td>
<td>• Annual Grant: 9/1-6/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fall Liaison Meeting (usually held during GU West regional conference)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Update 8-12th Grade Student Data and Educator Data in GEARS</td>
<td>• Summer Grant 6/1-7/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• GU West Regional Conference</td>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>• Review/Updates 7th Grade Student Data in GEARS</td>
<td>• September 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ACT Aspire (8th and 10th grade) testing window</td>
<td></td>
<td>• GEAR UP West Regional Conference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student/staff data updated in GEARS</td>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>ál</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINTER</td>
<td>• State summer camps announced</td>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>• Local Summer Program planning</td>
<td>• Last weekday in February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educator survey opens in January and closes end of February</td>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>• Winter Liaison meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mid-Year IP Progress Report</td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>• Mid-Year IP Progress Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1st/2nd Quarter Fiscal Report</td>
<td></td>
<td>• 1st/2nd Quarter Fiscal Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spring Planning meeting</td>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>• Budget amendments due for equipment/ technology/ license purchases</td>
<td>• Last Friday of Month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Draft IP and Budgets due 3rd Wednesday in May</td>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>• Student performance data for 1st semester due in GEARS</td>
<td>• Due APRIL 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Budget amendments due for non-equipment/ technology/ license purchases</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>• Due APRIL 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local Summer program proposals due</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPRING</td>
<td>• ACT Test administered to all public high school juniors – Mar/Apr</td>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>• APR for DOE</td>
<td>• Starts JUNE 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• State summer camp applications disseminated and due</td>
<td></td>
<td>• MSCA Conference</td>
<td>• Ends JUNE 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Final student performance data entered in GEARS; second Friday in June</td>
<td></td>
<td>• 3rd Quarter Fiscal Report</td>
<td>• Due JUNE 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Final IP progress report due</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>• Summer grant award period begins</td>
<td>• Ends JULY 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Annual grant award period ends</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Summer grant award period ends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*GEAR UP Year

Updated: August 2019
1.3 Montana GEAR UP Goals, Objectives, and Measures

The three goals of Montana GEAR UP and the objectives and measures associated with each goal are presented below. Montana GEAR UP has aligned its three goals to DOE’s GEAR UP objectives. The indicators or measures specified under each objective are a combination of Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures, DOE GEAR UP Program Office measures, Montana GEAR UP (MTGU) project-specific measures (collectively referred to as “state measures”), and Competitive Priority (CP) measures and are labeled as such. One quick note, with the exception of the MTGU project-specific measures, all performance measures were mandated by DOE as a requirement of the grant application. Reasonable annual percentage increase determinations for each measure will be informed by available OPI and MUS data on the 18 GEAR UP schools in the 2017 grant as well as by data on the 2005 and 2011 grant performance measures. Baselines and goals will be set during the second year of the 2017 grant. **Note:** For required objectives, schools must provide services until state measure(s) are met or exceeded.

1.3.1 GOAL 1: Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students

**Objective 1.1: Student Performance in Mathematics (Required Objective)**

**State Measures:**

1.1.1 Students passing Pre-Algebra by the end of 8th grade will increase by X% each year of the grant until reaching XX% (GPRA)
1.1.2 Students passing Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade will increase by X% each year of the grant until reaching X% (GPRA)
1.1.3 Students taking two years of post-Algebra 1 math by the end of 12th grade will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA)
1.1.4 Students scoring proficient or above on state math achievement tests in 8th grade will increase by X% each year of the grant (Smarter Balanced Assessments) (MTGU)

**Objective 1.2: Student Academic Preparation for College (Required Objective)**

**State Measures:**

1.2.1a The percent of students who meet or exceed the College Readiness Benchmark on the ASPIRE in grade 8 in Math will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)
1.2.1b The percent of students who meet or exceed the College Readiness Benchmark on the ASPIRE in grade 8 in English will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)
1.2.1c The percent of students who meet or exceed the College Readiness Benchmark on the ASPIRE in grade 10 in Math will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)
1.2.1d The percent of students who meet or exceed the College Readiness Benchmark on the ASPIRE in grade 10 in English will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)
1.2.1e The percent of students who meet or exceed the College Readiness Benchmark on the ACT in grade 11 in Math will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)

1.2.1f The percent of students who meet or exceed the College Readiness Benchmark on the ACT in grade 11 in English will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)

1.2.2 Percent of students who acquire non-cognitive skills, measured on ACT Tessera Survey will increase by X% each year of the grant (CP)

Objective 1.3: Professional Development (Required Objective)

State Measures:
No state measures

Objective 1.4: School Initiative

State Measures:
No state measures

1.3.2 GOAL 2: Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students

Objective 2.1: Graduation Rates of GEAR UP Students (Required Objective)

State Measures:
2.1.1 Students on track for graduation at the end of each grade will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA)

2.1.2 Students graduating from high school will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA)

Objective 2.2: Enrollment Rates in Postsecondary Education (Required Objective)

State Measures:
2.2.1 11th grade students on track with the MUS college preparatory curriculum will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)

2.2.2 Educators believing their students will obtain some college education will increase by X% each year of the grant (MTGU)

2.2.3 Students who are enrolled in college will increase by X% each year of the grant until reaching XX%

2.2.4 Students placing into college-level Math without need for remediation will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA) (NOTE: based on MUS only)

2.2.5 Students placing into college-level English without need for remediation will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA) (NOTE: based on MUS only)

2.2.6 Current and former GEAR UP students enrolled in college who are on track to graduate college will increase by X% each year of the grant until reaching XX% (GPRA) (NOTE: based on MUS & out-of-State, non-tribal colleges only)

Objective 2.3: School Initiative

State Measures:
No state measures
1.3.3 GOAL 3: Increase student and family education and knowledge of financial aid

**Objective 3.1: Student Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid (Required Objective)**

**State Measures:**

1. **3.1.1** Students completing the FAFSA will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA)
2. **3.1.2** Students demonstrating knowledge of available financial aid and the costs and benefits of pursuing postsecondary education will increase by X% each year of the grant (5pt scale from No Knowledge to Extremely Knowledgeable) (GPRA)
3. **3.1.3** Students expecting to go to college will increase by X% each year of the grant or until reaching XX% (MTGU)

**Objective 3.2: Family Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid (Required Objective)**

**State Measures:**

1. **3.2.1** GEAR UP parents/guardians actively engaging in activities associated with assisting students in their academic preparation for college will increase by X% each year of the grant (GPRA). (4pt scale from No Times to Often) (GPRA)
2. **3.2.2** GEAR UP parents/guardians demonstrating knowledge of available financial aid and the costs and benefits of pursuing postsecondary education will increase by X% each year of the grant (5pt scale from No Knowledge to Extremely Knowledgeable) (GPRA)
3. **3.2.3** GEAR UP parents/guardians expecting their child to go to college will increase by X% each year of the grant until reaching XX%

**Objective 3.3: School Initiative**

**State Measures:**

No state measures

1.4 Montana GEAR UP Implementation Plan (IP)

IPs are intended to guide the local implementation and reporting of GEAR UP services at GEAR UP schools. For simplicity, the following section discusses the IP as it relates to annual school programming; however, it should be noted that the IP is also used to guide local summer program implementation and reporting. For summer planning timelines and reporting deadlines, please reference the GEAR UP calendar.

- The IP is aligned with and organized by Montana GEAR UP’s goals. The following table is a guide as to where activities would best fit based on the GU Objective. Use of this table is encouraged so that across the State schools are consistent in laying out their plans. Note that objective 1.1 is primarily about rigorous math, and 1.2 is about the other rigorous STEM courses. Objective 2.1 is about helping prevent drop out, helping students catch up, and all tutoring that is not rigorous (Rigorous tutoring would be to help students pass advance placement or dual enrollment classes), should go under 2.1.
### Table 1-2 How Activities Align with GU Goals

#### GOAL 1: Increase the academic performance & preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students

#### Objective: 1.1 Student Performance in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math/STEAM tutoring</td>
<td>• Rigorous Math Tutoring (in class and afterschool) Remember to report out tutoring by subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/STEAM instruction and academic enrichment</td>
<td>• Glacier Park STEAM Trips, with heavy math focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/STEAM competitions, field trips and workshops</td>
<td>• AP Calculus classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP math and computer science tests (calculus, statistics, computer science, etc.); math assessments</td>
<td>• Math contests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation/alignment of math courses</td>
<td>• Expanding Your Horizons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Robotics (Supplies, clubs, competitions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Math supplies/calculators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objective: 1.2 Student Academic Preparation for College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English/reading, science, social sciences/studies and other tutoring</td>
<td>• Rigorous tutoring for all classes except math (in class and afterschool) Remember to report out tutoring by subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/reading, science, social sciences/studies, and other instruction and academic enrichment</td>
<td>• Dual Enrollment: English, Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/reading, science, social sciences/studies, and other competitions, field trips and workshops</td>
<td>• Scholastic Subscriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP arts, English, history, social science, science and language/culture tests; academic assessments (not math assessments)</td>
<td>• Book Clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation/alignment of English/reading, science, social sciences/studies and other courses</td>
<td>• Science/chemistry Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Cognitive skill building in advisories and workshops</td>
<td>• AVID Binders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tessera, ACT, Pre ACT, ACT Testing and Prep for testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Park trips with focus on geology, history, fire fighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Books for second language course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Science Olympiad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Art Supplies for academic enrichment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objective: 1.3 Professional Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development for staff</td>
<td>• Professional Development for staff that the State is not sponsoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Note: Count number served as the number of staff going, (not the number of students in the school).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objective: 1.4 School Initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives related to improved academic performance or preparation for post-secondary education</td>
<td>• Initiatives related to improved academic performance or preparation for post-secondary education that don’t fit above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Updated: August 2019
**GOAL 2: Increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students**

**Objective: 2.1 Graduation Rates of GEAR UP students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>• After school tutoring for all classes that is provided to prevent students from falling behind or dropping out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Recognition</td>
<td>• Academic advising that is specific to preventing falling behind or dropping out (Designate if it is parent or student; if both there must be two services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Promotion and Graduation events</td>
<td>• Credit Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention drop out initiatives</td>
<td>• Freshmen orientation, orientation to Junior High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal social counseling</td>
<td>• Freshmen success packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduation focused committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student leadership retreats/conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Jr High Reading Interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduation from 8th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anything to improve attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Character Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent teacher conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hi Set for credit recovery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective: 2.2 Enrollment Rates in Postsecondary Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College orientation</td>
<td>• College application week/application fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College application assistance</td>
<td>• Senior Portfolios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Application Week events</td>
<td>• 7th and 8th graders completing mock applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th year outreach and support</td>
<td>• College Freshmen gifts/visits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective: 2.3 School Initiative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gear Up Team Meetings</td>
<td>• Monthly Local Gear UP Team Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• This is where to put liaison supplies like lap tops, toner, paper, pens, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives designed to increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students</td>
<td>• Initiatives designed to increase the rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students that do not fit under Objective 2.1, 2.2 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parenting Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Drug/Alcohol counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Suicide Prevention Activities/Awareness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOAL 3: Increase GEAR UP student and family educational expectations & knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation and financing

**Objective: 3.1 Student Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid and Benefits of Pursuing Postsecondary Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic planning and counseling</td>
<td>• Each service here is for students only; If parents are involved there must be a matching parent service under 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College visit and college student shadowing</td>
<td>• Academic advising to help students choose classes that align with a chosen career or college field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College workshops, fairs and counseling</td>
<td>• FAFSA Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career workshops, fairs and counseling; job shadowing/internships</td>
<td>• Help applying for Scholarships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family events</td>
<td>• College Visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA/Financial aid/scholarship assistance and counseling</td>
<td>• Job Shadowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural events (unless clearly ties to another objective)</td>
<td>• Tracking progress toward graduation with students (Note: If students and parents are involved, there must be matching service under 3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Career Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• College Student Panels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Virtual job search</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective: 3.2 Family Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid and Benefits of Pursuing Postsecondary Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic planning and counseling</td>
<td>• Each of these are for when a parent only is involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College workshops, fairs and counseling</td>
<td>• If the service involves both the parent(s) and student, there must be matching student service under 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career workshops, fairs and counseling; job shadowing/internships</td>
<td>• Newsletters with GEAR UP content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA/Financial aid/scholarship assistance and counseling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA/Financial aid/scholarship assistance and counseling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College visit and college student shadowing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College orientation and 7th year outreach and support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural events (unless clearly ties to another objective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective: 3.3 School Initiative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Service Categories</th>
<th>Examples of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives designed to increase GEAR UP student and family educational expectations &amp; knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation and financing</td>
<td>• Activities that do not fit above in 3.1 or 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All Culturally-themed initiatives or community events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using school-specific data to align school need and services with GEAR UP goals, the IP for the upcoming school year is developed by the GEAR UP local management team in coordination with their assigned SGM at the annual Spring Planning Meeting (aka the “Implementation Plan Workshop”). Data are collected and analyzed via IP progress reporting throughout the school year to ensure integration of program services and to address gaps; therefore, the IP serves as both an on-going guide and a data-driven decision-making tool for implementation. A formal mid-year IP progress report allows local management teams to use their data to monitor progress toward state and local goals and make programmatic adjustments, as well as revise services as needed. An end-of-the-year final IP progress report allows local management teams to evaluate program outcomes and adjust goals and strategies accordingly.

Montana GEAR UP uses program objectives (see Section 1.3) in reporting to DOE to evaluate overall program effectiveness.

The budget for the upcoming school year is developed along with the IP and with a clear connection to services outlined in the IP. Furthermore, a school’s IP provides a framework for identifying other qualifying funding sources that can be used as match. **All services included in a school’s IP must be wholly or partially funded through a school's local GEAR UP budget and/or have qualifying matching funds outlined.**

Ultimately, the IP will serve as an effective tool for local management teams to implement, monitor, and evaluate the GEAR UP program. Best practices and effective strategies for replication will be collected and shared in the school’s mid-year and final year IP progress reports and shared periodically at state GEAR UP meetings.

### 1.4.1 Development

The IP and budget are to be created online through the Montana GEAR UP data management system GEARs: [https://grant2.pracd.net/mtgearup/](https://grant2.pracd.net/mtgearup/). Edits, revisions, comments, and final approvals will be tracked through GEARs. This process will be completed jointly by the SGM/state GEAR UP team and liaison/local management team.

### Planning

The annual IP and budget are developed at the Spring Planning Meeting (aka “Implementation Plan Workshop”). (Note: Teams may require planning time before and beyond the Spring Planning Meeting.) To facilitate this process, GEAR UP SGMs provide an implementation planning guide and other tools as necessary for guidance, technical assistance, resources, and team support. Throughout the school year, GEAR UP local management teams collect and analyze school-specific data to identify needs and services. While it is not necessary for teams to implement a service(s) for each GEAR UP objective, a school’s IP should include services that address the specific needs of the school as well as required objectives for which state measures have not been met or exceeded (see Section 1.3).

Some questions to consider when determining whether to include a service in your school’s IP are:

- **Does this service align with the local GEAR UP team’s mission?** (The team’s mission statement should be clearly stated on the IP and referred to often.)
- **Does this service address local needs?**
• **Will this service help the school meet required/prioritized state and local GEAR UP measures and goals?** (All services included in the IP should be measurable. Services under objectives without state measures should have meaningful local measures outlined.)

• **How will GEAR UP funds and/or match funds be used to complete this service?** (All services included in a school's IP must be wholly or partially funded through a school’s local GEAR UP budget or have qualifying matching funds outlined. IP services that list Match as a funding source must detail what will be used as match under Funding Notes; e.g., for a College Application Week service match might include “Match will be teacher's time beyond the contract day, assisting students with college applications.” IP services that list Local GEAR UP Budget as a funding source must identify the resources required to implement the service under Funding Notes; e.g., for a college visit resources might include “liaison’s time for chaperoning, bus mileage, and meals.” Include the GU number assigned by the budget. Acronyms used for expense categories in the IP under Funding Detail are included in Section 2, Table 2-1.)

• **Can participants (i.e., students, parents, and/or staff) be identified for this service?** Services must be reported with participants identified. Session duration and number of sessions per participant are required for service reporting.

Local management teams will meet prior to the Spring Planning Meeting to identify their needs, clearly state their team’s mission, brainstorm services, and determine funding priorities for the upcoming school year.

Local management team members are encouraged to solicit ideas for GEAR UP services from local stakeholders (e.g., community members, tribal members, parents, students, and teachers). A tool to facilitate idea sharing, the Program Idea Sharing Worksheet, is available on the GEAR UP website (http://mus.edu/gearup/fiscal.asp).

**Approval**

After the Spring Planning Meeting, local management teams will finalize their IPs and budgets and submit them in GEARS for state team review. (The deadline for submitting your draft IP and Budget is the **third Wednesday in May** and your final annual IP and budget is due **June 30**.) The SGM, along with the state GEAR UP team, will review the IP and budget and contact the school for any changes, clarifications, or additions needed. After all necessary revisions are complete, the SGM will approve the IP and budget. Approval documents will be sent to the local management team, pending approval of previous year reporting. The GEAR UP local management team will review approval documents and return a completed signature page (indicating their review and agreement) to the state office.

**1.4.2 Reporting**

**Services**

As services in your IP occur, they should be entered into GEARS (at a minimum, entry should be completed on a monthly basis, by the 10th of the month). The IP outlines service types and an approved plan for implementation and should be used to guide service entry. Services not included in a school’s approved IP (e.g., services with match funding opportunities not anticipated during IP development), should be added to the IP so service data can be entered into GEARS and evaluated.
IP updates should be provided to SGMs on an ongoing and as-needed basis. Service cheat sheets available on the GEAR UP website (http://mus.edu/gearup/fiscal.asp) and in GEARS should be referenced to ensure all GEARS service entries are accurately coded and reported. **Note: State-funded services will be entered by state staff.**

To facilitate participant tracking for GEAR UP services, local management team members and other contributors to GEAR UP services have access to a service sign-in sheet, the **GEAR UP Service Attendance Record**, available on the GEAR UP website (http://mus.edu/gearup/fiscal.asp). Note: Separate attendance records, also available on the GEAR UP website, should be used to track tutoring services and local summer program services.

To facilitate service-level evaluation and expedite IP progress reporting,
1. local management team members and other contributors to GEAR UP services have access to an evaluation tool, the **Service Evaluation Worksheet**, available on the GEAR UP website (http://mus.edu/gearup/fiscal.asp); and
2. GEARS includes a service evaluation field in the IP that can be used to document team members' and/or other contributors’ perceived service successes, challenges, and future opportunities (feedback would be provided to GEAR UP liaisons via worksheets or other means). **Note: The text included in service entry evaluation fields will be used to populate IP progress reporting boxes at mid-year and year end.**

**Progress Reports**
A mid-year IP progress report and final year IP progress report will be completed by the local management team and submitted to the GEAR UP state office (SGM) by the assigned deadlines. Once reports are approved, local management teams will be notified by email.

Quarterly and final fiscal reports (see Section 2 of this TAM) will be completed by the local management team and submitted to the GEAR UP state office (Federal Accountant) by the assigned deadlines. Once reports are approved, local management teams will be notified by email.

Program and fiscal data presented in progress reports will assist the GEAR UP local management team in their continued monitoring and evaluation of GEAR UP services, as well as inform the development of their next year’s plan.

Please note, failure to complete required reporting (outlined in Table 1-1) as well as other grant requirements, may delay or prohibit reimbursement for awarded GEAR UP funds and will halt or prevent receipt of future GEAR UP funds.

Finally, please note that by accepting GEAR UP funds you are agreeing to the responsibilities and provisions outlined in the Montana GEAR UP Memorandum of Agreement signed in Year 1 of the grant.

