

# WA State GEAR UP Expenditure Guidance



**This guidance represents typical GEAR UP (GU) expenditures. It may not include everything allowable.**

**NOTE:**

- The annual Work Plan and Budget details approved expenditures, and they must adhere to the guidance below.
- Expenditures must tie directly to GU activities and support.
- Written (email) approval is required for items requiring pre-approval. Verbal consent is not pre-approval.


Questions? Contact Roxanne, the Fiscal and Administrative Specialist, at [roxannee@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:roxannee@wsac.wa.gov)

INCENTIVES	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
<b>Family Gift Cards</b>	– A single or multiple gift card may equal the total value allowed.	– Up to \$25 per family event. – Allowable for adult family members only.	– Student gift cards. – Gift cards for unallowable expenditures (entertainment or alcohol, for example)
<b>Staff, Parent, and Volunteer Appreciation</b>	– Thank you cards or certificates.	– Low-cost items.	– Gifts or gift cards.
<b>Food &amp; Treats</b>	– Food may be provided for student celebrations of achievement. – Examples: Pi Day for all students who have a 3.14 GPA. – Senior Decision Day.	– Up to \$3 per event per student. – May be a treat like candy, coffee, cocoa, pizza, pie, gum, etc.	– Meals or total exceeding \$3 per GU participant.
PROGRAM MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
<b>Student School Supplies</b>	– Binders, folders, paper, highlighters, markers, flash drives, calculators, planners or calendars, pens, pencils, backpacks, etc., which are necessary for student success.	– Up to \$20 per year per student in need. – Must be given to students directly and not kept as a stockpile of items.	– Items that are not required for full student participation.
<b>Program Supplies</b>	– Consumable supplies that are necessary for program implementation. Includes postage and printing.	– Must be used directly by the GEAR UP program and not part of general supplies.	– Technology hardware, games, or any other non-consumable item (without prior approval from WAGU).

<b>Career &amp; College or Other Educational Books or Materials, Including Games:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To be used in classrooms, GU programming, or the library.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supplemental books or curriculum (other than the Career and College Club curriculum).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Required coursework, curriculum, or materials.</li> </ul>
<b>Decorations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Family events</li> <li>– GU focused celebration events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Up to \$25 per event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Decorations for non-family events.</li> <li>– Decorations for regular school activities/events.</li> </ul>
<b>College Going Culture Items</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– College/career pennants, motivational and informational posters, or other items to be displayed in public areas of the school or GU classrooms/offices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Up to \$500 per year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Items that are not college/career messaging focused.</li> <li>– T-shirts.</li> </ul>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ALLOWABLE</b>	<b>NOT ALLOWABLE</b>
<b>Field Trips &amp; College Visits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student and chaperone meals may be provided based on the meal period covered for the trip. See Travel Guidance for additional details.</li> <li>– If cash is given to students and/or chaperones, they must sign the Student Meal Allowance Form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– One meal per day provided through school food service to reduce costs whenever possible.</li> <li>– Up to \$5 for healthy snacks per day.</li> <li>– For field trips extending over multiple days, meals up to \$20.</li> <li>– Transportation and lodging are at or below per diem rates.</li> <li>– Substitute wage and mandatory benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Candy and similar treats are not allowable.</li> <li>– If a single receipt is provided for allowable meals, the total may not exceed the meal per person limits.</li> </ul>
<b>Family Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Food may be provided to all staff, students, and their family members in attendance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Up to \$5 per attendee for refreshments. OR</li> <li>– Up to \$10 per attendee for a meal.</li> <li>– Delivery fee and up to 20% tip are allowable for catered events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Food should be ordered based on projected attendance.</li> <li>– Leftovers may be given to families in attendance.</li> <li>– Leftovers may be given to students during the following school day.</li> <li>– Leftovers may be donated to a local shelter or similar.</li> </ul>
<b>Snacks</b>	Healthy, nutritious snacks (granola bars, string cheese, fruit, popcorn,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Allowed for testing/assessments and field trips only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Candy, pop, and similar treats are not allowable.</li> </ul>

