

WA State GEAR UP Expenditure Guidance

The guidance below represents typical GEAR UP (GU) expenditures. It may not include everything that is or is not allowable. Please note:

- Your work plan and budget detail what has been approved for your school and must adhere to the guidance below.
- Expenditures must tie directly to GU activities and support.
- For items requiring pre-approval, you must email Marcie Mills or the designee in writing. Verbal consent is not pre-approval.
- WSAC will not approve expenditures after the fact.
- Questions? Contact Buffy Hatcher at buffyh@wsac.wa.gov.

INCENTIVES	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Family Gift Cards or Other Incentives:	– May be an item or a gift card or multiple items/gift cards.	– Up to \$25 per family event. Gift cards are allowable for adult family members only.	– Incentives or gifts not attached to a specific event. – Student gift cards.
Staff, Parent, & Volunteer Appreciation:	– Thank you cards or certificates.	– Up to \$3 per person.	– No other items allowed.
Shirts:	– Must include a GU logo or college/career logo or message.	– Up to \$25 each, not including setup and shipping charges.	– Items without a GU logo or college message. – Items for adults - staff, volunteers, guest speakers, etc. – Incentives exceeding 1% of the annual budget or not included in the work plan and budget. – Gift cards are not allowable. – Incentives may not be distributed to non-GU students. – Incentives should be distributed fairly to students with no student receiving excessive incentives. – Entertainment is not an allowable incentive.
Other Wearable Items: <i>Hats, scarves, and socks.</i>	– Items with a GU logo or college/career logo or message.	– Up to \$20 each, not including setup and shipping charges	
Books: <i>Career or educational.</i>	– Books with career, college, or other educational focus.	– Up to \$20 each, not including setup and shipping charges.	
Other College Logo Items: <i>Such as pennants, notebooks, pens, magnets, key chains, lanyards, reusable coffee mugs, cups, or water bottles.</i>	– Items with a GU logo or college/career logos, such as those from a campus bookstore.	– Up to \$10, not including setup and shipping charges.	
Food & Treats:	– Food may be provided for student participation or celebration of achievement.	– Up to \$3 per event per student.	
PROGRAM MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Student School Supplies:	– Binders, folders, paper, highlighters, markers, flash drives, calculators, planners or calendars,	– Up to \$20 per student per year in need.	– Items that are not required for full student participation.

	pens, pencils, backpacks, etc., which are necessary for student success.		
Classroom Calculators:	– Required calculators for classroom use. Calculators must be retained as GU property.	– Up to one set per classroom in need at actual cost.	– N/A
Program Supplies:	– Consumable supplies that are necessary for program implementation. Includes postage and printing.	– Up to 1% of budget per year.	– Technology hardware, games, or any other non-consumable item.
Career & College or Other Educational Books or Materials, Including Games:	– To be used in classrooms, GU programming, or library.	– Up to \$500 per year.	– Required coursework, curriculum, or materials.
Decorations:	– Family events	– Up to \$25 per event.	– Items for non-family events.
College Going Culture Items:	– College/career pennants, motivational and informational posters, or other items for display in public areas of the school or GU classroom/offices.	– Up to \$500 per year.	– Items that are not college/career messaging focused.
FOOD	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Field Trips & College Visits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student and chaperone meals may be provided based on the meal period covered for the trip. See Travel Guidance for additional details. – If cash is given to students and/or chaperones, they must sign the Student Meal Allowance Form. – GU recommends that one meal per day be provided through school food service to reduce costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$15 per meal. – Up to \$20 per meal in King County only. – Up to \$5 for healthy snacks per day. – Transportation, and lodging at per diem rates. – Substitute wage and mandatory benefits. 	– Candy, and similar treats are not allowable.
Family Events:	<p>In Person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Food may be provided to all GU students and their family members in attendance. <p>Virtual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Food for confirmed adult attendees and the GU student. 	<p>In Person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$5 per attendee for refreshments. OR – Up to \$10 per attendee for a meal. – Staff may be included. <p>Virtual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$10 gift card per confirmed adult and GU student only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gift cards for in-person events. – Staff food for virtual events. – Food for non-GU students and their family members. – Food for any other virtual attendees (siblings, non-GU students).