**1.5 Montana GEAR UP Local Management Team**
Each GEAR UP school will form a local management team that believes that college is possible for all Montana students. The team will promote and lead the charge in developing a strong college-going culture throughout the school and community. The team will implement goal-driven GEAR
UP services with fidelity and provide leadership in preparing students to be college and career ready. The GEAR UP local management team will consist of at least the following:

- administrator
- counselor
- GEAR UP liaison
- core content teacher
- student
- parent

Other key personnel (e.g., Educational Talent Search (ETS) if applicable, tribal leaders, school board members, community business members) are also encouraged to participate on the GEAR UP local management team.

Key members of the GEAR UP local management team (administrator, counselor, liaison, core content teacher) must attend the annual Spring Planning Meeting. ETS, parents, students, and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend as well.

Each school will be assigned a GEAR UP SGM who will support, advise, and provide resources to the team along with technical assistance in implementation. In addition, the SGM will conduct a school site visit at least once per year, coordinate conference calls with team members as needed, and maintain ongoing communication with team members through phone and email. Additionally, each school will receive a second visit each year from their SGM or another member of the state team.

1.5.1 Local Management Team Responsibilities

Goal 1: Increase the academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education of GEAR UP students

- Provide academic advising to increase academic rigor and support
- Assist in the evaluation of course offerings and curricular improvement
- Promote and advance access of, opportunities for, and participation in rigorous coursework including AP and dual enrollment
- Monitor, track, and analyze student performance data and early warning indicators to promote on-time graduation and completion of the MUS college preparatory curriculum
- Coordinate the implementation of ACT’s College and Career Readiness System
- Assist in professional development needs

Goal 2: Increase rate of high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education for GEAR UP students

- Build a strong college-going culture
- Facilitate/organize quality, research-based interventions and student support programs including tutoring, study skills, credit recovery, transition (middle school to high school and high school to college), and summer programs
- Coordinate school-based mentoring programs
Goal 3: Increase GEAR UP students’ and families’ knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing

- Plan, coordinate, and organize college and career activities, such as college visits, career fairs, College Application Week, job shadow fairs, and student panels
- Provide grade-appropriate information about and preparation and planning services for college and college options
- Assist students and parents with financial aid, financial literacy, FAFSA, and college and scholarship applications
- Support and coordinate parental engagement efforts

Planning

The GEAR UP local management team works in coordination with their assigned GEAR UP SGM to develop an annual IP, along with an accompanying detailed budget, that meets Montana GEAR UP goals and the unique needs of the school. (Summer IPs and budgets and special project applications, if applicable, are also developed by local management teams in coordination with SGMs.)

Implementation

The GEAR UP local management team will meet at least once a month to carry out the IP. Members of the local management team will assist the GEAR UP liaison in implementing GEAR UP services. Team members’ involvement and responsibilities will be outlined during the annual Spring Planning Meeting and guided by the strengths and availability of each GEAR UP local management team member. Other school staff should be encouraged to assist in implementing GEAR UP services.

Monitoring/Reporting

The GEAR UP local management team will provide ongoing evaluation of services for continuous improvement. The team members will monitor progress and effectiveness of services. Formal mid-year and final year program and fiscal reports will be completed by the team and submitted to the GEAR UP state office by assigned deadlines.

The GEAR UP local management team will support the liaison to complete the following duties:

- Administer the GEAR UP surveys to students, parents, and educators
- Participate in the required monthly WebEx meeting, if the Liaison is unavailable
- Utilize GEARS to enter, analyze, and share data
- Track graduates’ postsecondary plans
- Attend GEAR UP liaisons’ state meetings and provide feedback to state staff
- Complete required paperwork by assigned deadlines
- Gather GEAR UP match documentation throughout the year
- Monitor the GEAR UP budget

1.6 Montana GEAR UP Liaison

Montana GEAR UP requires each local management team to have an assigned GEAR UP liaison who may be funded through the local GEAR UP budget. Each school is required to have a minimum full time equivalent (FTE) for liaison work (e.g., 1.0 FTE, which is the equivalent of 40
hours per week; 0.5 FTE, which is the equivalent of 20 hours per week). Required FTEs are based on the school’s 7-12th grade student enrollment and “reimbursement only” (high risk) status. FTEs above or below the required FTE for a school are allowable in certain circumstances and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

1.6.1 Required Duties of a GEAR UP Liaison

All grant-funded work performed by liaisons must be sanctioned by the state office. Administrators and liaison/s must request approval for duties to be performed by liaison/s that are in addition to those outlined below. (Please refer to the GEAR UP calendar for set deadlines.)

**PLANNING/IMPLEMENTING:**
- Create/submit Implementation Plans (IP) and Budgets for state review by set deadlines
- Assist in planning State team site visits to school
- Submit budget amendment requests for equipment and/or non-equipment purchases by set deadline
- Receive prior approval from School Grant Manager for all amendments to the approved IP or Budget
- Plan, facilitate, and document monthly local GEAR UP team meetings
- Coordinate and implement student, guardian/parent, and teacher (staff) services as outlined in approved IP
- Plan and coordinate College Application Week, FAFSA Night, and College Signing Week services
- Coordinate student enrollment/attendance at state summer camps and college orientation sessions
- Respond to requests from the State within 5 business days; Promptly share GEAR UP information with local team

**DATA:**
- Review/update student, staff and guardian/parent data annually in GEARS by set deadline
- Review/update 7th grade students in GEARS, adding and transferring as necessary by set deadline
- Complete service entries in GEARS by the 10th of the month
- Complete service entries in GEARS upon completion of summer program (no later than deadline)
- Complete student, guardian/parent, educator, graduate, college visit and summer program surveys by set deadlines
- Complete Mid-Year and Final Year Implementation Progress Reports in GEARS by set deadline
- Complete student performance data for State GEAR UP Annual Performance Report by set deadline

**FISCAL REPORTING:**
- Submit annual, and summer grant acceptance documentation with required signatures to the state office by set deadlines
- Maintain and monitor approved budget against recorded expenditures in the school’s
accounting system to ensure only approved and allowable expenditures are charged against the grant and match up with the services performed.

- Submit required documentation and reporting materials for expenditures (annual, and summer) by set deadlines
- Collect and Enter funding Match in GEARS monthly/annually *Dollar for dollar match must be entered in GEARS for all reimbursement requests
- Successfully complete quarterly and final fiscal reports by set deadlines
- “Reimbursement only” schools must request monthly reimbursement for completed services (include expenditure receipts, a current accounting ledger, and match documentation)

ASSESSMENTS:

- Act as the primary coordinator for ACT Aspire (Grade 8) and Tessera (Grade 7, 9) assessments
- Ensure your high school participates in both Pre-ACT (Grade 10), and ACT (Grade 11)
- Facilitate ACT Aspire/Tessera tasks as needed (uploading student data, creating tests sessions, etc.)

STATE EVENTS:

- Attend Fall Liaison Meeting
- Attend Regional Winter WebEx Meeting
- Attend Spring Planning Meeting (with team)
- Attend Monthly WebEx meetings (or coordinate a stand in if unavailable)

The recommended skills, knowledge, and abilities of the assigned GEAR UP liaison are as follows:

- Believes that college is possible for all students and is a resource for the school’s college-going culture
- Has or is able to develop a leadership role in the school
- Has experience in the socioeconomic, political, and cultural structures of the school and community
- Builds relationships with students, staff, parents, and community
- Has collaborative workplace experience and demonstrates history of positive teamwork
- Demonstrates strong ability to communicate, verbally and in writing, and is respected by school staff, students, and the community
- Applies program coordination skills including demonstrated record of completing tasks on time and within budget
- Exhibits knowledge of graduation requirements and postsecondary entrance requirements
- Demonstrates knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing
- Holds a postsecondary credential

Recognizing that each school is unique, the above responsibilities may involve other staff within the school district based on skill sets, school needs, other duties assigned, etc.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. i

Tables ................................................................................................................................... ii
Figsures .................................................................................................................................... ii

Section 2: GEAR UP Fiscal Administration ........................................................................... 1

2.1 Budget Development ........................................................................................................... 1
   2.1.1 Expense Categories ...................................................................................................... 2
       Personnel Services ............................................................................................................. 2
       Operating Expenses .......................................................................................................... 5

2.2 Budget Guidelines .............................................................................................................. 18
   2.2.1 Supplementing Existing Services .............................................................................. 18
   2.2.2 Following School District Policies ........................................................................... 18
   2.2.3 General Guidelines ..................................................................................................... 18
       Food ................................................................................................................................. 18
       Equipment ...................................................................................................................... 18
       Travel .............................................................................................................................. 19

2.3 Budget Pre-Approval Process ............................................................................................ 22
   2.3.1 School Year Annual Grants ...................................................................................... 22
   2.3.2 Summer Program Grants ......................................................................................... 23
   2.3.3 Pre-Approval Expenditures Request Procedure ......................................................... 23
       Request (Budget) ............................................................................................................. 23
       Request (IP) **Optional to include in your Implementation Plan (IP)** .......................... 23
       Authorization (Notification of Pre-Approval) ................................................................. 24

2.4 Budget Approval ................................................................................................................ 24

2.5 Budget Amendments ........................................................................................................ 24
   2.6.1 How to Request a Budget Amendment .................................................................... 25

2.7 Cash Requests ................................................................................................................... 25

2.8 Reimbursement Requests for Reimbursement Only Schools .......................................... 27

2.9 Fiscal Reporting ................................................................................................................ 27
   2.9.1 Quarterly and Final Fiscal Reports .......................................................................... 27
       Required Documentation for Fiscal Reporting ............................................................... 29
       Required Documentation for Monthly Reimbursement Requests (Reimbursement Only Schools) .................................................................................................................. 30

Updated: August 2019
Examples of Supporting Documentation that May Be Required/Requested during Quarterly and Final Fiscal Reporting or Reimbursement Request Processing

2.9.2 Fiscal Reporting Requirements

Tables

Table 2-1. Expense Categories and Associated Acronyms Used in the IP ...........................................8
Table 2-2a. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Chaperoning/Professional Development ..........11
Table 2-2b. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Guest Speakers/Special Vendors ..................12
Table 2-2c. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Academic Success Tools ................................13
Table 2-2d. MTGU Guidelines for Grant Activity Supplies ..........................................................16
Table 2-2f. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Meal, Beverage, and Snack Allowances ..........16
Table 2-2g. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Tuition and Fees ..............................................17
Table 2-3. Grant Time Table ........................................................................................................22

Figures

Figure 2-1. Example of Local GEAR UP Budget ........................................................................9
(New Liaisons, please request sample with footnotes)...............................................................9
Figure 2-2. Example of GEAR UP Time and Effort Certification ............................................11
Figure 2-3. Example of District Reimbursement Form ..........................................................20
Figure 2-4. Example of Special Project Funding Request in Local GEAR UP Budget ............20
Figure 2-5. GEAR UP Cash Request Form ............................................................................26
Figure 2-6. GEAR UP Fiscal Report ....................................................................................28
SECTION 2: GEAR UP FISCAL ADMINISTRATION

GEAR UP funds may be spent on things that are allowable, reasonable, and within purchasing guidelines. The following is a tool designed to help you meet with success when planning your budget. This section of the TAM lays out the specifics to help you determine if GEAR UP is the right funding source, if your ask is allowable, and if the cost is reasonable. It is recommended that you start planning your budget with this tool in mind.

2.1 Budget Development

A GEAR UP plan consists of an Implementation Plan (IP) and budget. The budget is an integral component of a GEAR UP plan.

The school’s local management team will develop an annual Implementation Plan (IP) (see Section 1) and budget for mapping out the year’s GEAR UP-related services and initiatives. The deadline for submitting a draft annual IP and budget for review and approval is the third Wednesday in May.
(Schools may request GEAR UP funds for planning time beyond staff contracts if needed. Funding for such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.) Local management teams may also develop IPs and budgets for local summer programs related to GEAR UP goals and objectives. The deadline for submitting a summer program IP and budget for review and approval is the first Friday in March.

The budget is prepared by the local management team and corresponds to services outlined in the IP. An example of a local GEAR UP budget is included as Figure 2-1. The budget is divided into two categories—personnel services and operating expenses—with the following sub-sections:

**Personnel Services**
- Salaries/Stipends and Hourly Wages
- Personnel Benefits (Social Security, Medicare, etc.)
- Health Insurance Benefits

**Operating Expenses**
- Contracted Services
- Consumable Supplies
- Student Travel – College Visits
- Staff Travel – Professional Development
- College Application Fees
- AP/Dual Credit Fees
- Other

### THE STATE WILL NOT REIMBURSE FOR EXPENSES THAT ARE NOT IN AN APPROVED BUDGET. IT WILL NOT REIMBURSE REQUESTS MADE AFTER THE FACT.

The first column in the budget is labeled GU ID. This unique number is automatically generated in the GEAR UP database, “GEARS,” for each line in the budget. The GU ID is a tool that enables local management teams and state staff to reference items in the budget and tie actual expenditures to approved budget lines (see Section 2.9 for more information about how to use the GU ID for fiscal reporting).

### 2.1.1 Expense Categories

**Personnel Services**

All wages, salaries, and stipends paid using GEAR UP funds must follow the same pay scale, payroll policies, and personnel guidelines that are established for the school district. Compensation must be comparable with similar positions within the school district. If there are not similar positions within the school district, compensation should be comparable with similar positions within the local area or region.

The following language is recommended when including salaries in the GEAR UP budget:

**SALARY: (name of individual/s, job title/position) _Full Time Equivalent at an annual contracted salary of $_____.**
• Identify the individual being paid, their job title, and their payment information. The payment information for a salaried employee includes the percentage of full time equivalent (FTE) being paid from the grant and the annual contracted salary.

• All salaried employees who are paid with GEAR UP funds are required to submit a Time and Effort Certification form. The State will provide schools with a Time and Effort Certification form, along with other fiscal reporting documents, at the beginning of a grant period. (A Time and Effort Certification is included as Figure 2-2.)

Stipends
The following language is recommended when including stipends in the GEAR UP budget:

STIPEND: (name of individual/s, job title/position) A stipend of $____ to be paid monthly/quarterly/annually/once for time beyond the normal contracted day for the completion of these duties as outlined: duties. (Rationale for stipend amount: rationale) *Stipends are paid upon completion of outlined duties and are not funded based on actual hours worked.

• A stipend is compensation given to employees for time contributed to the GEAR UP program beyond the contracted day. A stipend is like a contract: a specific amount is paid to compensate the employee to cover certain identified duties and/or responsibilities. All of the typical employee/employer taxes are calculated against stipends.

• Identify the individual being paid, their job title, and a basic rationale for payment amount. In the comments to the budget please include a basic rationale on how the stipend amount was determined with the estimated number of hours required to perform identified duties multiplied by the employee’s hourly rate. Once identified duties have been performed, stipends will be paid in full (i.e., stipends will not be paid based on actual hours worked).

• The budget description for all stipends must indicate that the stipend is to cover time beyond the normal contracted day and must specify the duties to be performed prior to stipend payment. Stipend amounts for certain duties outside of the academic year must follow established pay guidelines. (See Table 2.2 MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs.)

Hourly Wages
The following language is recommended when including hourly wages in the GEAR UP budget:

HOURLY: (name of individual/s, job title/position) $____ per hour for ____ hours.

• Identify the individual being paid, their job title, and their payment information. The payment information for hourly employees includes an hourly rate and a total number of hours.

• Bus driver pay for college trips and other student travel should be listed here if the driver is an employee of the district.
  o If the bus driver works for a bus service that contracts with the school, bus driver pay should be listed under Contracted Services or Student Travel (depending on how the district codes bus expenses) instead.

• Similarly, substitute teachers can fit under this category or contracted services depending on how they are normally paid by the school district.
• All hourly employees who are paid with GEAR UP funds are required to submit a Time and Effort Certification form. The State will provide schools with a Time and Effort Certification form, along with other fiscal reporting documents, at the beginning of a grant period.

**Figure 2.2. Example of GEAR UP Time and Effort Certification**

Please note that prior to the release of funds to the school for reimbursement of an expenditure, a service entry must be completed in GEARS (if applicable).

![Montana GEAR UP Example Form]

*****Montana GEAR UP Program Quarterly Certification Form*****

**Employee: __________________________**
**School/Title: __________________________**

**Federal Program: GEAR UP**
**CFDA: 84.334s**
**Fiscal Year 2019**
**Award #: P334S170019**

**For Quarterly Expenditure Period Ending: ( ) 12/31**
**( ) 3/31**
**( ) 6/30**

This is to certify that __________________________ has worked ___% of their time/
_____ hours per week on the Montana GEAR UP __________________________
position and cost objective as outlined in the 2018-19 Approved Budget and
within the above referenced quarterly fiscal reporting period:

**Employee Name and Title**
**Signature: __________________________**
**Date: __________________________**
**Supervisor: __________________________**
**Date: __________________________**

**Bus Drivers Flat Rate Wages**
The following language is recommended when including flat rate wages in the GEAR UP budget:

**FLAT RATE:** *(name of individual/s, job/duty)* $____ per (day/trip/event).

• Identify the individual being paid, their job title, and their payment information. The payment information for flat rate employees includes a per-day, per-trip, per-event, etc., rate.

**Benefits**
Employer paid benefits such as Social Security, Medicare, Worker’s Compensation insurance, and pension contributions are allowable and should be applied against the salaries, stipends, and/or wages charged against the grant at the current federal and state established percentages in accordance with established IRS rates. An accurate percentage must be included in the budget description. (Check with the district payroll clerk to determine an accurate percentage.)

Updated: August 2019
### Health Insurance

Health insurance is listed separate from benefits in the budget. The health insurance premiums charged against the grant must be in accordance with district policy and be proportional to the percentage of applicable salaries and wages allocated in the budget. Monthly and annual premium amounts must be included in the budget description, along with the number of months covered.

### Paid Leave

Paid sick or personal leave may be charged against the grant if the amounts earned are in accordance with district policy and leave taken is charged proportional to the percentage of the employee’s time allocated in the approved GEAR UP budget.

Examples of personnel services budget entries are included in Figure 2-1.

### Operating Expenses

For operating expenses, it is important to supply enough detail in the budget description to identify the expense and give a reasonable estimate of cost. Guidelines for specific costs related to operating expenses can be found in Table 2-2.

#### Contracted Services

- Services supplied by individuals who are not employees of the school and the services provided are outlined in a written contract. Example: Bus drivers who work for a bus service or professional development (PD) trainers.
- If PD trainers’ travel expenses are included in the contract, these expenses must be included in contracted services, rather than the “Staff Travel” category.

#### Consumable Supplies

- Supplies that will “get used up” or that have a limited useful life. For example:
  - Food for GEAR UP events
  - Office and technology equipment (Equipment must be for staff supported specifically because of GEAR UP or for specific GEAR UP activities.)
  - Incentives (Generally, one incentive item per meeting/event is allowable, not to exceed $25.00. Incentives must be educational, or college/career related. GIFT CERTIFICATES AND GIFT CARDS ARE NOT ALLOWABLE.)
  - Entertainment is not allowable. Supplies that are considered entertainment include but are not limited to sporting goods (e.g., footballs, baseballs, frisbees), toys (e.g., fidget spinners, play dough), and music CDs. On a case by case basis, the State team may consider the purchase of educational games that can be used to encourage reading, higher order reasoning, or mathematical skills.
- Specify what is being purchased, per-unit costs, and number of units. Knowing the quantities and estimated costs will ensure you maximize the funds awarded. If an item purchased with GEAR UP funds is to be taken home by students, you must provide the State GEAR UP office a copy of the school policy related to home use.

