

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 at roxanne@wsac.wa.gov

INCENTIVES	DESCRIPTION	ALLOWABLE	NOT ALLOWABLE
Family Gift Cards:	– 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)
Staff, Parent, & Volunteer Appreciation:	– Thank you cards or certificates.	– Up to \$5 per person.	– No other items allowed.
Student Shirts:	– Must include a GU logo or college/career logo or message. – May raffle one t-shirt per college visit for that campus. – May raffle for GEAR UP events, one per event.	– Up to \$30 each, not including setup and shipping charges.	– Shirts without a GU logo or college message. – Shirts for anyone other than students.
Food & Treats:	– Food may be provided for student celebration 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
Student School Supplies:	– Binders, folders, paper, highlighters, markers, flash drives, calculators, planners or calendars, pens, pencils,	– Up to \$20 per student per year in need.	– Items that are not required for full student participation.

	backpacks, etc., necessary for student success.	– Must be given to students directly and not kept as stock items.	
Classroom Calculators:	– Required calculators for classroom use. Calculators must be retained as GU property.	– Up to one set per classroom is needed as required for the course.	– N/A
Program Supplies:	– 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.
Career & College or Other Educational Books or Materials, Including Games:	– To be used in classrooms, GU programming, or library.	– Supplemental books that are not part of any curriculum.	– Required coursework, curriculum, or materials.
Decorations:	– Family events	– Up to \$25 per event.	– Decorations for non-family events.
College Going Culture Items:	– College/career pennants, motivational and informational posters, or other items to be displayed in public areas of the school or GU classrooms/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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – One meal per day provided through school food service to reduce costs whenever possible. – 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 are at per diem rates. – Substitute wage and mandatory benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Candy and similar treats are not allowable. – If a single receipt is provided, the total may not exceed the meal per person limits.

Family Events:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Food may be provided to all staff, students, and their family members in attendance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$5 per attendee for refreshments. OR – Up to \$10 per attendee for a meal. – Delivery fee and up to 20% tip is allowable for catered events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Leftovers may be given to families in attendance. – Leftovers may be given to students during the following school day. – Leftovers may be donated to a local shelter or similar.
Snacks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Healthy, nutritious snacks (granola bars, string cheese, fruit, popcorn, trail mix, pretzels, crackers, milk, juice, yogurt, bagels). 	<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 is allowed for less than a full-day event. – Up to \$10 per presenter for a meal, which is allowable for a full-day event. 	<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 the school day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meals and refreshments for staff during GU events during the school day or professional development.
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 is required. It must be in the approved work plan/budget. 	<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, Running Start books, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Credit retrieval or summer school fees are allowable if 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Running Start summer school tuition.

	supplies may be allowable if the school does not usually pay them.	students are responsible for the cost and no waiver or scholarship is available. – Running Start books, supplies, and bus passes are allowable.	– 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:	– 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 provider. Chaperone costs.	– School club activities and conferences, including but not limited to ASB, DECA, FFA, FCCLA, etc. – Out-of-state student travel.
Summer Enrichment:	– 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. – An equitable access plan must be established to provide funds for students.	– Sports camps. – Camps that are not pre-approved by WSAC. – Camps that are not open to the general student population (e.g., ASB Leadership Camp). – Late registration and cancellation fees.
Pre-College Assessments:	– PSAT, ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, or similar assessments required for college entrance.	– Cost of the test unless a waiver is available. – PSAT: – 9/10/12 th grades: Full cost of assessment. – 11 th Grade: Full cost of non-FRPL eligible GU cohort students. FRPL-eligible students are free. – ACT/SAT Saturday Tests: Full cost of non-FRPL eligible GU students. FRPL-eligible students are free/waiver. – SAT School Day Tests: Full cost of non-FRPL eligible GU students. FRPL-eligible	– Test fees for waiver-eligible students: ○ SAT/ACT – FRPL students ○ PSAT – 11 th Grade FRPL students ○ Late registration fees.

		students at a reduced rate (est. \$15)	
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 unless subsidized by the district or OSPI. – OSPI subsidized fee for FRPL students, 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 for colleges not part of the Common Application. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – All GEAR UP students are eligible for free applications using the Common Applications. – Application fees for colleges not using the Common Application for FRPL-eligible students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fees for waiver-eligible students. – Fees for colleges that use the Common Application. – Fees for students with access to family support to pay the fees.
Teacher Mini-Grants:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Durable goods and materials to enhance and supplement the curriculum. – Teachers submit applications to the GEAR UP Advisor. – Application approval required by Roxanne Encheff, roxannee@wsac.wa.gov. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$500 per core content (math, ELA, science, social studies, and dual credit courses) per 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 the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To be purchased in Years 1 and 4. – Emergency, pre-approved purchases in other years. – Reasonable warranty costs may be reimbursable if included in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Non-GU staff computers or technology unless explicitly in the work plan.

		the approved work plan/budget.	
Guest Speakers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – College/career planning and preparation or motivational speaker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Up to \$2,000 per year. – For a GU-endorsed guest speaker list, contact bethk@wsac.wa.gov. 	– 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"> – Full-fee students. 	– 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. – Staff who provide specific GU services, such as tutoring, may also be included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Actual salary and benefits directly assigned to GU staff, including mandatory 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. – Supplanting existing staff positions. – Staff time to work with non-GU students or on non-GU programming.
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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Travel outside WA, OR, and ID unless for GEAR UP West or NCCEP Conferences.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For off-site pro-dev: registration and allowable travel. – Substitute pay to cover staff who attend pro-dev. – See travel guidance for details on allowability for meal reimbursement and other travel-related costs. – Pay for staff time requires pre-approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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
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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reasonable cost of services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public relations and non-GU advertising.
AVID:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – May include required training, director meetings and training, materials costs, and membership fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allowable at cost if adopted 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 may be pre-approved if not offered in WA. All rules related to other professional development and travel apply. – AVID gear or swag.
Graduation or End of Year Celebrations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 exceeding \$25 each, not including set-up costs and shipping. Must include GEAR UP logo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Costs typical of graduation are not allowable, including caps, gowns, diplomas, decorations, music, supplies, etc.
Subscriptions & Memberships:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Necessary for program implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allowable at cost if attached to a specific GU activity or service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cannot support lobbying organizations.

Family Events:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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.
Incentives:	-Any item that may be given to students for participation or other activity.	Allowable only if donated by another business, organization, or school district.	Not allowable.
Entertainment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Movies, sporting events, escape rooms, amusement parks, recreational activities, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not allowable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not allowable.
Furniture & Equipment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Generally, not allowable.
Student Activity Fees:	ASB cards, sports passes, student clubs, graduation costs, caps/gowns, and related activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not allowable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student camps, conferences, etc., specific to club participation (ASB, FBLA, DECA, etc.). – Items that personally benefit the student or are extracurricular.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Masks, cleaners, gloves, disinfectants, sanitizer, etc. Schools are expected to provide programs with the necessary PPE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Not allowable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 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 a match to the program, but it is 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.