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Delivery fees are not allowable for virtual events. However, they are allowed for catered on-site events.
Snacks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Healthy, nutritious snacks (granola bars, string cheese, fruit, popcorn, trail mix, pretzels, crackers, milk, juice, yogurt, bagels or muffins). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allowed for testing/assessments and field trips only. – Up to \$5 per event or day per student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Candy, pop, and similar treats are not allowable. – Food for after-school programs. Use the USDA Food and Nutrition Service https://www.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/child-nutrition/school-meals/national-school-lunch-breakfast-program/afterschool-snack-program
College &/or Career Fairs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Light refreshments or meals for presenters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$5 per presenter for refreshments. – Up \$10 per presenter for a meal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff may not be included. – Meals for less than a full-day event.
Staff Events:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Food for staff on the school campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff may be included in family event meals outside of the school day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meals and refreshments for staff during GU events during the school day.
Student Meals during the School Day, on Campus:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Generally, not allowable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Written permission required: marciem@wsac.wa.gov 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Limited exceptions may be made for student events that limit access to regular mealtime.
ACADEMIC COSTS	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Academic Coursework Tuition & Fees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Credit retrieval course fees, College in the High School tuition, Running Start books, and supplies may be allowable if the school does not usually pay them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Credit retrieval or summer school fees are allowable if students are responsible for the cost and no waiver or scholarship is available. – CiHS tuition is allowable if the student doesn't qualify for the OSPI subsidy or school district funds. – Running Start books, supplies, and bus passes are allowable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Running Start summer school tuition. – Any tuition or cost that the school district pays typically on behalf of a student. – Non-mandatory fees that are not required for participation. – Late fees.
Student Conferences:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Support students in building leadership and skills. Must be open to all students and not based on a selective process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Registration fees, lodging, transportation, and meals not provided by the provider. Chaperone costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – School club activities and conferences, including but not limited to ASB, DECA, FFA, FCCLA, etc. – Out-of-state student travel.
Summer Enrichment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GU-approved summer camp experiences and courses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$500 per student for registration fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sports camps. – Camps that are not pre-approved by WSAC.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transportation and meals are allowable if not provided by the camp program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Camps that are not open to the general student population (e.g., ASB Leadership Camp). – Late registration and cancellation fees.
Pre-College Assessments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PSAT, ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, or similar assessments required by GU or for college entrance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cost of the test unless a waiver is available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Test fees for waiver-eligible students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SAT/ACT – FRPL students ○ PSAT – 11th Grade FRPL students ○ Late registration fees.
AP Test Fees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student fees for AP tests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The entire test fee for non-FRPL cohort students. – OSPI subsidized fee for FRPL and priority students allowed, if applicable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Test fees for FRPL eligible students who are covered by a waiver. – Late fees.
College Application Fees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to 3 college application fees are allowable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – See required forms and instructions in the Coordinator Manual. – Encourage students/families to pay a portion of the fee, usually \$15. Consideration should be made for family needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fees for waiver-eligible students.
Teacher Mini-Grants:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Durable goods and materials to enhance and supplement the curriculum. – Teachers must submit a form (https://gearup.wa.gov/file/sample-teacher-mini-grant-application) to the GU Coordinator requesting funds. The GU Coordinator will forward it to marciem@wsac.wa.gov for approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$500 per core content (math, ELA, science, social studies, and dual credit courses) teacher per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mini-grants for electives and non-core content courses.
Technology & Hardware:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GU staff and student computers, printers, scanners, and associated hardware required to support use. – May include mobile hot spots when in remote learning, with pre-approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To be purchased in Years 1 through 4 of the program. – Emergency, pre-approved purchases in Years 5 through 7. – Purchased hot spots must be owned/retained by the school district and canceled when no longer needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Non-GU staff computers or technology unless explicitly in the work plan.