#### Student Travel – College Visits

- Only costs incurred while students and school staff are, in fact, traveling are legitimate expense items for this category. These costs include meals, lodging, transportation, registration fees for workshops, entry fees for special events, etc. Travel costs must follow State of Montana travel policies whenever applicable.
Sample budget entry:
- Purpose of trip, number of people, food, mileage, lodging, other (registration fees, entry fees)

- Fees paid to Chaperones or Staff (i.e. stipends or wages) who travel with students would not be included in the budget under “Student Travel,” but instead are put in one of two places. If it is a staff, it will go under “Personnel Services,” because GEAR UP will pay a portion of their benefits. If chaperones are not employees their stipend should go under “Contracted Services.” (Additional details about chaperones are found in Table 2-2a.)

- **Meals:** Student and chaperone meals are based on outlined meal rates (see Table 2-2d). Schools should select restaurants with meal options that are in accordance with outlined meal rates. Actual receipts must be maintained as documentation for all student meals. Receipts may be requested by the state office as part of the reimbursement process. It is the responsibility of the liaison or designated chaperone to ensure that meal rates are not exceeded, and actual itemized invoices/receipts are collected and filed at the school. Tips are allowed are sit down restaurants and can not exceed 18%.

- **Lodging:** Schools should shop around for reasonable rates that are in line with state rates when possible. Schools should maximize the number of students per room and follow all applicable district policies for lodging.
  - **Example:** Number of rooms, times cost per night, times number of nights
  - 6 rooms x $95 x 2 nights= $1140

- **Transportation:** If a bus is used as the mode of transportation, all actual usage costs are permitted. Using a per-mile rate and calculating total miles being traveled is the best way to set a budget for bus travel. Verify the correct per-mile rate with the bus service or base it on previous bus travel costs.

- **Fees:**
  - Conference or workshop registration fees should be identified as Registration Fees
  - Entry fees that result in educational enrichment and, in some cases, cultural enrichment, are allowable. Entry fees that are considered entertainment are unallowable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allowable</th>
<th>Not Allowable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum Fees (e.g., Museum of the Rockies)</td>
<td>Guided Tour Fees (e.g., Lewis and Clark Caverns, Gates of the Mountains)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoo/Wildlife Center Fees (e.g., Grizzly Bear and Wolf Recovery Center)</td>
<td>POW WOW Fees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** In cases where educational activities are integral to an event that occurs at a venue whose entry fees are considered unallowable (e.g., Silverwood Theme Park’s Physics Day), non-entry fee expenses (e.g., travel costs) may be allowed. In such cases, activity lesson plans with lesson durations specified are required for reimbursement.
Staff Travel – Professional Development:
See Section 2.2.3 for general travel guidelines.

Locally Funded Professional Development
Staff travel for PD included in the local GEAR UP budget must follow a more restrictive state travel policy than student travel. Meals and mileage must be calculated and paid based on the current state per diem rates, and lodging rates should follow state rates when available. Other allowable expenses include registration fees, parking fees, luggage fees, etc. Current state per diem rates can be found at [http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877). Out of state professional development travel requires a strong justification and must be pre-approved by the Federal Program Officer if total costs exceed $5,000. Staff who attend out of state trainings are encouraged to share information with other school staff.

State-Sponsored Professional Development
Staff travel for professional development offered and paid directly at the state level is processed via reimbursement to the school district and should not be budgeted or paid out of school grant funds. All applicable receipts must be kept and submitted with a district reimbursement form to the Montana GEAR UP office within 30 days of conclusion of the event. All Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) non-employee travel policies apply. (Refer to subsection Travel under Section 2.2.3 for information regarding travel reimbursement.)

College Application Fees
College application fees should be included in the school’s annual IP and budget. Two college application fees of up to $50 each per student are allowable. (The school will pay the application fee from their annual grant. Montana GEAR UP will not reimburse any student directly.) It is the school’s responsibility to document application fee payments.

AP/Dual Credit Fees

GEAR UP encourages students to take college level coursework.

- A school may request funding for dual enrollment opportunities for students during their junior or senior year. Support of dual enrollment opportunities for younger students will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Use of GEAR UP funds should occur after students have utilized the 1, 2, Free program offered through the Montana University System. ([https://mus.edu/one-two-free/](https://mus.edu/one-two-free/))
- A school may request the AP test fee for any junior or senior student taking an AP course.
- School districts should have a policy in place for dual enrollment.

Other
Software and licenses that have a useful life of one year or less should be categorized as “Other” in the budget.

Examples of operating expenses budget entries are included in Figure 2-1.

Aronyms for budget expense categories used in the IP are presented in Table 2-1.
### Table 2-1. Expense Categories and Associated Acronyms Used in the IP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense Category</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Services</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Salary, Benefits, Health Insurance, Stipends for staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>CSV</td>
<td>Nonemployee Chaperones, Consultants, On-site Trainers, Professional Speakers, Stipends for Non-staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumable Supplies</td>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Incentives, food used when not traveling, Books for AP classes, Calculators, Office supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Travel/college visits</td>
<td>CV</td>
<td>Food, Mileage, Lodging, Registration or Entry Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Travel/Professional Development</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Food Per Diem, Lodging, Mileage, Registration Fees, Baggage fees, shuttles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Application Fees</td>
<td>CAF</td>
<td>College Application Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP/Dual Enrollment</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Enrollment Fees, Placement Testing Fees (After 1, 2, Free is exhausted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Software Licenses, Honoraria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample budget that follows demonstrates the level of detail needed in a budget. Please note the level of detail increases for services involving travel. You must include the amount you are using for each meal. For example, Breakfast at $8, Lunch at $10, Dinner at $18. The actual rate should be spelled out so clerks, chaperones, and the State office can tell how much is being allocated per event.

---

**Note:** There are different food rates depending on whether you have students with you or not. Mileage rates are lower during State-sponsored trainings. Please consult your School Grant Manager for the most current rates.
**Figure 2-1. Example of Local GEAR UP Budget**  (New Liaisons, please request sample with footnotes)

### Personnel Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GU ID</th>
<th>Implementation Plan Services</th>
<th>Description (Salary, Stipend/Hourly) + Benefits</th>
<th>Approved GEAR UP Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GU100</td>
<td>All Services</td>
<td>Jack Sparrow, full-time liaison 1 FTE at an annual contracted salary of $38,000. Quarterly Time and Effort Certification Required.</td>
<td>$38,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU101</td>
<td>1.1 Student performance in Mathematics</td>
<td>(Shauna Pfaff, teacher) Stipend of $2,000 to be paid at end of the 13 weeks for time after the contract day running the robotic club. Stipends are paid on estimated, not actual hours worked.</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU102</td>
<td>All Services</td>
<td>(Juanita Tapia, Paraprofessional) Stipend to chaperone student travel $186.24 x 3 days. $186.24 to be paid upon completion of each trip. Stipends are paid on estimated, not actual hours worked.</td>
<td>$558.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GU ID</th>
<th>Implementation Plan Services</th>
<th>Personnel Benefits (Social Security, Medicare, Worker’s Comp Insurance &amp; Pension)</th>
<th>Approved GEAR UP Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GU103</td>
<td>All Services</td>
<td>Sparrow’s benefits $38,000 x 16% = $6,080 Pfaff’s benefits $ 2,000 x 16% = $320 Tapia’s benefits $558.72 x 16% = $89.</td>
<td>$6,489.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Operating Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GU ID</th>
<th>Contracted Services</th>
<th>Detailed Rationale and Cost Breakdown</th>
<th>Approved GEAR UP Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GU107</td>
<td>1.3 Professional Development</td>
<td>1-day, onsite Texas Instruments Training provided by professional trainer Julia Robertson, for 25 staff</td>
<td>$1,900.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GU ID</th>
<th>Consumable Supplies</th>
<th>Detailed Rationale and Cost Breakdown</th>
<th>Approved GEAR UP Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GU108</td>
<td>1.1 Student performance in Mathematics</td>
<td>Snacks for afterschool tutoring $3 per 15 students x 4 days a week x 13 weeks= $2,340</td>
<td>$2,340.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU109</td>
<td>1.1 Student performance in Mathematics</td>
<td>7th Grade students will use TI 84+ CE model calculators in math classes. 28 calculators at $125</td>
<td>$3,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU110</td>
<td>1.2 Academic Preparation for College</td>
<td>Testing Support (Pre ACT and ACT Testing-Fall and Spring): 10 packs of pencils at $3.50 each = $35 $3 snacks x 150 students= $450 $485 x 2 events= $970</td>
<td>$970.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU111</td>
<td>1.2 Advanced Placement (AP)/Dual Enrollment</td>
<td>Books for AP classes 6 x $150 each</td>
<td>$900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU112</td>
<td>2.1 Graduation rates of GEAR UP students</td>
<td>After-school peer mentoring program: $1 snacks for 30 students x 1 day a week x 36 weeks</td>
<td>$1,080.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU125</td>
<td>1.1 Student performance in Mathematics</td>
<td>4 robotics kits @ 350 each plus $300 misc. robotic supplies.</td>
<td>$1,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GU113</td>
<td>2.3 School Initiative</td>
<td>PRE APPROVAL REQUESTED 1 Laptop for data entry by Liaison @ $1200 Supplies for Liaison (Paper at $60, Toner $120, $50 Misc.) = $230</td>
<td>$1,430.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personnel Services Sub Total:** $57,572.12
### GU ID: Student Travel - College Visits

**1.1 Student performance in Mathematics**  
Expanding Your Horizons Conference (5 students, 2 staff)  
(Meal rates are $8 B, $10 L, $18 D)  
7 people x $ 28 LD x 1 day = $196  
7 people x $36 BLD x 2 days = $504  
3 rooms @ $100 x 2 days = $600  
744 miles round trip x .545 = $405.48  
Registration 5 people x $30 = $150  
**Total: $1,855.48**

**1.2 Student Academic Preparation for College**  
Glacier National Park trip to study history and geology  
125 8th graders, 6 staff, 3 drivers  
134 people x $10 Lunch = $1,340  
Tip 18% = $241  
**Total: $1,581.00**

**3.1 College and Career Awareness**  
College visit U of M, Missoula: 30 students + 2 staff  
Bus Mileage 690 miles roundtrip @ $1.80/mi = $1,242;  
Meals 32 ppl x $10L/$18D = $896  
Lodging 12 rooms @ $90/room = $1,080  
**Total: $3,218.00**

### GU ID: Staff Travel - Professional Development

**1.3 Professional Development**  
Montana School Counselor Association Conference: 1 staff  
Mileage 290 miles roundtrip Bozeman @ 0.58 = $168.20;  
Per Diem (2 Dinners @ $14.50) = $29;  
Lodging (1 night @ $90) = $90; Registration $150  
**Total: $437.20**

### GU ID: College Application Fees

**2.5 College Application Week**  
College application fee 20 fees x $50  
**Total: $1,000.00**

### GU ID: AP/Dual Credit Fees

**1.3 Advanced Placement (AP)/Dual Enrollment**  
AP exam fee: 12 students x $85 + $1020.00  
Tuition for GFC Dual Enrollment Math Classes  
12 Students X $172.02 for 2 classes $2064.24  
**Total: $3,084.24**

### GU ID: Other (Specify)

**2.1 Graduation Rates of GEAR UP Students**  
Annual Licensing Fee for Odyssey Software for use in credit recovery $2750  
**Total: $2,750.00**

**3.1 Student Expectations and Knowledge of Financial Aid**  
Honorarium for guest speaker, Jake Gibson, for Speaking at Cat/Griz pep rally during FAFSA week event $250  
**Total: $250.00**

### GU ID: All Services

5% or less of this total budget is set aside as reserves for service opportunities that may arise throughout the year, to be approved by the State office of GEAR UP  
**Total: $2,500**

| Operating Expenses Sub Total: | $30,195.92 |

Approved: (Date)  
By: (Name)  
Total Budget: $87,767.74
### Table 2-2a. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Chaperoning/Professional Development

These guidelines primarily apply to staff working outside of the academic year (i.e., during the summer period).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chaperone Pay or Stipend</td>
<td>Personnel Services - Salaries/Stipends/Hourly Wages</td>
<td>Chaperoning activities include riding in a bus or car, staying in a motel, and/or attending an activity for the purpose of managing and assisting students during GEAR UP supported activities.</td>
<td>The maximum hourly rate is $15 per hour. The maximum hours per day is 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver Pay or Stipend</td>
<td>Personnel Services - Salaries/Stipends/Hourly Wages</td>
<td>Hourly rate can be applied for student activities for which a school vehicle or personal vehicle is used. Hours should include all time on a given trip in which payee is designated as a driver.</td>
<td>The maximum hourly rate is $20 per hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development Stipend</td>
<td>Personnel Services - Salaries/Stipends/Hourly Wages</td>
<td>Stipends can only be offered to staff beyond contracted time (e.g., during summer period). Stipends cannot be offered to staff if college credit will be earned or certifications will be awarded as such accolades could bump staff up in pay scale.</td>
<td>District rates for beyond contract time should be followed. In the absence of an established district policy, the maximum stipend rate is $100 per day. Written district policy may be requested for documentation purposes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 2-2b. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Guest Speakers/Facilitators**

**Guest Speakers/Facilitators**

- *Speaking and Facilitator fees shall be no more than 10% of a school’s total annual or summer budget.*
- *Content must focus on college/career planning, educational achievement, or other skills and abilities related to academic success. It is strongly recommended that permission is obtained from the GEAR UP program prior to booking a speaker.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/ Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracts for motivational speakers and student workshop facilitators</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Contracted Services</td>
<td>College/career planning and awareness. Leadership and soft skill development. Preparation or motivational.</td>
<td>Up to $3,000 for professional speakers per event not to exceed $6,000 per school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honoraria for motivational speakers, workshop facilitators, or college students participating on a student panel</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Other</td>
<td>A payment for “usual academic activity or activities” with the intent of showing appreciation for participation or services provided. Activities may include but are not limited to lecturing, teaching, sharing knowledge, performance (when the audience is composed of non-paying students and/or open to the general public free of charge).</td>
<td>Up to a $500 honorarium for non-professional speakers, per school year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A token of appreciation honorarium is capped at $25 per person, per event.

It is the responsibility of the liaison to ensure that appropriate documentation is collected and filed at the school (at a minimum, a flyer or memo documenting the recipient’s participation in the speaking event and a Form W9).

The school is required to prepare and submit 1099 documents (taxable income) to the IRS and the recipient of the honorarium.
### Table 2-2c. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Academic Success Tools

**Academic Success Tools**

*Tools Given to Students to Help them attain Post-Secondary Education; The combination of Academic Success Tools and Incentives shall be no more than 2% of a school’s total annual or summer budget.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Success Packages</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>For College Freshmen Only</td>
<td>Follow guidelines below; Postage is allowable; Maximum of contents $25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backpacks</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Backpacks filled with Academic Success tools are for college freshmen only. Empty backpacks can be used as incentives for students but should be distributed in the first half of the year.</td>
<td>Up to $20 each; may be filled with up to $20 of Academic Success Tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Educational and career books, schoolwide novels</td>
<td>Up to $20 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculators</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Reward for high achievers</td>
<td>Up to $20 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash drives</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Customized flash drives promoting GEAR UP, flash drives loaded with materials for college and career units</td>
<td>Up to $10 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry Bags</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>For College Freshmen only.</td>
<td>Up to $7.00; 1 per person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines and magazine subscriptions</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Scholastic MATH magazine and Science World magazine for academic enrichment in math and science classrooms, English</td>
<td>Up to $11 per issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Budget Category/Sub-Section</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supplies (pens, pencils,</td>
<td>Operating Exp. -</td>
<td>Orientation kits for students in grades 7-12 with</td>
<td>Up to $20 per student per annual or summer budget including the cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>color pencils, binders, folders,</td>
<td>Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>various Academic Success Tools</td>
<td>of any pouch or drawstring bag purchased to hold the items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>index cards, paper, rulers,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>math compass, highlighters, mini</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staplers, lanyards, markers,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graphing paper, sticky notes,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and other school supplies)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>Operating Exp. -</td>
<td>Supply (e.g., textbooks for college-level courses</td>
<td>Full costs of books are allowable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>such as AP US History, AP US Government, AP Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arts, AP Literature, and dual enrollment/dual credit</td>
<td>See Table 2-2c for tuition and test fee guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>classes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water bottles</td>
<td>Operating Exp. -</td>
<td>For students attending summer camps for hydration and</td>
<td>Up to $5 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See also “Coffee mugs, cups”</td>
<td>Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>safety.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gifts, cash, gift certificates, or gift cards are NOT allowable*
### Table 2-2d. MTGU Guidelines for Incentives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/ Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing items that promote school, college, and other GEAR UP activities</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>College hoodies for “College Reveal Nights” and T-shirts for college visits, field trips, etc., to promote GEAR UP and ensure student safety</td>
<td>Up to $20 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee mugs, cups</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Mementos for families participating in a GEAR UP event</td>
<td>Up to $5 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Food + Incentive</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>This is nontravel-related food. Maximum Snack $3, Breakfast $8, Lunch $10, Dinner $18 for parents and students. Do not count staff.</td>
<td>One (1) incentive, maximum of $25 can be offered per parent event or community event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hats, scarves, bags that promote GEAR UP and college/career readiness</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Up to $10 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnets or key chains</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Calendar magnets; “Class of…” key chains; Brag tags honoring student achievement, hard work, and citizenship, e.g., “Student of the Month”, “Most Improved”, and “Outstanding Classmate”</td>
<td>Up to $2 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennants that promote college</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>For example, to help students visualize where they will apply.</td>
<td>Up to $10 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stickers, bumper stickers</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Reward/incentive (e.g., “My Class Had Perfect Attendance Today!” stickers for classes with perfect attendance; “Today Counts, Attendance Matters” stickers for participating in an attendance initiative; bumper stickers that promote GEAR UP and college/career readiness “Proud Parent of a GEAR UP Student”, “College: It’s not a dream; it’s a plan”</td>
<td>Up to $0.50 per sticker Up to $3.00 per bumper sticker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2-2e. MTGU Guidelines for Grant Activity Supplies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/ Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decorations</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Flowers, centerpieces, banners, and balloons</td>
<td>Up to $25 per event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headphones for Multi-year use</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Ear buds for use with online software and learning programs</td>
<td>Up to $12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational games</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>Games that promote math, reading, or reasoning</td>
<td>Up to $20 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Calculators</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>TI-84 calculators and caddy; <strong>calculators must stay with the school</strong></td>
<td>Up to $125 per single calculator; $100 for a caddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennants that promote college</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.</td>
<td>For example, to decorate a career center</td>
<td>Up to $10 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2-2f. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Meal, Beverage, and Snack Allowances

**Meal, Beverage, and Snack Allowances**

*Food and beverages may be offered to students/families only in conjunction with GEAR UP structured activities where participants receive GEAR UP information, per the following guidelines.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/ Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Meals for student travel and meals/ refreshments for student and family activities | Operating Exp. - Student Travel-College Visits | Meals for students, their accompanying family, chaperones (e.g., teachers, liaisons, counselors), and bus drivers attending college and career fairs, field trips, college visits, etc. | **Per-person rates:** $8 breakfast, $10 lunch, $18 dinner ($36/day)  
**Out of state per-person rates:** $13 breakfast, $14 lunch, $23 dinner ($50/day)  
These rates do not include sales tax or gratuity if applicable. Gratuities must be reasonable (15-18%) and in line with normal practices.  
**Catered meals must follow the designated rates noted above.**<br>It is the responsibility of the liaison or designated chaperone to ensure that meal rates are not exceeded, and actual itemized invoices/receipts are collected and filed at the school. |
Table 2-2f. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Meal, Beverage, and Snack Allowances

**Meal, Beverage, and Snack Allowances**

Food and beverages may be offered to students/families only in conjunction with GEAR UP structured activities where participants receive GEAR UP information, per the following guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/ Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Meals for staff travel (per diem)                | Operating Exp. – Staff Travel-Professional Development | Per diem for staff attending events that align with GEAR UP objectives such as OPI Indian Education for All Best Practices Conference and Montana College Access Network Conference. | Per-person rates: $7.50 breakfast, $8.50 lunch, $14.50 dinner ($30.50/day)  
Out of state per-person rates: $13 breakfast, $14 lunch, $23 dinner ($50/day)  
**Meals for staff meetings or professional development are not allowable unless staff are in travel status. Meals included in the cost of a professional development registration cannot be requested as per diem.** |
| Snacks                                           | Operating Exp. - Consumable Supp.                 | Snacks for students attending GEAR UP activities such as before- and after-school tutoring and ACT Aspire testing.                                                                                           | Up to $3 per student  
This rate does not include sales tax if applicable. |

---

Table 2-2g. MTGU Guidelines for Specific Costs – Tuition and Fees

**Tuition and Fees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget Category/ Sub-Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College application fees</td>
<td>Operating Exp. - College App. Fees</td>
<td>College application fees for students; after 1 free one is used during college application week.</td>
<td>Two college application fees of up to $50 each per student are allowable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Tuition and test fees for students allowable after they used up 1, 2, Free | Operating Exp. - AP/Dual Enroll.                  | Tuition and test fees (AP/dual enrollment) for college credits are allowable for 11th and 12th grade students, as well as other students as approved. Students must be enrolled prior to high school graduation. | Full costs of tuition and test fees are allowable.  
See Table 2-2c for textbook guidelines. |
| Tuition and credit fees for staff                 | N/A                                              | Tuition and fees for college credits are not allowable for staff under any circumstances including college credits associated with professional development opportunities. (Note: Registration and travel costs for an event where college credits are offered and not included in the cost of registration are allowable.) | NOT ALLOWABLE                                                         |
2.2 Budget Guidelines

2.2.1 Supplementing Existing Services

GEAR UP services included in a school’s budget are to supplement and not supplant existing school services. A school’s approval signature page includes a statement affirming that GEAR UP funds will be used to supplement and not supplant existing funds.