	trail mix, pretzels, crackers, milk, juice, yogurt, bagels).	– Up to \$5 per event or day per student.	– Food for after-school programs. Use the <a href="#">USDA Food and Nutrition Service</a>
<b>College and/or Career Fairs</b>	– Light refreshments or meals for presenters.	– Up to \$5 per presenter for refreshments is allowed for a less-than-full-day event. – Up to \$20 per presenter for a meal, which is allowable for a full-day event.	– Staff may not be included. – Meals for less than a full-day event.
<b>Staff Events</b>	– Food for staff on the school campus.	– Staff may be included in family event meals outside the school day.	– Meals and refreshments for staff during GU events during the school day or professional development.
<b>Student Meals during the School Day, on Campus</b>	– Food for students for regular school meals.	– Written permission is required. It must be in the approved work plan/budget.	– Limited exceptions may be made for student events that limit access to regular mealtime.
<b>ACADEMIC COSTS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ALLOWABLE</b>	<b>NOT ALLOWABLE</b>
<b>Academic Coursework Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	– Credit retrieval course fees, Running Start books, and supplies may be allowable if the school does not usually pay them.	– Credit retrieval or summer school fees are allowable if students are responsible for the cost and no waiver or scholarship is available. – Running Start books, supplies, and bus passes are allowable.	– 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.
<b>Student Conferences</b>	– Support students in building leadership and skills. It must be open to all students and not based on a selective process.	– Registration fees, lodging, transportation, and meals not provided by the sponsor. – Chaperone costs.	– School club activities and conferences, including but not limited to ASB, DECA, FFA, FCCLA, etc. – Out-of-state student travel.
<b>Summer Enrichment</b>	– GU-approved summer camp experiences and courses. Pre-approval of camps is required.	– Up to \$750 per student for registration fees. – Transportation and meals are allowable if not provided by the camp program.	– Sports camps. – Camps that are not pre-approved by WSAC.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– An equitable access plan must be established to provide funds for students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Camps that are not open to the general student population (e.g., ASB Leadership Camp).</li> <li>– Late registration and cancellation fees.</li> <li>– Costs that the school has typically covered.</li> </ul>
<b>Pre-College Assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– PSAT, ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, or similar assessments required for college entrance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cost of the test when a waiver is not available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Test fees when a waiver is available.</li> <li>– Late registration fees.</li> </ul>
<b>AP/IB Test Fees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student fees for AP/IB tests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Test fees for FRPL-eligible students where the district or OSPI does not subsidize the fee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Test fees for FRPL-eligible students who are covered by a waiver.</li> <li>– Late fees.</li> </ul>
<b>College Application Fees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Up to 3 college application fees are allowable for colleges not part of the Common Application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– All GU students are eligible for free applications using the Common App. NCCEP has partnered with the Common App and NACAC to provide GU families with fee waivers for college applications. Access the Educator <a href="#">College Application Fee Waiver Resource Guide</a> and the Student <a href="#">Fee Waiver Flyer</a>.</li> <li>– NOTE: All GU students qualify for a fee waiver on the Common App. There are no exceptions.</li> <li>– Application fees for colleges not using the Common Application for FRPL-eligible students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fees for waiver-eligible students.</li> <li>– Fees for colleges that use the Common App.</li> <li>– Fees for students with access to family support to pay the fees.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Mini Grants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Durable goods and materials to enhance and supplement the curriculum.</li> <li>– Teachers submit applications to the GU Advisor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Up to \$500 per core content (math, ELA, science, social studies, and dual credit courses) per teacher per year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Mini-grants for electives and non-core content courses.</li> <li>– Funds to replace costs that are usually paid with district funds (e.g., textbooks).</li> </ul>