Guest Speakers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – College/career planning and preparation or motivational speaker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$1,000 per year. – For a GU endorsed guest speaker list, contact bethk@wsac.wa.gov 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – N/A
Field Trips, College Visits, Job Site Visits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Educational or cultural experiences, career exploration, and college visits for students and families. Includes job site visits and job shadows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Entry fees, activity costs, transportation, and meals per guidance are for students, family members, and chaperones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Entertainment is not allowable. Exception: for overnight trips on a college campus, activities may be permitted with written pre-approval.
Scholarships & Financial Aid Application Completion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Support students in applying for scholarships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supplies and materials needed for search, including USB drives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student Scholarships. – Scholarship or financial aid website or service membership fees or costs.
Focus Training Seeds Training:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – College knowledge and career planning workshops on your campus. – Student leadership, SEL training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to full fee for GU students. – Non-GU students may participate for no additional cost. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – N/A
STAFF	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Staff Salary & Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For GU assigned staff. – Up to 190 days for Coordinators or Directors. – Up to 185 days for other staff. – May also include staff who provide specific GU services such as tutoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Actual salary and benefits directly assigned to GU staff, including mandatory fringe benefits paid by the employer. – Salary/wages commensurate with experience and district personnel policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff pay that is not directly attached to GU programming. – Cannot supplant existing staff positions. – Staff time to work with non-GU students or on non-GU programming. – Any days beyond allowable must be providing direct services to students.
Professional Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supports building a college and career culture, GU objectives, or improves curriculum and instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For on-site pro-dev: cost of trainer and materials. – For off-site pro-dev: registration and allowable travel. – Substitute pay to cover staff who attend pro-dev. – See travel guidance for allowability details for meal reimbursement and other travel-related costs. – Pay for staff time requires pre-approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Travel outside of WA, OR, and ID requires pre-approval. – Rental cars, unless pre-approved. – Clock hours or fees for credit. – Late registration or cancellation fees. – Travel insurance, travel agent fees, or booking fees.
MISC. COSTS	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Advisory Committee:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Two meetings per year are required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cost of materials for required advisory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Food, refreshments, incentives.

		meetings, thank you cards.	
Advertising & Public Relations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recruiting and advertising GU position openings are allowable. – Promoting GU specific events or accomplishments. – General outreach to families. 	– Reasonable cost of services.	– Public relations and non-GU advertising.
AVID:	– May include required training, director meetings and training, materials costs, and membership fees.	– Allowable at cost if adopting as a new program. Schools are expected to build sustainable budgets over time, separate from GU funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Out-of-state training must be pre-approved. All rules related to other professional development apply. – AVID gear or swag.
Graduation or End of Year Celebrations:	– Graduation activities that are outside of the traditional events may be allowed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Costs are limited to those previously stated. – GU student banners or signs may be purchased, not to exceed \$20 each, and not including set up costs and shipping. 	– Costs typical of graduation are not allowable, including caps, gowns, diplomas, decorations, music, supplies, etc.
Subscriptions & Memberships:	– Necessary for program implementation.	– Allowable at cost if attached to a specific GU activity or service.	– Cannot support lobbying organizations.
Family Events:	– Ensure family members have the information they need to support preparation and planning for graduating on time and being prepared for postsecondary options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Supplies and materials that are needed for promotion and implementation. Language interpretation services. Childcare at the events. – See incentive and meal guidance above. 	– See incentive and meal guidance above.
UNALLOWABLE COSTS	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Donations:	– Any donation of funds or goods purchased with GU funding.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable.
Entertainment:	– Movies, sporting events, escape rooms, amusement parks, recreational activities, etc.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable.
Furniture & Equipment:	– Schools are expected to provide programs with the necessary furniture for the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Equipment is defined as exceeding \$5,000. – File cabinets or similar must be adequate for secure program documentation storage. File cabinets or other records storage containers are allowable. 	– Generally, not allowable.

Student Activity Fees:	– ASB cards, sports passes, student clubs, graduation costs, caps/gowns, and any related activities.	– Not allowable.	– Student camps, conferences, etc. that are specific to club participation (ASB, FBLA, DECA, etc.). – Items that personally benefit the student or are extracurricular.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):	– Masks, cleaners, gloves, disinfectants, sanitizer, etc. Schools are expected to provide programs with the necessary PPE.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable.
AmeriCorps:	– Program match or site fees.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable.
Indirect Costs:	– The cost to the district for administering the grant may be billed at the Federal Restricted Rate, up to WSAC's approved indirect rate, posted here: http://www.k12.wa.us/safs/FinancialResources.asp	– WSAC recommends that the district contribute the Indirect Cost rate as match to the program, but not required.	– Costs for district staff and other district expenditures are included in the indirect rate calculation.
Communications:	– Cell phone and landlines.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable; school districts are expected to support these costs.