- *Supplement* means to enhance or increase funding beyond current educational requirements/practices.
- *Supplant* refers to replacing required expenses within a program with federal funds. It would be considered supplanting if GEAR UP funds replaced an expense that would be required even in the absence of federal funds.

2.2.2 Following School District Policies

Per EDGAR (Education Department General Administrative Regulations), when setting wages, determining compensation for services, and/or procuring outside services or products for the GEAR UP grant, schools must follow the same written school board policies and procedures required for other school district funds. For more information go to: [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ae1fa4119438ae2122b41475ffcab4f8&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#sp2.1.200.d](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ae1fa4119438ae2122b41475ffcab4f8&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#sp2.1.200.d). Documentation of written district policy may be requested by and kept on file at the state office if deemed prudent.

2.2.3 General Guidelines

General guidelines for using GEAR UP funds are included below. Additionally, guidelines and allowable costs for specific expenses are included in Table 2-2.

*Food*

Montana GEAR UP recognizes the importance of providing food to increase attendance for student and parent activities; therefore, food is an allowable use of GEAR UP funds, as long as the food is used for a GEAR UP activity involving students, parents, or both. Food expenditures should be listed under “Consumable Supplies” in the budget. Good judgment must be used in the purchase and supply of food, however, as this practice can be abused. All food expenditures will be closely scrutinized by GEAR UP state staff for compliance.

*Equipment*

For purposes of a school’s GEAR UP budget, “equipment” means any article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds $500 as established through the GEAR UP program. Equipment purchases with a single unit cost of $5,000 or greater require program officer approval. This includes software and licensing costs.

Equipment or supplies with a useful life longer than a year are considered property of Montana GEAR UP and, therefore, can only be used as approved or directed by the program. This equipment cannot be sold, traded, or disposed of without notifying Montana GEAR UP and requesting permission. It is the school’s responsibility to safeguard the equipment and it is the
expectation that the school will investigate and replace any lost, stolen, or damaged equipment if it is deemed necessary for the success of the program.

The state GEAR UP office will maintain equipment inventory records for all equipment purchased by the schools with GEAR UP dollars. Through the annual IP and budget approval process, schools will receive authorization to purchase equipment or supplies that meet the above definition.

During site visits, state staff will place Montana GEAR UP inventory tags on newly purchased equipment and will inspect and inventory previously acquired equipment. A physical inventory of the equipment will be taken, and all items accounted for on a regular basis. Missing or damaged equipment will be reported back to the state office for adjustments to the inventory records and to determine whether further actions will be taken.

**Travel**

**Reimbursement of State-Sponsored Travel Expenses**

State-sponsored professional development opportunities by application will be identified by the state GEAR UP office when applicable and appropriate. Budgetary guidelines and parameters for such opportunities will be outlined and explained in the application materials distributed to GEAR UP schools and posted on the GEAR UP website. All state-sponsored PD by application will follow OCHE non-employee travel policies referenced below.

---

State-Sponsored events include the Capacity Building Workshop, GEAR UP West, and NCCEP Annual conference. You must apply to attend and may not put these in your local budget. Officials other than the liaison will be considered.

---

Travel expenses that may be reimbursed include meals, lodging, mileage, registration fees, shuttle/taxi, parking, airline luggage fees, and substitute teacher costs. All costs will be reimbursed at the current OCHE non-employee rates for mileage, lodging, and per diem meals, even if the school district reimbursement rate is higher. Current rates can be found at [http://www.mus.edu/gearup/travel.asp](http://www.mus.edu/gearup/travel.asp). Montana GEAR UP will not reimburse late registration fees, meals covered by the event, or college credit costs. All attendees must receive the required approval following school district policies prior to registering or incurring other travel-related costs. Reimbursement costs are outlined and submitted via the GEAR UP district reimbursement form for state-sponsored travel.

Montana GEAR UP school districts are encouraged to advance travel expenses to their staff. Advanced amounts must be approved by the state office prior to the event to ensure that amounts align with state rates. These expenses may include meals and costs associated with the use of a school-owned vehicle. School districts will be reimbursed through submission of a district reimbursement form which can be found at [http://mus.edu/gearup/travel.asp](http://mus.edu/gearup/travel.asp).

See **Figure 2-3** for an example of a state-sponsored travel district reimbursement form.
Multiple Attendee Vehicle Policy
When a school sends more than one staff member to any given event, Montana GEAR UP requires carpooling for up to three participants and always encourages using a school-owned vehicle when one is available. Vehicle use over and above this ratio will not be reimbursed by Montana GEAR UP, and terms of payment for these expenses will be between the school and attendees. Local GEAR UP funds will not be allowed for use of additional vehicles. Exceptions to this policy must be approved prior to travel and will be noted and justified on the reimbursement travel form.

Figure 2-3. Example of District Reimbursement Form

State-Sponsored Travel
District Reimbursement Form

School District Name: ______________________
Address: ______________________

Purpose of Travel: ______________________
Departure from: ______________________
Traveler’s Name (please print): ______________________
Traveling to: ______________________

Traveler’s Signature: ______________________
District Official Signature: ______________________

Please note: Receipts for lodging and other expenses such as baggage, parking, and taxi fair must be attached.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Departure Time</th>
<th>Arrival Time</th>
<th>Personal Car or School Car</th>
<th>Miles Traveled</th>
<th>Mileage Rate</th>
<th>Lodging</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Other Expenses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals: $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0
TOTAL: $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0 $0

Explanation of other expenses: Parking

Per Diem for 10/1/18-9/30/19

In-State
Morning Meal (12:01 am-10:00 am) $7.5 $13
Midday Meal (10:01 am-3:00 pm) $8.5 $14
Evening Meal (3:01 pm-midnight) $14.5 $23
Total per day $30.5 $60

Must be in travel status at least 15 miles away from your headquarters or work site for the day for MORE THAN 3 hours (a minimum of one minute over three hours) during the meal time range to qualify for that meal allowance. This means, leave no later than 6:59 am for a morning meal, and don’t return any earlier than 6:02 pm for the evening meal. (You must count your minutes and be VERY SPECIFIC about recording the start and finish of your travel shift.)

District Clerk Reference: ______________________
State Office Use Only: ______________________
Grant Year: ______________________

ORG: ______________________ EXPENSE CATEGORY: ______________________
Prep. by: ______________________ Date: ______________________
Approved by: ______________________ Date: ______________________

PLEASE NOTE: Your GEAR UP School district must complete and submit this District Reimbursement Form that is available at: www.mus.edu/gearup/travel.asp within 30 days of the event. Montana GEAR UP will reimburse expenses related to the event per state of Montana/OCHE guidelines (http://mus.edu/che/intranet/StateTravelPolicy.pdf), which include but are not limited to: mileage expenses at the current state rate of one vehicle per every three participants, lodging at the current state rate or the hotel conference rate if state rate is unavailable, and meals at the current state rate not covered by the event. Reimbursement will not be greater than the current state allowable rates, even if the district reimbursement rate is higher. This form is for state-sponsored PD events, not those included in your school IP/Budget.

Updated: August 2019
Academic Success Packages
If you choose to include Academic Success Packages (ASP) to former GU students in your budget, the ASP should be delivered after September first to those who are now college freshmen. It is preferable that the ASP be delivered during the first quarter or semester. ASPs that are purchased must be based on actual number of enrolled students, not estimates.

A model Academic Success Package would include items from the Academic Success Tools list, and some of the following:

- Information and reminders on upcoming dates (i.e. when to submit next year's FAFSA, Study Tips, Local Resources; Notes of encouragement from teachers, students, family members; offers to help with academic planning, etc.)

Each Package must be delivered in conjunction with a service. Possible services could include:

- Getting students from a lower grade to help put the academic success packages together and talking about why we are giving it (addressing homesickness, need to know deadlines, knowing people want you to succeed); Having the younger students write a note of encouragement to include
- Gathering and delivering notes from Home and then including them in the package; talk to caregivers about ways to support the student
- Inviting freshmen students to have lunch while younger students who are visiting campus and talking about what college is like- then giving the ASP to the freshmen
- Sending the ASP through the mail and following up with a phone call to the student and determining how they are doing and offering support
- Delivering the package and have a one on one conversation to see what supports they might need and taking them to appropriate supports on campus

It is a requirement to have students sign off that they received the ASP; follow your school’s policy around providing a 1099 form. There must be a minimum of one 15-minute GEARS entry for every freshman who receives an ASP.

Orientation Packages
Students in grades 7-12 may receive one Orientation Package with Academic Success Tools at the beginning of the academic year or summer program.

A model Orientation Package would include items from the Academic Success Tools list, and some of the following:

- The GEAR UP planner, a list of what to do if you fall behind in homework, a list of planned GEAR UP events, where to go for tutoring, test taking strategies, etc.

Each Orientation Package must be delivered in conjunction with a service. Examples include:

- An assembly that is your school orientation, a tour for students new to the school, a session on how to use a planner, going over the school’s conduct code, etc.

Culturally Themed Initiatives or Community Events
The State office of GEAR UP recognizes the important role that culturally themed initiatives or community events can have in forming a positive identity, strengthening student success, and
improving graduation rates. **Culturally themed community events** should clearly identify GEAR UP as a sponsor and include at least one of the following:

- A table with GU information on tutoring, college visits, parent services, CAW, FAFSA
- Students who will go to college speaking about why they are going on
- College students talking about why they went to college and how it will benefit them or the local community
- Banners, photos, slide shows of GEAR UP activities, graduation, and current college students
- An Elder talking about how Post-Secondary Education helps the community
- Students who are going to pursue Post-Secondary Education circulate the crowd and talk to younger students about GU and why they should try hard in school and graduate
- Other ways your local program chooses to promote college access, as preapproved by the State office

College visits are encouraged during cultural events on campus like powwows or other cultural celebrations and should involve a campus tour; Regional cultural events held on college campuses will be considered on a case by case basis and funding will be limited to days spent visiting campus and learning about what that institution has to offer.

Culturally themed initiatives will be considered on a case by case basis. For example, traditional clothing made for graduation regalia (8th or 12th) is allowable and in line with GEAR UP objectives.

### 2.3 Budget Pre-Approval Process

#### 2.3.1 School Year Annual Grants

School annual grants run from September 1 to June 30 to best match up with the school year and the school's fiscal accounting year (Table 2-3). There is a general understanding that Montana schools start their annual school year on different dates, so if there are necessary expenditures prior to the annual September 1 start date, a pre-approval request must be included in the annual budget proposal. (Please refer to the Pre-approval Expenditures Request Procedure below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2-3. Grant Time Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grant</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.2 Summer Program Grants

Summer grants may run from the last day of school (which varies by district) or June 1 through July 31 (Table 2-3). There is a general understanding that Montana schools start their summer program on different dates, so if there are necessary expenditures prior to the summer June 1 start date, a pre-approval request must be included in the summer budget proposal. (Please refer to Pre-approval Expenditures Request Procedure below.)

2.3.3 Pre-Approval Expenditures Request Procedure

In some cases, schools start prior to the September 1 annual grant start date or summer programs start prior to the June 1 summer start date. To prepare or execute GEAR UP planned activities in a timely manner, the GEAR UP local management team may need to purchase supplies, make airline reservations, register for a conference, or have personnel charges against the grant prior to the start date. The following outline details the procedure for requesting and receiving authorization for pre-approval of expenditures. This procedure is to be followed for both summer and annual program expenditure pre-approvals.

Request (Budget)

1. During the development of a budget proposal (annual or summer), do one of the following:
   a. Note in CAPITAL LETTERS, in the first line of the budget description box, the item you are requesting pre-approval for and the funding amount you are requesting.
      i. Example: Staff Travel/Professional Development 1.6 “REQUESTING PRE-APPROVAL FOR AIRLINE RESERVATIONS @ $350.00.”
   b. Place a note in the Liaison Comments box in the draft budget “REQUESTING PRE-APPROVAL” (specify item in need of authorization if budget line item includes multiple expenses) so the state staff can easily identify a pre-approval request.

Request (IP) **Optional to include in your Implementation Plan (IP)**

1. During the development of an IP (annual or summer), do one of the following:
   a. Place a note in the Liaison Comments box in the draft IP that states a pre-approval request item is included in the service.
   b. Record in the Funding Notes box in the draft IP the item you are requesting pre-approval for.
      i. Example: Funding Notes: “Request pre-approval for airline ticket @ $350.00.”

NOTE: STARTING IN 2020 INCLUDE TRAVEL VOUCHERS FOR SUMMER ORIENTATION AND TRANSPORTATION TO STATE-SPONSORED SUMMER CAMPS- IN YOUR SUMMER BUDGET.

Updated: August 2019
Once your pre-approval has been reviewed and approved by the state team, the school grant manager will record that your pre-approval request has been “Approved” or “Denied” in the budget description or SGM Comments box in the draft budget and (if applicable) SGM Comments box in the draft IP.

**Authorization (Notification of Pre-Approval)**

1. Once your IP and budget have been reviewed and approved by the state team, the school grant manager will send an official email notification that your pre-approved expenditure(s) have been approved or denied. If approved, you may proceed.
2. Your official award notification will be sent after the start of the grant cycle. (School year grant September 1; summer grant June 1.) Pre-approved item(s) will be listed on your signature page, which is included as part of the approval notification.

By including a request for pre-approval of an expenditure in the annual or summer budget and IP proposals, we eliminate the need for separate reviews and approval documentation.

**2.4 Budget Approval**

When the full budget has been reviewed and approved for allowable expenses, clarity, justification, and rationale in connection with the school’s GEAR UP IP, the state team will approve the IP as well as the school’s budget. Upon approval, an approval letter, signature page, approved IP, and approved budget will be sent to the school. Approvals will not be issued until the previous year’s program and fiscal reporting is complete.

**2.5 Budget Amendments**

As the year progresses, a school may find it necessary to make changes to its approved budget to achieve its GEAR UP goals and objectives. Schools are allowed up to three budget amendments per school year. Amendments to summer budgets are generally not allowed unless they are needed to implement a special project. In cases where summer budgets need to be revised to allow for special project implementation, one amendment is allowed. All special project proposals (if applicable) must be included in allowed amendment requests; additional amendment requests for special project proposals will not be considered. The deadline for requesting amendments to a school year budget for equipment, technology, or license purchases is the last business day in February. The deadline for requesting amendments to a school year budget for non-equipment, non-technology, or non-license purchases is the May 1st (see GEAR UP Calendar specific dates). Changes will not be considered after these deadlines.

Please note that amendments requesting to transfer budgeted funds between personnel services and operating costs are generally not permitted. Please also note that all proposed changes should be supported by local management team members.
GEAR UP funds that are not expended by the end of the fiscal year will be retained at the state program for use as overall grant carryover or other state program expenses.

2.6.1 How to Request a Budget Amendment

To request an amendment, provide the following information in writing to your school grant manager. The manager can provide an excel spreadsheet to facilitate ease of providing the following information:

1. GUID and objective of the budget line you propose amending (for new budget lines, indicate “New”).
2. Funds approved in the GEAR UP budget and funds being requested in the proposed amendment.
3. An updated rationale/cost breakdown for the budget line and/or a new detailed rationale/cost breakdown for proposed expenses.
4. Service details (service name, targeted number and grades served, date/s, description) for new budget lines. (Note: New service/s in IP may be required for new budget lines.)

Example:

- Reduce GU103, Objective 3.1, from $300 to $100 (lunches were budgeted at $10 each for 30 participants and actual cost was $100 for 10 participants).
- Reallocate $91 to new line, Objective 3.1, for 11th Grade College Visit to UM (lunches at $10 each and snacks at $3 each for 7 participants). Five students and two chaperones will visit UM in April. During their visit, students will participate in a campus tour, a financial aid presentation, and a fun scavenger hunt.
- Reallocate $108 to new line, Objective 1.7, for 10-12th Grade Spanish Class Cultural Immersion Field Trip (dinners at $18 each for 6 participants). 6 students, the Spanish teacher, and GEAR UP liaison will dine at a Mexican restaurant. Students will practice their language skills and order their food in Spanish. The Spanish teacher will present on study abroad opportunities the students can pursue in college. Meals for the Spanish teacher and liaison will be covered by the school and used as match.

2.7 Cash Requests

Funds can be requested monthly, typically on a reimbursement basis with a copy of the previous months detailed expenditure ledger and enough documented matching funds to meet the request. If a school has a planned event or purchase, they can ask for an advance based on 30 days’ worth of expected cash flow as long as explanation is attached with a “Cash Request Form” (Figure 2-7). GEAR UP fiscal reports will be reviewed by the State Team and used to monitor cash disbursements. GEARS match reporting tools will also be reviewed by the State Team to ensure reported match is in line with the amount of cash being disbursed. At least 20% of grant funds will be retained until final fiscal and program reports are received and complete. The cash request form must include the proper authorized signatures.
No funds will be made available for a given year’s award period until all of the previous year’s
programmatic and fiscal reports are received and approved and an IP and budget are approved for
the given year by the GEAR UP office.