<b>Technology &amp; Hardware</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– GU staff computers, printers, scanners, and associated hardware required to support the program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Pre-approval of purchases through work plan/budget.</li> <li>– Reasonable warranty costs may be reimbursable if included in the approved work plan/budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Non-GU staff computers or technology, unless explicitly in the work plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Guest Speakers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– College/career planning and preparation or motivational speaker (aligned with GU).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Up to \$2,000 per year.</li> <li>– For a GU-endorsed guest speaker list, contact  WAGU staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– N/A</li> </ul>
<b>Field Trips, College Visits, Job Site Visits:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Educational or cultural experiences, career exploration, and college visits for students and families. Includes job site visits and job shadows.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Entry fees, activity costs, transportation, and meals per guidance are for students, family members, and chaperones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Entertainment is not allowable. Exception: for overnight trips on a college campus, activities may be permitted with written pre-approval.</li> </ul>
<b>Scholarships &amp; Financial Aid Application Completion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support students in applying for scholarships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supplies and materials needed for the search, including USB drives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student Scholarships.</li> <li>– Scholarship or financial aid website, service, membership fees, or costs.</li> </ul>
<b>STAFF</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ALLOWABLE</b>	<b>NOT ALLOWABLE</b>
<b>Staff Salary &amp; Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For GU-assigned staff.</li> <li>– Up to 190 days for Advisors or Directors.</li> <li>– Up to 185 days for other staff.</li> <li>– Staff who provide specific GU services, such as tutoring, may also be included.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Actual salary and benefits directly assigned to GU staff, including mandatory benefits paid by the employer.</li> <li>– Salary/wages commensurate with experience and district personnel policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Staff pay that is not directly attached to GU programming.</li> <li>– Supplanting existing staff positions.</li> <li>– Staff time to work with non-GU students or on non-GU programming.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supports building a college and career culture, GU objectives, or improves curriculum and instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For on-site pro-dev: cost of trainer and materials.</li> <li>– For off-site pro-dev: registration and allowable travel.</li> <li>– Substitute pay to cover staff who attend pro-dev.</li> <li>– See travel guidance for details on allowability for meal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Travel outside WA, OR, and ID unless for GEAR UP West or NCCEP Conferences.</li> <li>– Rental cars, unless pre-approved.</li> <li>– Clock hours or fees for credit.</li> <li>– Late registration or cancellation fees.</li> </ul>

		reimbursement and other travel-related costs. – Pay for staff time requires preapproval.	– Travel insurance, travel agent fees, or booking fees.
<b>MISC. COSTS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ALLOWABLE</b>	<b>NOT ALLOWABLE</b>
<b>Advertising &amp; Public Relations</b>	– 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.
<b>Graduation or End of Year Celebrations</b>	– Graduation activities that are outside of the traditional events may be allowed.	– <b>GU</b> banners or signs may be purchased, not exceeding \$25 each, not including set-up costs and shipping. Must include GEAR UP logo. (For items more than \$25, please request WAGU approval.)	– Costs typical of graduation are not allowable, including caps, gowns, diplomas, decorations, music, supplies, etc.
<b>Subscriptions &amp; Memberships</b>	– Necessary for program implementation.	– Allowable at cost if attached to a specific GU activity or service.	– Cannot support lobbying organizations.
<b>Family Events</b>	– Ensure family members have the information they need to support preparation and planning for graduating on time and being prepared for postsecondary options.	– Supplies and materials that are needed for promotion and implementation. – Language interpretation services. – Childcare at the events.	– See incentive and meal guidance above.
<b>UNALLOWABLE COSTS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ALLOWABLE</b>	<b>NOT ALLOWABLE</b>
<b>Donations</b>	– Any donation of funds or goods purchased with GU funding.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable.
<b>Incentives</b>	– Any item that may be given to students for participation in an activity.	– Allowable only if donated by another business, organization, or school district. (Or as described above.)	– Not allowable.
<b>Entertainment</b>	– Movies, sporting events, escape rooms, amusement parks, recreational activities, etc.	– Not allowable.	– Not allowable.

<b>Furniture &amp; Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Schools are expected to provide programs with the necessary furniture for the program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Equipment is defined as exceeding \$5,000.</li> <li>– File cabinets or similar must be adequate for secure program documentation storage. File cabinets or other records storage containers are allowable if not provided by the district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Generally, not allowable.</li> </ul>
<b>Student Activity Fees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ASB cards, sports passes, student clubs, graduation costs, caps/gowns, and related activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student camps, conferences, etc., specific to club participation (ASB, FBLA, DECA, etc.).</li> <li>– Items that personally benefit the student or are extracurricular.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Masks, cleaners, gloves, disinfectants, sanitizers, etc. Schools are expected to provide programs with the necessary PPE.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable.</li> </ul>
<b>AmeriCorps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Program match or site fees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable.</li> </ul>
<b>Indirect Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The cost to the district for administering the grant may be billed at the Federal Restricted Rate, up to <u>WSAC's approved indirect rate</u>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– WSAC recommends that the district contribute the Indirect Cost rate as a match to the program, but it is not required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Costs for district staff and other district expenditures that are included in the indirect rate calculation.</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cell phones and landlines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Not allowable; school districts are expected to support these costs.</li> </ul>