**Figure 2-7. GEAR UP Cash Request Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education</th>
<th>GEAR UP Cash Request for State and Federal Grant Programs Fiscal Year 20XX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montana University System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO Box 203201</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena, Montana 59620-3201</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Complete and sign, then send the original of this form to the OCHE, Fiscal Department. Retain copy for your files.
2. The amount requested for a particular month must be the minimum amount needed in that month for actual immediate cash
   required to carry out the purpose of the approved project.
3. OCHE may, at its discretion, request written documentation and/or explanation for the amount requested for any or all months, and may
   request a report of cash-on-hand at any time during the project period.
4. The total amount of the cash requested for this project may be less, but not more, than the approved project budget.
5. 20% of the grant award will be held until final reports are submitted and approved. At that time the balance due to the school will be
   released.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prime Applicant/Fiscal Agent</th>
<th>School:</th>
<th>Project #: NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check below to indicate if this is an initial or an amended cash request for this project period</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Request</td>
<td>Amended Request</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>June</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I certify that the amount of the monthly cash advances requested above is a reasonable estimate of the minimum amount needed each
month to carry out the purpose of this project.

| AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE | Signature: | Date: |
| CLERK/BUSINESS OFFICIAL FOR OCHE USE ONLY | Signature: | Phone No. | Date: |
| Approved | Approved with conditions (see attached) | Denied |
| Signature of federal accountant: | Date: |
2.8 Reimbursement Requests for Reimbursement Only Schools

If a school is labeled “high risk” by OPI, or if fiscal concerns have arisen from previous years’ awards, a school will be put on a strictly “reimbursement only” basis. Reimbursement Only schools are required to submit monthly requests for reimbursement, in addition to quarterly reports, along with match and expenditure documentation (see Section 3.1 for details on Match). Match entries must be current in GEARS. If no request is being made for a particular month, the school is required to check in with the state federal accountant to communicate their status. Funds will be reimbursed after the State Team reviews and approves required documentation for fiscal reporting and the school grant manager verifies that fiscal reporting aligns with service reporting in GEARS.

2.9 Fiscal Reporting

Major components of fiscal reporting for the Montana GEAR UP program are:

- Initial budget development
- Quarterly fiscal reporting
- Final fiscal closeout reporting

2.9.1 Quarterly and Final Fiscal Reports

The State will provide a pre-populated fiscal report (see Figure 2-6) with schools’ approved budgets for annual and summer grants. The report, which is a fillable Excel spreadsheet, is used to complete quarterly and final fiscal reports, so please save electronic copies of submitted forms for use in the next reporting period.

- For annual sub-grants, quarterly fiscal reports are due 30 days after each quarter (due the last business days in January and April) and final fiscal reports are due June 30th (see GEAR UP calendar for specific dates). If your school cannot meet this deadline please submit a formal written request for an extension.
- For summer sub-grants, final fiscal reports are due the first Friday in August with a grace period of up to the second Friday in August (see GEAR UP calendar for specific dates).

Upon successful submission of a fiscal report, funds due to the school will be dispersed within 3 weeks for annual contracts and within 30 days for summer contracts.
**Figure 2-6. GEAR UP Fiscal Report**

**Summary:**
- **School:** [Insert name]
- **Grant Year:** (Insert grant year)
- **Expenditure Period Ending:** [Insert period]
- **Special Project:** (Insert if applicable)

**Directions:**
1. Column (a) was populated with your approved budget. Check these amounts for accuracy.
2. Column (b): Report actual/cash federal GEAR UP expenses through the current expenditure period.
3. Columns (c) and (d) will auto-populate.
4. Column (e): Print the Matching Contribution Report from GEARS and enter the total category totals.
5. Print and obtain signatures.
6. Email, fax, or mail the following to Kelly Hert, khert@montana.edu, PO Box 203201, Helena, MT 59620-3201, 406-449-9171 (fax):
   - Signed GEAR UP Fiscal Report
   - Expenditure Detail Report from your accounting system to support figures in column (b)
   - Expenditure Tracking Spreadsheet (provided by Kelly Hert)
   - GEARS Matching Contribution Report
   - All associated match documentation to support figures in column (e) in the order they appear on the GEARS Matching Contribution Report

**Expenditure Items:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel Services</th>
<th>Approved Budget (a)</th>
<th>YTD Total (b)</th>
<th>Remaining Budget (c)</th>
<th>Percentage of Budget Remaining (d)</th>
<th>YTD Match (e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Salaries/Stipends</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Hourly Wages</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Employee Benefits</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Total Personnel Services</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Expenses</th>
<th>Approved Budget (a)</th>
<th>YTD Total (b)</th>
<th>Remaining Budget (c)</th>
<th>Percentage of Budget Remaining (d)</th>
<th>YTD Match (e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Contracted Services</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Consumable Supplies</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Student Travel</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Staff Travel/Prof Dev/Inservice</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 College Application Fees</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 AP/Dual Credit</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Other</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Total Operating Expenses</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#DIV/0!</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Expenditures: 0.00 0.00 0.00 #DIV/0! 0.00

**Comments:**

Please indicate the following for the final fiscal reporting period:

**Questions? Contact Kelly Hert, Federal Accountant at:**
Office of Comm. of Higher Education
PO Box 203201 Helena, MT 59620-3201
Tel: (406-449-9147) Fax (406-449-9171)
Email: khert@montana.edu

I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the figures reported are based on true, complete, and accurate information. I further certify that the expenditures and disbursements made with these funds were used for the purposes and objectives set forth in the applicable Federal award or program participation agreement, and that the organization on behalf of which this submission is being made is and will remain in compliance with the terms and conditions of that award or program participation agreement. I am aware that the provision of any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me, and the organization on behalf of which this submission is being made, to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties for fraud, false statements, false claims, or other violations. (U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1001; Title 20, Section 1097; and Title 31, Sections 3729-3730 and 3801-3812)

**District Clerk:** (Type Name) **Telephone Number:**
Signature: Date:

**Liaison:** (Type Name) **Telephone Number:**
Signature: Date:

**School Administrator:** (Type Name) **Telephone Number:**
Signature: Date:

Form updated 2/1/2018

Updated: August 2019

2-28
Fiscal reports cover the actual cash expenditures and match earned through the expenditure reporting period marked on the GEAR UP fiscal report. As part of the review of the fiscal report and supporting documentation, some assumptions are made and questions are raised:

1. Regular/timely personnel service costs should have been charged to GEAR UP if the budget indicates wages are paid from the grant. Is there a similar amount of benefits being charged in relation to the salary?
2. Do the expenditures follow the IP and approved or amended budget?
3. Do figures reported on the fiscal report tie back to expenditures reported in the school’s accounting system?
4. When did purchases occur? While some travel and supplies may not occur immediately following approval, equipment and classroom supplies should be purchased right after approval.
5. Does the school’s “funds received to date” figure agree with the state’s records? Does the school show the same amount of cash received that GEAR UP shows as having advanced (if applicable)?

These questions provide a framework for the evaluation of the quarterly fiscal reports. The school should provide an explanation in the comment section of the fiscal report if there is any unforeseen reason why the budget and the match doesn’t follow the expected assumptions outlined above. If there are major issues or concerns, the a member of the State Team will contact the school liaison for clarification.

**Required Documentation for Fiscal Reporting**

- **GEAR UP Fiscal Report** – Report filled out by the GEAR UP liaison in coordination with the school clerk.
- **Accounting Ledger** - Detailed expenditure reports from the school’s primary accounting system.
  - All actual expenditures reported on a GEAR UP fiscal report should agree with expenditures listed on the school’s primary accounting system records.
  - All accounting system entries for GEAR UP expenditures should be detailed with enough information to easily tie expenditures back to the approved GEAR UP budget. Including the GU ID in accounting system entries is highly recommended for this purpose. If detail is not provided, the State will contact the school to request additional information and, in some cases, will request backup documentation.
    - Posts for payroll must include employee name, pay date/s, and payroll type (i.e., salary, hourly, stipend, etc.)
    - Posts for travel will be carefully reviewed.
    - Posting dates will be carefully reviewed. For example, if there are several payments out of or accounting transfers (adjustments) into the grant during the month of June, the State will ask questions, ask for supporting documentation, and may request a written explanation.
  - Although *schools must retain supporting documentation for all actual grant expenditures*, they are generally not required to submit said documentation for reimbursement unless the State Team determines that the detailed expenditure ledger does not provide enough information necessary to reimburse the reported expenditures. Two exceptions are expenditures that have been included in the ledger...
as part of a Journal Voucher (JV) or other adjustment and expenditures that require payment directly to school staff.

- JVs and other adjustments always require copies of invoices to be submitted as supporting documentation.
- Payments made to school staff for supplies, travel, etc., always require supporting documents to be submitted.

To tie supporting documentation (receipts, invoices, etc.) for all grant expenditures to the approved budget, the GU ID should be used. The GU ID can be written directly on supporting documents or included on a GEAR UP sticky note (provided by school grant managers), which is placed on the supporting documents. Typically, liaisons note the GU ID on supporting documents, which are submitted to the clerk who enters the expenditure in the school’s accounting system. As stated previously, it is recommended that GU IDs be included as part of the description in the accounting system entries. (Note: Multiple GU IDs may be listed on one GEAR UP sticky note.)

- **Budget Tracking Sheet** - Budget tracking sheet that ties to the total expenditures listed on the accounting ledger. Updated by the GEAR UP liaison (budget tracking sheets are provided to schools by the federal accountant).
- **Matching Reports and Documentation** - Two matching reports from GEARS are required along with all the supporting documentation for claimed match. They are the List Match Report and the Matching Contributions (In-Kind) Report. Please see TAM Section 3 for more details on match.

**Required Documentation for Monthly Reimbursement Requests (Reimbursement Only Schools)**

Reimbursement Only schools are required to submit monthly requests for reimbursement by the 10th day of each month. Monthly requests should include all expenses through the last day of the previous month.

The following documentation is required for all monthly requests (see previous section for more information about what is meant by an accounting ledger, budget tracking sheet, etc.):

- Accounting Ledger
- Budget Tracking Sheet
- Matching Reports and Documentation
- Supporting Documentation for Actual Expenditures

Please note that prior to the release of funds to the school for reimbursement of an expenditure, a service entry must be completed in GEARS (if applicable).

**Examples of Supporting Documentation that May Be Required/Requested during Quarterly and Final Fiscal Reporting or Reimbursement Request Processing**

- Time and Effort Certifications: Time and Effort Certifications are required for all salaried and hourly employees paid with grant funds. The Time and Effort Certification provides documentation that the employee has worked the hours specified in the contract and should be reviewed by schools regularly to ensure that actual hours worked align with hours budgeted and paid. The Time and Effort Log provides documentation of in-kind match contributed by school staff. (A Time and Effort Log is included as Figure 2-8.)
• Substitute Request Forms
• Transportation/Bus Driver Logs
• Copies of Signed Contracts
• Purchase Orders/Requisitions
• Paid Invoices
• Detailed Receipts
• Staff Travel Forms
• Payroll Ledger

2.9.2 Fiscal Reporting Requirements

Each GEAR UP school is required to follow OCHE, Montana GEAR UP fiscal reporting requirements. These requirements include:

A. Fiscal control and fund accounting procedures: A grantee shall use fiscal control and accounting procedures that ensure proper disbursement and accounting of federal funds. Federal funds must be easily identified in the accounting records. OCHE will require a grantee to furnish reports from their accounting system that support the federal expenditures reported on fiscal reports as well as documentation on all matching funds.

B. The School District agrees to create and retain records documenting the GEAR UP-supported expenditures and School District match for a period of three years after either the completion date of the seven-year grant or the conclusion of any claim, litigation, or exception relating to this contract taken by the State of Montana or a third party.

C. All GEAR UP expenses (federal as well as non-federal matching) must be verifiable, necessary, and reasonable for the accomplishment of the program’s objectives. Federal dollars should be spent to support the objective of the program during the award period. Large expenditures at the end of the grant period will require justification.

D. Recipients must ensure that GEAR UP funds supplement and not supplant funds expended for existing programs.

   • Supplement means to enhance or increase funding beyond current educational requirements/practices.
   • Supplant refers to replacing required expenses within a program with federal funds. It would be considered supplanting if GEAR UP funds replace an expense that would be required even in the absence of federal funds.

E. If a school expends $750,000 or more in federal awards during one fiscal year, an audit is required in accordance with OMB (Office of Management and Budget) 2 CFR 200.501.

F. Required documentation for personnel services/salaries and benefits:
   When an employee is supported with GEAR UP funds, basic payroll records substantiate the personnel expenses. If an employee supported with GEAR UP funds is salaried or hourly, they are required to maintain and submit appropriate time distribution records (i.e., Time and Effort Certifications; see Figure 2-2) that document they have met the GEAR UP
agreements specified in the contract (i.e. if they are full-time then it certifies they have worked full-time on GEAR UP only).

Federal requirements state that an allocation process can be used to pay personnel expenditures through the payroll process, but that an “after-the-fact” procedure needs to be in place to ensure that only actual hours worked are charged against a federal grant. This is called time and effort reporting.

G. Laws & regulations effecting federal programs must be followed.

- **Federal Program-specific Requirements**
  - Higher Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 105-244) as amended in 2008
  - Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), (34 CFR 694) [www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html)

- **General Administrative Requirements**

- **Audit**
  - 2 CFR 200 Subpart E Audits of States, Local Governments, Non-Profit Organization [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_default](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_default)

- **Cost Principles**
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents .......................................................................................................................... i
Figures ........................................................................................................................................... i
Section 3 Match ............................................................................................................................. 1
  3.1 Fiscal Match (Dollar-for-Dollar) ............................................................................................ 1
  3.1.2 What are the matching requirements For GEAR UP? ....................................................... 1
  3.1.3 Are there any limitations with respect to matching contributions? ................................. 2
  3.1.4 How should grantees document matching contributions? ................................................ 5
  3.1.5 Quarterly or Monthly Reporting of Match ........................................................................ 13
  3.1.6 What are the consequences for failure to provide matching dollars for the GEAR UP funds spent? ........................................................................................................... 15

Figures

Figure 3-1 Volunteer Sign in Match Form .................................................................................... 7
Figure 3-2 Sample Time and Effort Match Form for School Staff ........................................... 8
Figure 3-3 Sample In-Kind/Matching Report .............................................................................. 9
Figure 3-4 Indirect Costs ............................................................................................................ 10
Figure 3-5 Facility Usage Match Capture ................................................................................... 11
Figure 3-6 Utility Costs Match .................................................................................................. 11
Figure 3-7 Technology Usage Match Capture ........................................................................... 12

Press Ctrl+F or F3 to search by keyword/s
SECTION 3 MATCH

3.1 Fiscal Match (Dollar-for-Dollar)

GEAR UP schools are required to provide match equal to or greater than the amount expended in
granted funds. This means a school with $150,000 award will be required to show matching dollars
of $150,000 if the full grant is used. It is the intent of Congress that schools bring together resources
locally to advise and assist with college readiness. For every dollar of Federal money there must be at
least one dollar in state, local, institutional, or private money provided as in-kind or cash supporting
the GEAR UP project in your school.

All federal cost principles that guide spending apply equally to matching contributions. If
the use of federal funds is not permissible for a purchase, then the use of non-federal funds for such
a purchase is also not permissible as match. Matching contributions must meet the allowable,
allocable and reasonable test, just as they would if federal funds were to be used. Funds or efforts
that would be occurring in the absence of GEAR UP are not allowable match.

| Scholarship - Financial assistance designated | Waivers - The amount of tuition, fees, room, |
| for GEAR UP students. | board waived or reduced for GEAR UP |
| Type: Cash Match | students (from tribal or community colleges |
| | only). |
| Cash - Cash donated to purchase materials, | Discounts - The documented amount on the |
| supplies, or services for a GEAR UP project. | price of products or services that is waived or |
| Type: Cash Match | reduced for a GEAR UP project. |
| Time and Effort - The amount contributed in | Donated Items - The documented value of |
| time, on GEAR UP services, by volunteers or | donated items such as equipment, supplies or |
| paid staff. | use of facilities. |
| Type: In-Kind | Type: In-Kind |

3.1.2 What are the matching requirements For GEAR UP?

- **Dollar-for-dollar match**: Section 404(b) of the Higher Education Opportunity Act requires
  that at least 50% of the total cost of a GEAR UP project is paid with state, local,
  institutional, or private funds. That is, for each dollar of federal funds received, at least one
dollar of non-federal funds must be contributed. This match requirement relates to actual
funds spent, not on the total funds granted.

- **Overall match**: Contributions are matched “overall” as opposed to category by category.
  That is, a school does not need to match federal funds spent within each expenditure
category, but the overall dollar amount must be matched.
• **Source of matching contributions:** Matching contributions may be made from any non-federal source, including non-federal grants. Match or cost share requirements may be satisfied by (1) any necessary and reasonable costs paid by the grantee and verifiable in the accounting records; or (2) the value of third-party in-kind contributions.

• **Exception to the rule:** If a school is located on an Indian Reservation and the school receives federal funds “in lieu of taxes,” those federal funds, referred to as Impact Aid Funds, may be used as matching contributions.

A good question to ask when trying to determine whether a specific item or activity qualifies as allowable match is: “Does the GEAR UP program benefit in any way from this activity or expense and how can I document it?”

### 3.1.3 Are there any limitations with respect to matching contributions?

• **Match needs to tie back to the Implementation Plan.** This means that as you do planning, you are thinking of match. If you ask for $1500, can you see a pathway to provide a portion of $1500 in match? Whose time and resources will be contributing to the service? How will you capture that contribution?
  - If you are using items as match that were developed as a result of having GEAR UP in your school, it may or may not count as match. It will be reviewed by the State Team. If you intend to count it, please provide the date the service originated, and propose it to the State Team. If approved, it should be included in the IP as match. Examples of this include counting the time of someone hired to monitor attendance because the school sees the value of going the extra mile to encourage attendance or hiring a para to assist in classes to help students struggling to keep up. Ask yourself, is this something the school is required to do because of licensing or State law? If the answer is yes, it will likely not be allowable match.

• **All matching contributions must be verifiable in the grantee’s records.**

• **Matching contributions can be counted only one time:** A matching contribution may be counted as cost-sharing towards only one federal project. Multiple GEAR UP grants given to one school during one grant period qualifies as one federal project. If a grantee has multiple federal grants, the same contributions cannot be counted as cost sharing for two or more federal grants.

• **Matching contributions must be incurred solely to advance the goals of GEAR UP:** If matching contributions benefit both a GEAR UP project and another project or entity, the matching contribution must be credited in the proportion that it benefits the GEAR UP project. For example, if a GEAR UP school hires a tutor to work with both GEAR UP students and students that are not in the GEAR UP program, only the time spent with the GEAR UP students may be counted as match. Another example is when a school pays for software that benefits all grades in the school. Only a portion of the cost can be counted—that which covers GEAR UP students.

• **Matching contributions cannot be shifted from one project to another:** Grantees that have more than one federal grant must document match separately for each grant. Matching contributions cannot be shifted from one project to another. However, GEAR UP will allow both an annual GU grant and a summer GU grant that are under the same grant cycle to be tracked at the same time.
• **Matching contributions must occur during the grant period:** Reported matching contributions must occur during the same year as the grant and align with the established GEAR UP year (September 1 to August 31). Additional match reported over the dollar-for-dollar requirement cannot be used to meet future years’ match requirements. However, please report any additional match available. This reduces the need to go back and find additional match if not all the original match submitted is allowed. It also may reduce the match required in later years.

• **Teacher salaries and benefits and certified Counselor’s cannot be counted as GEAR UP match if their contribution is done during the contract day.** However, if they are working beyond their contract day on activities directly related to GEAR UP, that time may be counted. For example, if they are preparing new STEM or advanced placement lessons after their contracted day, it is allowable match. But their time teaching that lesson during their contract day is not match. If they are chaperoning after hours, that can be match also.

WHETHER YOU USE THE VOLUNTEER RATE OR A TEACHER’S ACTUAL WAGES, DEPENDS ON IF THEIR EXPERTISE IS CRUCIAL TO THE ACTIVITY. ON A TRIP WHERE STEM IS THE FOCUS AND THEY ARE TEACHING STEM CONTENT, USE THEIR PROFESSIONAL SALARY. IF THEY ARE THERE AS A CHAPERONE, THEN USE THE VOLUNTEER RATE FOR THEIR TIME.

• **Other school staff’s time** (not certified teachers or counselors) may be counted during the work day if they are working directly on GEAR UP goals. Time and Effort Match Forms should be used to count their actual time.

• If the cost is not allowable under Federal or State rules, then the cost is not allowable as match.
  o For example, the school may have a higher meal rate than the State allows. The difference cannot be counted as match.
  o Entertainment is not allowable, so entertainment the school pays for is not allowable as match.

Please review the following chart for what is allowable or not allowable regarding GEAR UP Match. **Keep in mind that match must tie back to Gear Up services and objectives.**
Table 2 Allowable/Never Allowable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never Allowable</th>
<th>Allowable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Match already being counted for another Grant</td>
<td>% of IT costs associated with use of inventoried computer electronics that GU students use, IT salaries related to maintenance, and operating budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding donated from another Federal Source (except for Impact Aid Funds)</td>
<td>Impact Aid Funds of Bureau of Indian Education funds that are contributing to specific GEAR UP activities and are allowable under all other grant guidelines for GU-related activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowable match that occurred outside of this present grant period</td>
<td>Indirect costs- if your school has an indirect cost agreement with OPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and Effort of Military recruiters</td>
<td>Scholarships-for previous year's GU graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and Effort from someone who is getting a stipend or gift for their contribution</td>
<td>Fee Waivers from Community or Tribal Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anything that would not be allowable under normal GU guidelines</td>
<td>Use of space- at your school and at other locations for GU services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alta Care and Private Student counseling services</td>
<td>% of custodial and custodial operating budget based on GU regular on-going use of space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AmeriCorps or Vista volunteer’s time (they are federally funded)</td>
<td>Administrator's time (Principals, Superintendents) doing GEAR UP activities- Going to GU activities, Taking GU issues to the Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and Effort from Talent Search and 21st Century staff</td>
<td>Administrative Staff time during work that directly contributes to GU activities in the IP or are required by GU (for e.g. clerks time preparing fiscal reports)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A certified teacher's time during the contract day- even when GEAR UP related</td>
<td>Teacher's time beyond the contract day-if it is GU related or relates to a Professional Development opportunity that directly benefits and ties back to the GEAR goals such as travel time and travel costs if not paid from GU grant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A school counselor's time during the contract day if they are a certified staff.</td>
<td>A school counselor's time when engaged in GU Activities- if they are designated as an administrator or if she/he is classified as a certified counselor and the time engaged in GU activities is after their contract day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A school counselor’s time on activities that would be occurring in the absence of GEAR UP</td>
<td>Substitute teacher’s pay while teacher is on a GU event when GU is not paying for the substitute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A paraprofessional's time if they would be doing their job because it is required by State or Federal Regulations</td>
<td>A paraprofessional's time if the position exists to support GEAR UP Goals, or a portion of their time if significant tasks are carried out in support of GEAR UP objectives and the duties are part of the current Implementation Plan and their work is not required by licensing, State or Federal regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discounts that are offered to everyone (BOGO; 20% sale)</td>
<td>Discounts that are GU specific- You asked for a GU discount.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies donated to the school for general use without a direct link to GU: Ask “Would these donations have occurred without GU?”</td>
<td>Student time volunteering as interns for GEAR UP tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School expenditures to buy equipment that it would buy in the absence of GEAR UP.</td>
<td>Student jobs paid by the school who do GEAR UP tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus expenses for normal pick up/delivery, including for after school drop off</td>
<td>Bus expenses if added on to cover GU services exclusively (e.g. for after school tutoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daycare coverage for GU Events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.4 How should grantees document matching contributions?

The following chart provides an overview of the most common kinds of supporting documentation that may be used. A full narrative follows with more details. At a minimum the supporting documentation should outline the date, the relationship to GEAR UP, and the length of time spent. Whenever possible the signature of the entity providing match should be obtained.

Table 3 Supporting Documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Match</th>
<th>Examples of Supporting Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships or Fee Waivers for the previous year’s senior cohort</td>
<td>Written document prepared by the school listing the student’s name, the scholarship name, and the amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discounts</td>
<td>Copies of invoices or contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and Effort of Staff</td>
<td>Time and Effort Match Form School Staff, Travel request documents- if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sign in sheets for GU specific meetings- agendas and minutes also provide the needed details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers Time (Non-school staff)</td>
<td>Volunteer Sign-In Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Kind Matching Report if travel was involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Staff’s Time</td>
<td>Time and Effort Match Form, Attestation, School Travel Vouchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>Volunteer sign in Sheet or In-Kind Matching report, Receipts if available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written, Signed, and Dated Statement that donation is for GEAR UP, Award Notification for Private Grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Cost Rate</td>
<td>Annual Statement from OPI website- “Approved Indirect Cost Rates”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities Usage</td>
<td>% of Current year depreciation expenditure found on the annual Financial Trustee Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodial/utility Costs associated with GU space</td>
<td>Expenditure detail ledgers from General Fund or Impact Aid fund and payroll reports for specific custodian, Match Capture Help Form in GEARS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Usage</td>
<td>Match Capture Help form in GEARS-current inventory list from IT department, Expenditure detail ledgers and payroll information from General Fund or Impact Aid funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT costs and overhead</td>
<td>Daily Usage Rate (Quote from Bus Company and gas receipts), Mileage Rate (School’s established rate for all bus activities or current approved OPI rate of $1.80 per mile)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Usage</td>
<td>School’s pre-authorization ticket, Bus Driver’s Log at end of trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Drivers Time or Mileage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitute Teacher’s Pay</td>
<td>Substitute request form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Visits or Special Events</td>
<td>Flier, Printed program, Itineraries, Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Use somewhere else</td>
<td>A formal statement of their rental costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Invoices, Receipts, Contracts, Email from provider, Outlook Calendars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All match must be entered/tracked and summarized in GEARS and each match entry needs to be supported with actual documentation and submitted to OCHE as part of the fiscal reporting process.

Tips for Entering Match into GEARS are available in GEARS under the “Add Match” screen at the top right corner. We encourage that you review that help screen before entering match into GEARS.

To avoid a potential audit penalty, the kind of funds used as match (school district general funds, private funds, or in-kind match) should be noted in the supporting documentation or correctly identified in the match entry in GEARS. Expenditure reports from the school’s accounting system, invoices, Time and Effort Logs, timesheets, and activity sign-in sheets/logs that document the date and activity/purpose are some of the types of documents that can be used as documentation.

- **Scholarships or Fee Waivers**: The State office will need the name of the student, the name of the scholarship, and the amount awarded to the student. If a student receives a four-year scholarship or fee waiver, divide it by four because only the first year can be counted as GEAR UP match. If the school will give you a list of scholarships, you can attach that to a scholarship spreadsheet. If students tell you they received a scholarship, you can ask to copy their award letter and upload it into GEARS.

- **Discounts**: A discount of the cost of services or supplies may be counted as match, if it is not a discount offered to everyone. Discounts that you ask for and receive in behalf of GEAR UP can be documented on the invoice or within the contract. Language stating that this is a “GEAR UP Discount” that is being applied should be included. Ask for discounts from guest speakers, on licenses, on supplies, or even books used for test preparation. Some vendors may agree to a lower price, others may agree to offer free items because of your large purchase.

- **Valuation of in-kind contributions**: “In-kind” refers to contributions that occur which are valuable to the program but for which NO CASH exchanges hands and no expenditures are recorded in the school’s accounting records. In most cases, in-kind matching contributions are made by third parties for services, supplies, travel expenses, or facility usage for GEAR UP-related activities. All in-kind matching contributions must be supported by documentation that shows how the value of the contribution was derived.

- **Donated Time**
  - If the in-kind match relates to volunteer services, a description of the activity as well as type of duties performed, date of the activity, name and signature of the volunteer, and the number of hours worked must be noted. The per-hour rate for volunteer chaperones and/or other general volunteer services is updated annually and can be found at [http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time) (use the hourly rate given for the state of Montana). The rate remains constant for a full school grant period. The State Team will look up this rate and provide the current rate at the start of each grant year.
  - Volunteer services furnished by professionals, technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled workers may be counted as match if the service is a necessary part of the program. For example, professionals (doctors, lawyers, etc.) volunteering

- The GEARS match system automatically applies 30% to all salary or donated pay entered in the system, so please do not include benefits when entering personal service costs into GEARS. The benefit contribution will update in your Matching Contribution report.
at a career fair or in a job shadowing program may be matched at their professional salary. Rates for professional volunteer services must be consistent with those paid for similar work in the local labor market.

- Since many schools, as part of their GEAR UP program, offer college visits or host college recruiters, the current volunteer rate can be used to calculate the value of college recruiter time at: http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time (use the hourly rate given for the state of Montana).
- The person or organization providing the contribution must sign the in-kind form. Fill in as much information on the in-kind form as possible to limit the imposition on the contributor’s time.
- During the planning process of events, be thinking about match. Gather as much information or supporting documentation prior to the event as possible.
  - Complete a Volunteer Sign-in Match Form (Figure 3-1) for planned GEAR UP events or meetings. It’s an easy way to capture the time of many people at once.
  - For one event you can capture volunteer time for planning, set up, having the event, and cleaning up.
  - The Volunteer sign in sheet includes a place for entering any supplies people may contribute to an invent. This could include food that parents bring to a GEAR UP event, handouts, table decorations, etc. Ask for a fair market valuation of the items. Receipts are better.
- When an employer other than the grantee furnishes the services of an employee, these services shall be valued at that employee’s regular rate of pay.

Figure 3-1 Volunteer Sign in Match Form

Volunteer Sign in (Match Form)

By my signature below, I certify that I donated the following goods to GEAR UP and did not receive compensation. (Time furnished may include time planning, preparing, working event, and cleaning up.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Volunteer Tasks</th>
<th>Volunteer’s Signature</th>
<th>Amount of Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Time x Volunteer Rate $22.40 = Total of Contributed Value:

* Or actual hourly wage if they tell you it.

By my signature below, I certify that I served as a volunteer to this organization for the hours as noted above and did not receive compensation for my services. (Time furnished may include time planning, preparing, working event, and clean up.)

By my signature below, I acknowledge receipt of the above-mentioned volunteer services/goods. I hereby certify that the contribution(s) reported above are not from federal sources and will not be used as matching funding for any other federally funded program. * Receipts are required if actual costs are claimed.

Liaison Signature ___________________________  Date __________________

Updated: August 2019

Please Note: When a staff from your school is volunteering time, their time and effort is tracked using the Time and Effort Match Form for School Staff (Figure 3-2). By signing they attest that their work is for the GEAR UP project and students.

Figure 3-2 Sample Time and Effort Match Form for School Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of the Month</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Code #</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Provided administrative support of GEAR UP grant: invoicing, in-kind match,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Prepared class activity/lessons to help underachieving students and/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>implemented effective prevention strategies to decrease dropout rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chaperoned and/or facilitated a GEAR UP field trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Provided job shadow or career opportunity for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tutored or mentored students outside of classroom time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Prepared students for standardized testing, including Fessera, Aspire,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Provided information about financial aid, including FAFSA, scholarships, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Prepared information to students and/or families about the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Developed family and community partnerships to increase parent engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Participated in a GEAR UP-sponsored event or meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Participated in professional development which will directly benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Participated in State-Sponsored event (GEAR UP West, Spring, Winter, Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Other: Please describe:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I certify that all time and effort being claimed as in-kind match directly supported the GEAR UP project and GEAR UP students. I have not been compensated by any federal funds for these activities, nor has any of this time been donated as in-kind match for any other program. I hereby certify, UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of Montana, that this information is true and correct.

Contributor’s Signature and Date

GEAR UP Liaison’s Signature and Date

Updated: August 2019
• Donations
  o Donations counted as match must have been given in support of GEAR UP. This means general donations cannot be used as match.
  o There are many physical things that people may donate to GEAR UP that you can count. For example, a guest speaker may bring several handouts to distribute to students. Ask the speaker to provide the fair market value of the handouts. During a college visit each student may be given a bag of promotional items. You can ask the person you are working with to provide a valuation of the items, withholding the cost of promotional items that are entertainment (for e.g. frisbees are frequently a promotional item at universities). Promotional items, like catalogues, pens, stress balls, can add up, and are match.
  o Documentation of volunteer in-kind contributions may also be entered on the In-Kind Matching Report if travel is involved  (see Figure 3-3).
  o Equipment usage is an allowable matching expenditure. The valuation of equipment usage is based on usage hours and fair market value. For example, someone lets GEAR UP use microphones for free for an event and the usual cost is $50 hour.

Figure 3-3 Sample In-Kind/Matching Report

IN-KIND / MATCHING REPORT

I hereby certify that the contribution reported above has not and will not be paid from any federal funds and further that said contribution has not and will not be used as matching for any other federally funded program.

Dated this __________ Day of __________, 20__

Contributor (Signature)  GEAR UP Liaison (Signature)
- **School's Approved Indirect Cost Rate Used as Match**
  - An indirect cost (IDC) is a cost incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective but not readily assignable to the specific programs benefited. IDCs are pooled and charged by allocation to various programs.
  - GEAR UP federal requirements state that a GEAR UP grantee may charge as match indirect costs of eight percent (8%) or the grantee’s OPI negotiated indirect cost rate—whichever is less—of allowable GEAR UP federal funds expended. The grantee must have an approved indirect cost rate agreement in order to use this as qualifying match, and a copy of this approved rate must be included in the match documentation submitted with the school’s final fiscal closeout report. *(See Figure 3-4)*

  **Figure 3-4 Indirect Costs**

  | Example: | A school spent a total of $18,546 in actual expenditures from its GEAR UP grant. The school’s approved indirect cost rate is 12%, so it can only use 8% in this calculation as 8% is the lesser. |
  | School’s total GEAR UP actual expenditures: | $18,546.00 |
  | 8% indirect cost rate: | x 0.08 |
  | **Allowable indirect match:** | $1,483.68 |
  |
  However, if the school’s approved indirect cost rate is only 2.5%, it can only use this 2.5% rate, as it is the lesser.  
  | School’s total GEAR UP actual expenditures: | $18,546.00 |
  | Approved 2.5% indirect cost rate: | x 0.025 |
  | **Allowable indirect match:** | $463.65 |

- All other services provided by the school must be **specifically identified** to be used as match. For example, the district clerk’s time spent preparing GEAR UP quarterly and final fiscal closeout reports could be counted for additional match because the actual time can be identified. However, if the district clerk is part of the indirect cost calculation and the school uses the IDC as match, the district clerk’s time can’t be used as match.
- **Facilities Usage** (a spreadsheet designed to assist schools with capturing facilities usage is available at [http://mus.edu/gearup/files/MatchCaptureHelp.xlsx](http://mus.edu/gearup/files/MatchCaptureHelp.xlsx)): Only areas of the school that can be identified as regular/daily use in the GEAR UP program can be captured as match. Determining a percentage that can be applied to monthly/annual utility and custodial costs paid with school’s general funds can be determined by finding the square footage of the room(s) used divided by the total square footage of the building. Identify each area individually showing the details of the calculation and a short description on why it qualifies as match. *(See Figure 3-5)*
Figure 3-5 Facility Usage Match Capture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITIES USAGE MATCH CAPTURE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Length (ft)</td>
<td>Width (ft)</td>
<td>Square Footage</td>
<td>Justification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison’s office or classroom if used for office</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>Liaison’s office space always qualifies as match.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer lab(s) used for GEAR UP-related activities</td>
<td>×</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom(s) used for GEAR UP-related activities</td>
<td>×</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify):</td>
<td>×</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify):</td>
<td>×</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total square footage utilized for GEAR UP services</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total square footage of facilities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Liaison’s office space always qualifies as match.** The school signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) stating that the school will provide office space for the GEAR UP Liaison. Therefore, this space automatically qualifies as match, whether the space is an actual office or the use of a classroom after or between class offerings. The actual size of the room can be used for this calculation, or an 8-foot by 12-foot space would be reasonable. (See Figure 3-6)

- Areas such as computer labs or classrooms can also be counted as match if they are used daily for GEAR UP-related activities. (This does not count general education courses.) It includes classroom use for afterschool tutoring, Dual Enrollment courses, and new courses developed as a result of having GEAR UP in your school.

- Once a percentage of space is determined for each area identified as regularly used for GEAR UP activities, that percentage can also be used to capture match for utility costs and custodial costs associated with the space.

- Facility use donated by a third party is allowed as match and can be based on a per-hour rate, if the third party has signed the In-Kind Form and a copy of their established rates are attached.

Figure 3-6 Utility Cost Match

**Example:**
Annual or actual year to date utility cost associated with the liaison’s office space equals total annual utility costs times percentage of space used.
Annual or actual year to date custodial cost associated with the liaison’s office space equals total annual custodial costs times percentage of space used.

Updated: August 2019
Technology Usage (a spreadsheet designed to assist schools with capturing technology usage is available at http://mus.edu/gearup/files/MatchCaptureHelp.xlsx): (See Figure 3-7). The maintenance and costs related to technology upkep—including computers and devices such as computers, iPads, and Chromebooks—that is accessible to and used by GEAR UP students and/or GU paid staff that can be captured as match using the year to date earned salary/salaries of IT professional(s) plus the year to date operating costs of the IT department for the school times the percentage of computers utilized by GEAR UP students and GU paid staff, which is the number of computers and devices used by GEAR UP students and GU paid staff divided by the total number of computers and devices in the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology Match Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An inventory list of computers and devices with their location noted is required to justify the percentage applied to overall technology costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A payroll accounting ledger is required to document year to date earnings of IT professional(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. An accounting ledger is required to document year to date operating costs of the IT department.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-7 Technology Usage Match Capture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TECHNOLOGY USAGE MATCH CAPTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of computers accessible to GEAR UP students and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of computers in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent computers utilized by GEAR UP students and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual salary/salaries of IT professional(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual operating budget of IT department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL TECHNOLOGY USAGE MATCH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Bus Usage**: The use of a bus and bus driver’s time can be counted as match for travel outside the normal daily school delivery. However, most after-school programs would fall under normal school delivery. There are two ways this rate can be determined, but a school must choose one option and use it consistently over the total grant period. Either:
  - Daily Usage Rate is a flat rate for the use of a bus. The company that owns the school buses can determine this rate; www.busbank.com can be visited for current rates, or a privately-operated bus company can be called to obtain a quote on chartered bus services. If a school uses a flat rate, it can also include the actual gas expenses for the trip; fuel receipts would therefore be required; or
- **Mileage Rate** is a rate that is applied to the total number of miles traveled. This rate considers maintenance costs on the bus and the cost to operate the bus, so gasoline costs would not be counted. The company owning and operating a school’s buses would establish this rate or if the school uses a standard rate to allocate costs to other programs then that same rate should be used. Actual school records that document the date(s), location, purpose, and school authorization for the trip need to be supplied to document these trips.
  - **Bus driver’s time or mileage** related to GEAR UP travel event needs to be supported by school records such as a pre-trip authorization form or after trip school report listing the purpose of the trip, location, mileage driven, dates/times, and name of bus driver.

- **Substitute Teachers**: If GEAR UP is not paying for the substitute, the school may use the cost of a substitute as match, when the teacher is on a GEAR UP trip. The school’s Substitute Request Form may be submitted.
- **College Visits and Special Events**: A large portion of matching contributions can come from college visits and special events. Itineraries, agendas, flyers, invitations, printed programs, etc., can be used as supporting documentation for match.

It is impossible to list every possible source of match a school might use. If you need assistance on determining if your match is allowable or have questions about how to document it, the federal accountant and school grant manager are available to assist. Here are some other miscellaneous possibilities:

- Educational resources and supplies used by the program but paid by non-federal funds or donated by a private party.
- Office equipment and specialized equipment for specific activities, i.e., sound system, microphones for special assemblies.
- Time spent by volunteers on tutoring, mentoring, assisting with program activities, speakers that encourage higher academic achievement, or presenting information about college options and financial aid.
- Additional professional development activities related to the three GEAR UP goals for teachers and others initiated through GEAR UP but not paid with GEAR UP funds.
- Annual licenses or start-up costs for software and/or databases used to capture required student information.
- Parental involvement and student award activities: Kitchen staff preparation and serving time can be counted as match, as well as janitor time for cleanup. If food for the activity is not being paid with GEAR UP funds, it can be used as match.
- Funds raised by clubs and other non-federally funded programs offered in the school which meet the goals and objectives of GEAR UP may be used as match, as costs associated with supplies, advisor time, etc. However, federally funded programs such as Talent Search and 21st Century cannot be used as match.

### 3.1.5 Quarterly or Monthly Reporting of Match

- **Matching Reports and Documentation** - Two matching reports from GEARS are required along with all the supporting documentation for claimed match.
List Match Report: Print or copy and paste your full match list that ties back to your supporting documentation.

- Please ensure there is a supporting document for each item listed on this report and that supporting documentation is in the same order presented on the match list with assigned ID numbers written directly on all supporting documentation.

Matching Contributions (In-Kind) Report (Matching Contributions for Budget Year): Print your current budget year matching contributions (organized by match category) with detailed match totals.

Supporting Documentation for Claimed Match:
- Volunteer Sign in Match Form or “In-Kind Matching Reports” must be submitted for in-kind match. Reports must include the signature of the person donating his/her time, travel, supplies, etc., and must include activity date/s and description. (See Figures 1 or 6.)
- The Time and Effort Match Form for School Staff must be submitted for staff who are not paid with GEAR UP funds who are counting their time and effort working on GEAR UP activities as match. (A Time and Effort Match form for Staff is included as Figure 2 above.)

Documentation for Cash Match (invoices, receipts, etc.). Documentation should prove purchase with general school, local, institutional, or private funds and not with GEAR UP or other federal program dollars (an exception is Impact Aid Funds).

In two cases the school may need to provide an attestation statement certifying that a staff’s time and effort is not required by State or Federal regulations.

- The first case is when the school wants to use the time and effort of staff who’s role appears to be required, for example attendance monitoring or paraprofessionals. Many paraprofessionals are required, as when the class size is too large or and IEP is in place. When a staff is required, their time and effort during the contract day cannot be counted as match because this would be an example of GEAR UP supplanting existing services. Since the use of GEAR UP funds is not allowable in this case, neither is the use of this as match.
- The second case is when the school wants to use GU funds to hire a staff to do tasks that appear to be required. For example, a school wants to hire a paraprofessional to work in class to help improve math scores. GEAR UP funds can be used to supplement existing effort, but never to supplant. In this example, the use of GEAR UP funds would be allowable.

In either of these cases, the liaison will need to have the school Superintendent complete a GEAR UP Attestation Form (Figure 3-8). This form is a certification that the time and effort is not supplanting what is supposed to be happening anyway, or that the proposed time and effort is supplementing what is already in place.
### Attestation Form

I certify that the time and effort of the following school district employee(s) directly supports the GEAR UP project and GEAR UP students.

I further certify that the named staff member’s time and effort was not used to provide services we are required to provide per State or Federal guidelines. I certify that the funding requested, or the match provided, are for activities done to supplement and not supplant existing efforts at the school. None of the time donated as match has been used as match for any other program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Position:</th>
<th>Is this certification for match?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I hereby certify that this information is true and correct.

________________________________________________________

Print School District’s Superintendent Name

________________________________________________________

School District Superintendent’s signature and today’s Date

#### 3.1.6 What are the consequences for failure to provide matching dollars for the GEAR UP funds spent?

Failure to provide adequate match to meet federal expenditures or providing match that does not meet the program objectives can result in a request for a refund by OCHE, for any federal funds advanced during the grant period over documented match. It could also result in a reduction in the next year’s award amount, removal of items purchased with GEAR UP funds, or denial to award further GEAR UP funds to a school, i.e., removal from the GEAR UP program.
TABLE OF CONTENTS
Table of Contents ........................................................................................................................................................................i
Tables ......................................................................................................................................................................................i
Figures..................................................................................................................................................................................i
Section 4: GEAR UP Evaluation and Reporting.........................................................................................................................1
  4.1 Evaluation Overview .........................................................................................................................................................1
  4.2 GEAR UP Evaluation and Assessment Reporting System (GEARS) ...............................................................................7
  4.3 Surveys .................................................................................................................................................................................10
  4.4 Evaluator Site Visits ..........................................................................................................................................................14
Tables
Table 4-1. Survey Administration Overview ..........................................................................................................................13
Figures
  Figure 4-1a. FERPA and the Dissemination of Educational Information Memo to GEAR UP...........2
  Figure 4-1b. FERPA and the Dissemination of Educational Information Memo to GEAR UP...........3
  Figure 4-2. Example of an External Evaluator Site Visit Schedule .....................................................................................15
Page Intentionally left blank
SECTION 4: GEAR UP EVALUATION AND REPORTING

4.1 Evaluation Overview

Evaluation is an important component of Montana GEAR UP and takes on three forms. The first is the Annual Performance Report (APR) that is submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) every April; the second is the annual evaluation of Montana GEAR UP by an outside evaluator; and the third is Montana GEAR UP's participation in a national evaluation consortium of GEAR UP programs. Each component is described briefly below.

It is important to note that when Montana GEAR UP’s data is used for these evaluation and reporting purposes, the information is compiled and presented in the aggregate. No one student is ever singled out and identified. Please see Figure 4-1 for the Office of the Commissioner Chief Legal Counsel's memo regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act’s (FERPA) provision on the release of personally identifiable educational information from student files.

Annual Performance Report (APR)

Every spring, Montana GEAR UP is required to submit the APR to the DOE. The APR serves two purposes for DOE.

- In return for granting the state the funds to operate GEAR UP, DOE expects the state to demonstrate and document the use of its funds and the status of the program through the APR. The APR is then used by DOE to determine whether progress has been made that year toward meeting the objectives of Montana GEAR UP as specified in the grant application. Ultimately, DOE bases their decision of whether to continue funding for Montana GEAR UP on their review of the APR.
- As required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, the APR is also used to collect data addressing the performance of GEAR UP at the national level. DOE will use Montana GEAR UP’s APR in combination with all the other state and partnership APRs to show Congress what a difference the program is making and to provide a justification for continued federal funding.

The APR presents information on our program in four areas:
1. Programmatic – such as the current status of Montana GEAR UP, successes and barriers, sustainability and systemic changes, expenditures and matching contributions.
2. Demographic Data and Services Data – such as the number of students served, ethnicity, gender, LEP, IEP, and services provided to students, parents, teachers, and schools.
3. Student Outcome Data – such as enrollment in advanced courses, course completions, educational progress of students, unexcused absences, and SAT/ACT test taking.
4. Parent and Student Survey Data – such as knowledge of college entrance requirements and financial aid, educational expectations, and perceptions of affordability.
MEMORANDUM

TO:        Sandy Merdinger, Director, Montana GEAR UP

FROM:      Catherine M. Swift, Chief Legal Counsel

RE:        Dissemination of Educational Information to GEAR UP

DATE:      October 18, 2011

This memorandum responds to your inquiry as to whether the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows for school district contractors of Montana GEAR UP to provide, as per GEAR UP requirements, personally identifiable educational information from student files. The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) mandates that such information be gathered and reviewed by GEAR UP as a requirement of the GEAR UP grant. The information is passed on from GEAR UP to the DOE, but in a statewide aggregated or statistical form, not in a personally identifiable form. The DOE uses the aggregated information to help determine the continuation of funding for Montana GEAR UP.

The data gathered by Montana GEAR UP serves three purposes. The first is to complete the Annual Performance Report (APR) for DOE. DOE uses the APR to determine whether substantial progress is being made in meeting Montana GEAR UP’s objectives as well as to address the performance of GEAR UP on a national level as required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. Every state and partnership GEAR UP grant completes the APR.

The second purpose is the evaluation of Montana GEAR UP by an outside evaluator, who is contracted to assess the implementation and impact of the program. Evaluation of the GEAR UP program is a required component of the federal grant. The information and data that Montana GEAR UP details in the APR and that the evaluator analyzes is compiled and reported in the aggregate. No one student is ever singled out and identified.

The third purpose is for Montana GEAR UP’s participation in the College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (“Consortium”). The Consortium consists of GEAR UP programs from various states and its members participate in an interactive process to define, measure, and report on the value-added impact of GEAR UP on student aspirations, academic growth, and college readiness and success. Through measurement and comparison of common performance indicators, formative and summative evaluation, and research studies, the Consortium delivers a higher standard of accountability, evidence-based practice, and...
capacity to demonstrate the local, state and national impact of GEAR UP. As with the APR and the outside evaluator, the work of the Consortium will never individually identify a student.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act expressly allows for the release of educational information by school district contractors to Montana GEAR UP. Section 99.35 of the Act speaks directly to this issue. That section provides as follows:

§ 99.35 What conditions apply to disclosure of information for Federal or State program purposes?

(a) The officials listed in § 99.31(a)(3) may have access to education records in connection with an evaluation of Federal or State supported education programs, or for compliance with Federal legal requirements which relate to the program.

Section 99.31(a)(3)(iv) provides that prior consent to disclose information is not required when the disclosure is made to an authorized representative of a state or local educational authority. Only the designated educational authorities may have access to the information and the information must be destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes listed in this section.

There is no question but that the federal GEAR UP grant to the state requires and anticipates that Montana GEAR UP will access personally identifiable educational information relative to the program for evaluation and other program purposes. FERPA expressly allows for such access. Protections are in place to ensure that such information is accessed only by the appropriate state educational authorities and their authorized employees or contractors. All of this comports with the terms of the federal grant and federal law.

I would be pleased to serve as a resource for you or for GEAR UP schools, parents and students on this issue. I can be reached at (406) 444-0325. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions.

Figure 4-1b. FERPA and the Dissemination of Educational Information Memo to GEAR UP
Annual Evaluation of Montana GEAR UP

Based on a competitive request for proposals, Montana GEAR UP will enter into a contract with an external evaluator to assist our program in meeting its federal evaluation and annual reporting requirements.

The evaluation plan addresses four research questions, which are explained further below:

1. What activities do Montana GEAR UP schools implement with program funds? What is the level of implementation of those activities? Do activities prepare students with the academic preparation, non-cognitive skills, and behaviors and aspirations that increase their likelihood of college entry and completion?

2. To what extent do Montana GEAR UP schools implement college and career readiness (CCR) best practices? Are schools implementing high-impact practices, such as dual enrollment with college credit, that have been shown to be effective in research studies?

3. Do Montana GEAR UP activities achieve the three main program goals:
   a. academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education; and
   b. high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education; and
   c. student and family knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation, and financing?

4. What are the relationships between participation in Montana GEAR UP services and long-term student outcomes for all students and student subgroups, especially Native American students? In particular, does participation in Montana GEAR UP activities predict: college readiness by grade 11, high school graduation, enrollment in college (including the need for remedial courses), and persistence through the first year of college?

An important tool that Montana GEAR UP developed, and will continue to refine, is a comprehensive longitudinal database, called GEARS, that allows for the ongoing collection of data to address the four research questions. Data is entered into GEARS manually by school staff as well as uploaded in batch files, such as from OPI. The GEARS database stores data about (a) Montana GEAR UP services to students, parents, and teachers; (b) statewide performance indicators; (c) participant attitudes and self-reported behaviors among students, educators, and parents; and (d) selected student academic measures related to college and career readiness and academic performance.

- Research Question 1: Implementation. GEARS collects important information on implementation by tracking student, parent, and teacher participation in Montana GEAR UP services as well as tracking how funds are allocated to the goals and objectives by schools and statewide. In addition, student, parent, and teacher surveys will be administered to collect information about service implementation, providing valuable formative data on how these services are implemented and might be improved.

- These findings about service data, budgets, and implementation data will be supplemented with descriptive data on service implementation from site visits. Annual school visits will be conducted so that one-third of the schools are visited annually with each school visited twice over the grant. Site visits will use interviews and observations to rate the level of implementation of services in the school’s implementation plan (IP), based on a rubric developed in the previous grant. The evaluator will write a descriptive report for each school providing formative feedback to schools, including their strengths, areas of concern, and recommendations for implementing Montana GEAR UP services.
Research Question 2: CCR Best Practices. An educator survey will be conducted annually to assess how educators view the implementation of CCR best practices. Montana GEAR UP has previously developed and used an educator survey that addresses the larger CCR best practices emphasized in the research literature that go beyond specific GEAR UP services. The best practices correspond to the three broad GEAR UP goals of preparing students academically for college, creating a culture of high aspirations and expectations to graduate from high school and attend college, and instilling the knowledge that students and families need to understand financial aid and college admissions procedures. By tracking educator perceptions over time, the evaluation will document how school college-going cultures change and are sustained in schools as a result of participation in Montana GEAR UP.

The school site visits, described previously, will follow-up on the educator survey results and document examples of CCR best practices. These CCR practices will be included in further revisions of a Best Practices Guide, initiated during the previous grant cycle. The guide provides a resource for sharing expertise across the Montana GEAR UP network using examples from other rural Montana schools serving similar populations of disadvantaged students.

Research Question 3: APR and State Performance Indicators. Montana GEAR UP has developed 18 statewide performance indicators to measure annual progress towards achieving the three program goals and objectives. The indicators are further described in 6(b).

Research Question 4: Program Services in Relation to Student Outcomes. The fourth evaluation question will be addressed by a longitudinal analysis of students as they progress from grade 7 through high school and into their first year of college. Each year the GEARS database will accumulate more information on individual students, including participation patterns in GEAR UP services; student expectations, attitudes, and satisfaction levels from surveys; student behaviors including grades and course taking throughout high school; and outcomes including student achievement, ACT college-readiness scores, graduation from high school, entry into college, and progress through the first year of college including remedial courses needed. The longitudinal analyses will focus on cohorts of students and will examine relationships between program inputs and short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes for students in grades 8 through 13. The results to these analyses are very important as schools search to identify practices that are most beneficial to help students achieve program goals.

The longitudinal analyses will be guided by the logic model developed for Montana GEAR UP schools. The contracted evaluator will work with Montana GEAR UP staff to develop a more refined evaluation logic model that links program contextual variables (e.g., student population characteristics, community conditions); program services or inputs organized around the three major goals; and short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. This model will be used to plan correlational and multiple regression analyses that test relationships between program inputs and outcomes for all students and for important subgroups, such as American Indian students. Because Montana GEAR UP districts are small with one middle school, one high school, or in some cases one grade K12 school, collecting similar data on non-program control or comparison schools will not be possible.

GEAR UP College and Career Readiness Evaluation Consortium (Consortium)

Montana GEAR UP has entered a partnership of 13 state GEAR UP grants to form the Consortium. Operating as a learning network, the Consortium originated from a common purpose/goal among GEAR UP state grantees to strengthen the evaluation of the program through
interstate collaboration, data-sharing, and research. The Consortium seeks to demonstrate the impact of GEAR UP across local, state, and national levels of implementation as well as to build a culture of evidence-based assessment and decision-making. Member states are Arizona, Idaho, Kentucky, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Central to this effort, the Consortium is partnering with ACT, Inc., to conduct research on a cohort of students taking the College and Career Readiness System suite of assessments – EXPLORE (now Aspire), PLAN (now Aspire), and the ACT – to examine the performance of GEAR UP versus non-GEAR UP students on these tests and to further understand the growth that GEAR UP students are making in their postsecondary preparation. These analyses will provide the first large-scale, longitudinal GEAR UP evaluation looking at the linkages between GEAR UP services to students and families, as they relate to student outcomes, postsecondary enrollment, and subsequent success. Ultimately, this research and evaluation will strengthen GEAR UP, as well as inform college access programming in local education agencies outside of GEAR UP.

The Consortium is additionally partnering with the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP), the DOE-designated technical assistance provider and policy advocate for GEAR UP nationally. NCCEP serves as the managing partner for the Consortium and employs the Consortium Evaluation Director.

Lastly, the Consortium is partnering with the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to build and manage a data repository to house the de-identified student data of all 14 Consortium states.

Each state member of the Consortium commits to: 1) administer the EXPLORE (Aspire) to all 8th grade GEAR UP students; 2) administer the PLAN (Aspire) to all 10th grade GEAR UP students; 3) administer the ACT to all 11th grade GEAR UP students; 4) share the results of the Aspire and ACT assessments, the 4-year cohort high school graduation rate of GEAR UP students, and postsecondary enrollment data; 5) share the professional services costs associated with a consortium consultant and costs for data systems housing and maintenance; and 6) benefit equally from the in-kind costs associated with research and evaluation services of ACT, Inc., and other providers of external evaluation services.

Through measurement and comparison of common performance indicators, formative and summative evaluation, and research studies, the Consortium delivers a higher standard of accountability, evidence-based practice, and capacity for demonstrating local, state, and national impact that has been seen in few college access programs.

Data Collection

Data will be collected on an annual basis as students move from middle school to high school to college. Sources of data will include student performance and demographic data from GEAR UP schools, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), ACT, the DOE, and NSC; surveys of students, parents, educators, and high school graduates from each GEAR UP school as well as of specific events, such as summer programs; school IPs; and site visits/classroom observations. In the first year of the evaluation, an online
database, GEARS, was built to allow for future longitudinal statistical analyses of the data and generation of both formative and summative findings.

4.2 GEAR UP Evaluation and Assessment Reporting System (GEARS)

“GEARS” stands for GEAR UP Evaluation and Assessment Reporting System. GEARS is an online data collection system for recording all the major services that participating schools provide through their GEAR UP sub-grants. It also allows for following the progress of GEAR UP students, schools, and the state program itself through the life of the grant. Finally, the data gathered in GEARS is necessary to sustain the federal grant and is compiled and presented in aggregate to the DOE on an annual basis through the APR.

PRA developed GEARS to track student cohorts as they progress through middle and high school on a number of key variables reflecting attainment of program goals and objectives. The variable list includes unexcused school absences, achievement test scores, college entrance exam participation and scores, math and science course sequences, advanced placement and international baccalaureate courses, FAFSA completion, high school graduation, postsecondary education, and other indicators to fully assess progress in achieving Montana GEAR UP’s three main goals. GEAR UP services that are provided to students, parents, and educators, as well as in-kind contributions to the program are also entered into the database. The database will include school and district tags for each student so that school or district-level progress reports can be generated. Limited student background information is also included such as ethnicity, limited English proficiency, and individual education plan status. Beginning in Year 3 of the grant, schools’ IPs were tied into GEARS to allow for easier management of grant funds to schools, linking GEAR UP services outlined in schools’ IPs to those services entered in GEARS, and a smoother IP development and review process.

GEARS can be accessed from the following website: https://grant2.praed.net/mtgearup/index.php.

GEARS Timeline

The collection of GEARS data is spread throughout the school year according to the following timeline. To the extent feasible, Montana GEAR UP will obtain data from OPI, ACT, the NSC, the OCHE data warehouse, and DOE to pre-populate the fields in GEARS in order to reduce the data entry burden for liaisons. These data include: Aspire and ACT scores; student first and last names and middle initial, birth date, gender, race, ethnicity, lunch eligibility, limited English proficiency, IEP status, FAFSA completion, postsecondary enrollment and persistence, postsecondary course remediation, and Smarter Balanced Assessment scores. Please note that the student and parent surveys will occur at a minimum of every other year.
**September**

- A data entry reminder will be sent out detailing the exact data that needs to be reviewed/updated.
- Based on the spring promotion field for students filled out in June, new student performance records for all 8th through 12th grade students will be automatically created. Review this list to make sure that it is accurate – adding new students who have enrolled, making students who did not return from the prior school year inactive, changing grade levels as needed. If a student is inactive, enter the date of inactivity, and choose the reason. If you have a student who never enrolled in your school this fall or who left in early September and so never really participated in GEAR UP this year, please make the inactive date 8/15. All 8th - 12th grade students should be entered and/or updated in GEARS by September 30.
- Don’t forget to check that the parent pages of a student are completed, identifying one or two parent/guardians per student. Note that providing names is optional.
- Please review the list of educators in GEARS for accuracy and report any deletions needed. Please add staff as needed, too, by September 30.
- Start entering student, parent, and teacher (staff) services. All your students/staff will need to be entered into GEARS to accurately record who participated in a given service. Remember, only those services that are related to the Montana GEAR UP goals and objectives and are funded wholly or partially by Montana GEAR UP federal funds or matching funds should be recorded. Refer to the student, parent, and teacher (staff) service cheat sheets, as well as IPs, for help categorizing services.

**October/November**

- (October 1 – parent survey opens. This survey will be available online as well as on paper. For the paper survey, please make sure the ID number of the parent’s child/student is on the survey.)
- In early October, Montana GEAR UP will obtain from OPI a list of all 7th grade students for upload into GEARS. As with your 8th - 12th grade students, review this list to make sure that it is accurate – adding new students who have enrolled and making students who did not actually enroll inactive. If you have a student who never enrolled in your school this fall or who left in early September and so never really participated in GEAR UP this year, please make the inactive date 8/15.
- Keep entering student, parent, and teacher (staff) services; they will be checked monthly.
- Remember to keep your student list current: 1) add new students as they transfer in; 2) make inactive those students who leave your school.

**December**

- (December 1 – online student survey opens. Make sure that all your students are updated in GEARS as they will log into the survey using their last name and birth date as it appears in GEARS.)
- (December 19 – parent survey closes.)
- For schools that were part of the 2011 grant, you will receive by secure email in late November/early December a list of students who graduated from high school the prior spring. We gather most fall postsecondary enrollment data from the Montana University System, the NSC, and tribal college registrars. This list contains student names for whom
there is no match, and we ask for your help in figuring out what these students are doing in the summer/fall after high school graduation. Your responses are due January 15.

• Keep entering services (they will be checked monthly)
• Remember to keep your student list current: 1) add new students as they transfer in, 2) make inactive those students who leave your school.

January
• Start entering student performance data, e.g., grades, absences. A data entry reminder will be sent out detailing the exact data that needs to be reviewed/updated.
• Keep entering services (they will be checked monthly); remember to keep your student list current.
• January 16 – online educator survey opens.
• (January 30 – student survey closes.)

February
• February 28 – all pertinent student performance data needed for the APR must be entered.
• February 28 – educator survey closes.
• Keep entering services (they will be checked monthly); remember to keep your student list current.

March/April
• Between March and May, the external evaluator will visit approximately six GEAR UP middle and high schools.
• Keep entering services (they will be checked monthly); remember to keep your student list current.
• March 31 – deadline for entering student, parent, and teacher (staff) services into GEARS to include in the APR.
• April 15 – APR submitted to DOE.

May/June
• Start entering end of the year student performance data, e.g., course completion, promotion, graduation data, etc. A data entry reminder will be sent out detailing the exact data that needs to be reviewed and updated.
• Keep entering services. Don’t forget local summer programs!
• June 9 – deadline for entering end of the year course and graduation data.
• June 30 – GEARS closed for services (except for summer program services) and student performance data for the school year.

July/August
• August 4 – all local summer program services must be entered into GEARS, with the exception of camps that are still occurring. State staff will enter state summer camp services.
• August 15 – rollover of student data in GEARS to prepare for the next school year. Students’ grade levels will be determined by the June promotion field in GEARS.
4.3 Surveys

The external evaluator will administer surveys of educators every winter to support the APR, evaluator visits to schools, and the annual evaluation of GEAR UP; students and parents will be surveyed at a minimum of every other year. Additionally, Montana GEAR UP annually surveys each class of graduating seniors the following fall to gather data on these students’ post-high school plans. Lastly, Montana GEAR UP developed brief surveys to assess the effectiveness of summer programming and college visits, two areas that receive significant funding. Each survey and its administration are described below.

Parent Survey

The parent survey will be accessible both online and hard copy and linked to the student. Depending on schools’ preferences for administering the survey (online, hard copy, or both), The external evaluator will mail the surveys to the liaisons as well as provide instructions on accessing the electronic survey. If a parent has more than one child in either the middle or the high school, please ask the parent to select one child for whom to complete the survey per middle school or per high school. If a parent has children in both the middle school and high school, please ask the parent to complete one survey for a child at the middle school and one survey for a child at the high school. Generally, the parent survey is open for three months and should close by the end of April.

Montana GEAR UP is required by DOE to achieve a 50 percent return rate on the parent surveys. Below are some tips for administering the parent survey, as supplied by school liaisons with a high parent survey return rate:

- I would suggest that every liaison get to know their football, volleyball, and basketball coaches and ask that they have the students bring their surveys home at the same time they bring home other documents needing signing for a student to participate in their sport. This worked really well.
- We have a parent open house where we had a chili dinner. We handed out surveys as parents came in to eat.
- I put the link on our Facebook page, on the campus portal where students and parents check grades, and on the GEAR UP section of our school’s webpage. Also did homeroom competitions for ice cream. If a homeroom had 100 percent, all got ice cream and cookies and if a homeroom got 80 percent, they got no bake cookies made by our lunch ladies.
- Our parent survey is given during p/t conferences in November. The HS counselor and I have iPads, log in, and distribute them to parents while they are waiting to talk to teachers.
- I caught a lot of parents at basketball games and other school events. This really helped with getting the surveys done.
- I personally called and checked in with most parents that didn’t get it filled out in the first couple weeks.
- I promised each class a party if everyone in the class returned their surveys. It worked!
- The parent surveys are done at one of our family nights where I serve food. They do them before they leave. The ones that don’t make it to the dinner, I call them and hound them until they hand it in. In years past, I have also offered a reward (like a candy bar) to the students, so they have an incentive to get the surveys back.
- The homeroom teachers hand out the surveys at parent/teacher conferences. In most cases, the parents fill them out right then; otherwise, the students bring them back.
I set up a GEAR UP table by the front door and informed parents during parent/teacher conferences if they fill out the survey – they will be eligible to sign up for a $20.00 cash drawing.

We got a good response rate because we are a small school so we can go right to the homes of students and parents if nothing else works. We send out letters with surveys, have tables at special events, call on phone, and if none of these work, we go directly to individuals’ homes.

Questions on the parent survey explore educational expectations for child, engagement in child’s school and learning, knowledge about college enrollment and financial aid, perceptions of child’s academic performance, knowledge of GEAR UP services, high school graduation and college preparation and enrollment, and school communication with parents.

**Student Survey**

When the student survey is offered, it will be accessible online through GEARS. Students will log on using their first initial, last name, and birth date. More detailed instructions will be provided by the external evaluator in their letter/email to liaisons outlining the process for administering the student survey. The survey takes about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Parent consent forms are required before a student can take the survey. GAER UP recommends including the form in orientation process at the beginning of the school year to make it easier to engage parents.

Montana GEAR UP is required by DOE to achieve an **80 percent return rate** on the student surveys. Because the survey is accessed through GEARS, liaisons will be able to monitor directly which students have completed the survey. Below are some tips for administering the student survey, as supplied by school liaisons with a high student survey return rate:

- I set up a time with their teachers that I could meet with the students to fill out surveys. I also baked cookies and gave them to the students that completed their surveys.
- Poptarts!
- I have been able to achieve success by communicating and collaborating with staff and conducting the survey during a core class such as English or Science. The teacher and myself are in the computer lab while the students are taking the survey.
- I bribe them with O’Henry bars, caramel popcorn, or Rocky Road brownies! It works everytime!
- I personally went to all 7th to 10th grade students during academic time to complete the My Voice and the GEAR UP surveys with the iPads or Chromebooks over the first week of December. IT put the link on the GEAR UP page of our school’s website for ease of finding to complete the survey.
- First thing is the GEAR UP liaison or coordinator goes to a staff meeting and asks what day would work for everyone. Once the day is chosen, make it happen. With the 7th and 8th graders, we take them to computer lab as soon as the morning bell rings and work on the surveys. If the student can’t log on or the password won’t work, I have a hard copy on hand and they fill out the survey that way. With the 9 – 12 students, I call the 9th grade first. As soon as they are done, I call 10th graders and so on. For all the absent students, I just went and got them before lunch, and they either do the survey on the computer or hard copy if there is trouble logging in.
- We worked student surveys into our MAPs testing windows.
Students fill them out when they are in our class. I have rewards that the school gives me for them when they are done – the treat is usually something small like their favorite...rice crispy bars. I tell the students how important the surveys are so we get continued funding.

We have the students do the surveys during their computer class.

I had my wonderful Science Teacher do them because she has computers in her classroom and all she needed was a list of students who should take the survey and the website address! If a student was missing the day she started, then she took the next day to finish them up.

I had a week in November for our Career and College lessons, and I took one of those days and brought every class to the computer lab. Every student in our school takes history so I utilized history classes and the only students we missed were absent that entire week...although I caught up with a few of them later on.

My 7th and 8th grade English teacher administered the surveys and as she has the students daily, sometimes twice a day, she was able to remind them and shepherd the process.

I filled them all out myself (jokes)!

Questions on the student survey are similar to the parent survey and explore students’ academic expectations, knowledge about college enrollment and financial aid, academic performance, assessment of GEAR UP services, and high school graduation and college preparation and enrollment, and engagement.

Educator Survey

The educator survey will be available online in the early winter. School staff will be able to access the survey through GEARS using their last name as the username and their State Educator ID (SEID) number as the password. It will take about 15 minutes to complete. The educator survey provides important information for the annual evaluation report of Montana GEAR UP for planning purposes of the program as well as for tailoring the external evaluator’s site visits to selected schools. The external evaluator will send out a letter/email to liaisons explaining the survey process as well as a letter addressed to educators that the liaisons can distribute to the appropriate personnel in their school (teachers, counselors, administrators, paraprofessionals) to further explain the purpose of the survey, how to access the survey online, and to lend legitimacy to the request for their participation. GEAR UP would like a return rate of 80%, completed by May 1st.

Questions on the educator survey explore school-wide and teaching practices that research has shown to be associated with preparing all students for college and careers.

Graduate Survey

The goal of the graduate survey is to gather information on what Montana GEAR UP high school graduates are doing four months or so after their graduation. It provides valuable information about the effectiveness of Montana GEAR UP, how well high schools prepared their students to be college and career ready, what students wish they had known in high school about college, and how well students were supported in the transition to college. The graduate survey is available in November/December to catch students once they have settled into college life. The survey is available in electronic copy only.

It is preferred that graduates themselves complete the survey, as they are the primary source of information. You could send each graduate an email with a link to the survey.
College Visit Survey

The college visit survey opens in the fall and runs throughout the school year. It is available both online and hard copy. The survey is brief and covers how students prepared for their college visit, activities on the college campus, and perceptions on how the visit affected student’s college awareness. Students should complete one survey for each campus visit. So, for example, if students visit, MSU-Billings and City College, UM and SKC, Great Falls College and the University of Great Falls, or Carroll College and Helena College, they should complete a survey for each college and not collapse their views on the two (or more) campuses visited into one survey. If this is not possible, then students should pick one campus that best represents their experience for the survey. To save time, it might be helpful to type in your school name and campus to be visited on the survey before printing the survey out/copying it. Completed surveys should be mailed to Montana GEAR UP, brought to a meeting, or given to a school grant manager. Schools will receive survey results for the program. Schools with a significant number of students visiting a particular campus will also receive personalized survey results for that campus visit.

Summer Program Surveys

Both state and local summer program surveys are used to improve future summer program offerings and assess their effectiveness in increasing college and career awareness among students as well as, for credit recovery programs, in helping students get back on track for on-time graduation. The surveys are short and available online as well as paper copy. Students provide their perceptions on a series of statements about the summer program, evaluate various summer program components, and state what they liked best about the program or how it could be changed to make it a better experience. The survey should be administered in the last day or two of the camp so students have enough time to experience the camp’s benefits and to respond more meaningfully. Completed paper surveys should be mailed to Montana GEAR UP within five days of the camp’s end.

Table 4-1 provides an overview of survey administration details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Return Rate</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Close</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Survey (biennial)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Electronic and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Survey (biennial)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>Electronic (GEARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator Survey</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Survey</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>November/December (TBD)</td>
<td>January (TBD)</td>
<td>Electronic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Visit Survey</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Beginning of Fall</td>
<td>End of School Year</td>
<td>Electronic and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Program Surveys</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Due within 5 days of camp’s conclusion</td>
<td>Electronic and paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Evaluator Site Visits

As part of the evaluation of Montana GEAR UP, each spring the external evaluator will visit six sites, with a site consisting of a middle school and a high school. All schools will be visited at least once by the end of the grant. The purpose of the site visits is to address the following two research questions:

- What GEAR UP services are being implemented at each school and what is the level of implementation of these services?
- To what extent and in what areas does each school implement college and career ready (CCR) best practices, and how are these practices implemented?

Below are the steps the external evaluator will take to plan and implement the site visits.

Step 1: Document and Data Review

While the site visits will follow the same general protocol for each school, the specifics of interview topics, who will be interviewed, and any informal observation activities will be guided by two types of data: the annual IP and the educator survey results.

*Level of implementation of GEAR UP services/activities (first research question)*

The focus of the implementation analysis will be determined by an examination of the annual IPs. From these documents, the evaluator will select two or three major GEAR UP services or activities—based on funding levels and any other information on the relative emphasis of the different activities—as the focal points for assessing service implementation. For example, if the majority of funds requested at a particular school were for (a) student tutoring and mentoring services, and (b) aligning curriculum with Montana Common Core Standards, the evaluator would choose these two service areas.

*Implementation of school college and career readiness best practices (second research question)*

Based on results of the fall educator survey, the evaluator will choose the one or two strongest CCR best practice areas; that is, one or two areas for which educators report a relatively high level of use in their efforts to improve college and career readiness. The goal of this assessment is description and amplification of best practices rather than an overall judgment of implementation level. The external evaluator will assess the extent to which GEAR UP service implementation supports CCR best practices that are evident. A connection between funded services and best practices is an indicator that schools are using Montana GEAR UP funds in meaningful ways rather than as isolated add-on activities that are not really related to a larger school improvement effort.

Step 2: Planning the Site Visit Specifics

Once the evaluator identifies the GEAR UP services and CCR best practices in step 1, he will suggest more specific procedures for the actual site visit through email to the school grant manager, liaison, and the evaluation program manager. Through email and telephone conversations, final arrangements will be made on the observation topics and the interview and observation schedule. At this point, the GEAR UP liaison can begin scheduling activities.
Each site visit will be customized to the school’s GEAR UP services and best practices, e.g., who will be interviewed and what informal observations will occur, although the external evaluator will use a common assessment to rate the implementation of the GEAR UP services. For example, if a major service or best practice service is parent involvement, then the external evaluator would want to interview some parents in a focus group and the parent coordinator on the faculty, and perhaps visit the parent resource center. Or, if the emphasis were motivating American Indian students to stay in school and pursue college, then the external evaluator might want to interview students who are in the program and perhaps community members serving as college-going mentors. Finally, if the main GEAR UP activity is after-school tutoring and the main CCR area is curriculum alignment with common core state standards, the external evaluator would want to predominantly interview teachers as well as a group of students who participate in the tutoring. Before the visit, a schedule will be developed by the evaluator and school liaison. A rough, sample schedule is provided as Figure 4-2.

### Montana GEAR UP Site Visit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Interview principal about after-school tutoring and curriculum alignment with common core state standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Interview GEAR UP liaison about after-school tutoring and collect data on effects of tutoring on student academic achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Interview tutors about after-school tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Interview a group of participating students about after-school program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Interview pairs of teachers in 20-minute intervals on curriculum alignment with common core state standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Observe several classrooms on curriculum alignment with common core state standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Interview curriculum department chairs on curriculum alignment with common core state standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Observe after-school tutoring program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4-2. Example of an External Evaluator Site Visit Schedule*

**Step 3: Conducting the Site Visits**

In all cases, the external evaluator will want to interview the school principal as the school’s instructional leader and the liaison. Beyond that, the evaluator and program staff (during step 2) will identify appropriate teachers, students, parents, counselors, and/or community members that can be reasonably interviewed (either individually or in small focus groups) to collect data on GEAR UP activities and school CCR best practices.

The external evaluator does not anticipate doing systematic observations, but informal observations of key activities can be useful especially for gathering data on GEAR UP services and school CCR best practices. Again, this will depend on local conditions. For example, if the emphasis of a GEAR UP service and CCR practice is advanced mathematics and science courses for all students, the
The evaluator may visit some of these classrooms to provide detail about how CCR practices are carried out.

The interviews will be semi-structured – a flexible interview in which the interviewer does not follow a formalized list of questions but has a list of general topics instead. However, the following generic questions will be used for appropriate individuals or focus groups in order to gather targeted information.

**Level of implementation of services/activities (first research question)**

- Describe how you are implementing this GEAR UP service in some detail.
- Are there challenges or barriers to making this service work effectively?
- How pervasive is this service area across the school, students, parents, etc.?
- How far along are you in changing teacher, student, parent, etc., attitudes and behaviors through this service/practice area?
- How would you rate the level of implementation of this service?
- Do you have any evidence that this service is achieving its goals?

**College and career readiness best practices (second research question)**

- Describe how you are implementing this practice area in some detail.
- Are there challenges or barriers to making this practice work effectively?
- Provide some examples of how this practice area is changing the attitudes and behaviors of teachers, students, parents, etc., towards improving college and career readiness.
- How would you rate the level of implementation of this practice?
- Do you have any evidence that this practice area is achieving its goals?
- What have you learned from this experience and are there ways you want to improve what you are doing with this practice area?
- Based on your experience, what advice would you give to other schools who want to implement this practice area towards achieving better results?

**Step 4: Reporting Results**

Results from the site visits will be reported in a site implementation report and a best practices report.

**Level of implementation of services/activities (first research question)**

The site implementation report will focus only on the main GEAR UP services studied during the visit, including how they relate to the three broad GEAR UP goals. In brief narrative and bullet points, the evaluator will present main findings of the interviews and any informal observations relevant to the area.

Following these results, the evaluator will present his judgment of high, medium, or low implementation level by judging the data along three basic questions:

- Is the service operating smoothly and as designed?
- Is it pervasive for the target audience?
- Is there evidence that it is effective?
In cases of an overall rating of LOW, the external evaluator may present a set of recommendations to suggest ways that implementation can be improved. Finally, as stated earlier the external evaluator will comment on the extent to which GEAR UP service implementation is supportive of the larger efforts of the school to adopt CCR best practices.

**College and career readiness best practices (second research question)**
The development of a best practice is a two-step process. First, the external evaluator will make a comparison between interview and observation findings and the educator survey results for the specific practice area. This will help amplify the quantitative survey results with on-the-ground descriptive examples. It will also be an opportunity to note any discrepancies between survey results and interview/observation data. The site visit report will include a brief description of the best practice area and the extent to which the field data support or contradict the survey results.

Second, the information from site visits will also be used to write a well-informed and documented best practices report. Hence, over several waves of school site visits, the external evaluator will accumulate enough information to produce the best practices report beginning in the summer of 2019, and then adding to that for subsequent reports on a biennial basis. These write-ups will likely be organized by topic areas or practice clusters, and will include descriptions from different schools of how the practices were implemented, implementation challenges and how they were addressed including lessons learned, and any anecdotal or hard evidence that the practices are pervasive and effective.