

# NEVADA GEAR UP AMBASSADOR MANUAL 2012-2019

Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for  
Undergraduate Programs

*“GEAR UP is widely viewed as an effective solution for creating systemic change, as well as increasing academic achievement, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates among low-income, first generation and underrepresented students.”*

*-National Council for Community and Education Partnerships*



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## GEAR UP Introduction

GEAR UP is a competitive grant program from the U.S. Department of Education. GEAR UP increases the number of low-income, minority, and first generation students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. It is a bi-partisan, public-private educational partnership created by Congress in 1998.

### **GEAR UP is Cohort-Based**

GEAR UP works with entire grade levels, and whole schools, supporting low-income students and their families, starting no later than the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (middle school), through high school and onward to fulfill their dreams of attaining a postsecondary education.

### **GEAR UP Provides Critical Early College Awareness and Support Activities**

The program includes interventions such as tutoring, mentoring, rigorous academic preparation, financial education and college scholarships to improve access to higher education for low-income, minority, and disadvantaged first-generation students and their families.

### **GEAR UP Is Community-Based**

GEAR UP provides six-year grants, with an option of an additional year to support students in their first year of postsecondary education, to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. The program unites the entire community in a responsive, creative, and research-based effort to get entire classrooms of low-income, minority and disadvantaged children and their families, ready for higher education.

### **GEAR UP Leverages Local Resources**

Because GEAR UP is built around public and private partnerships, it enlists the formidable resources of government, industry, business, labor, community groups, and places of worship alike, in the cause of helping low-income students prepare, enter, and succeed in college.

### **GEAR UP is Research-Based**

GEAR UP helps local school systems improve student achievement by providing them with resources, training and expertise to use the most effective and evidence-based interventions.

### **GEAR UP Works**

The program now serves more than 570,000 low-income, minority and disadvantaged students nationwide.

*Source: National Council for Community and Education Partnerships*

## Nevada State GEAR UP Program

The Nevada Department of Education is the Governor-designated agency for the Nevada State GEAR UP Grant. Since 2001, the Nevada Department of Education has provided leadership for the state-wide GEAR UP grants. In partnership with the Nevada System of Higher Education, Nevada school districts, and businesses, the Nevada State GEAR UP Program provides research-based interventions and services to targeted schools.

### WHO WE ARE

Nevada State GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is a federally funded grant that is designed to increase the number of students from low-income families who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Generally, students are identified as GEAR UP during their 7<sup>th</sup> grade year and exposed to GEAR UP activities that continue through high school. There are 18 middle schools and the UNR Dean's Future Scholars, or approximately 5,500 students, included in the Nevada State GEAR UP Program. To qualify for program participation, school selection was based on a federally free or reduced lunch rate of 50% or higher. For a list of districts and schools see page 7.

### WHAT WE DO

There are many types of student services provided through Nevada State GEAR UP. These services include academic enrichment, summer programs, assessment preparation (ACT, PSAT, SAT, etc), mentoring & tutoring, career & college counseling, college & university campus visits, financial literacy & financial aid, and family engagement.

### WHAT'S NEW

Four distinct, but inter-related initiatives will be undertaken to achieve the GEAR UP goals: professional development and mentoring for school leadership; STEM professional development and alignment of the curriculum; Student-Parent Involvement Facilitator program; and College GEAR UP Ambassador program.

*Professional Development and Mentoring for School Leadership:* The College Readiness Team will provide ongoing professional development and mentoring for GEAR UP school leadership for a transformative period of seven years of the project. Each year a Summit will be held for school leadership to assess their school's needs to create and sustain a culture of college readiness. Professional development will be designed to meet the needs of the GU schools as

## NEVADA STATE GEAR UP GOALS

### Academic Preparation

Increase academic performance and preparation for postsecondary education.

### Graduation and College

Increase high school graduation rate and participation in postsecondary education.

### Knowledge

Increase student and parent/family knowledge of postsecondary education options, preparation, and financing.

### College-Going Culture

Create a college-going culture in GEAR UP schools to ensure that all students have the opportunity, support, guidance, and information to obtain the skills and knowledge necessary to apply for and succeed in postsecondary education.

they become models in their Local Education Agency (LEA) for the creation of a college-going culture.

*STEM Professional Development:* The GEAR UP STEM Team will conduct a needs assessment with GEAR UP schools and design appropriate activities and curriculum aligned with Common Core State Standards. Throughout the grant, STEM professional development opportunities will be available to GEAR UP school teachers.

*Student-Parent Involvement Facilitator Program:* The 2012-2019 project will provide direct services to GEAR UP students, and families by introducing the Student-Parent Involvement Facilitators (SPIFs) to monitor each student's progress through middle and high school, as well as serve as primary GEAR UP contact for parents. Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) will be developed and updated annually as an academic roadmap to reach GEAR UP students' college and career goals.

*GEAR UP Ambassador Program:* The Nevada System of Higher Education institutions will have a greater presence in the GEAR UP schools than in previous projects. GEAR UP Ambassadors will adopt the GEAR UP middle and high schools in their service areas. The Ambassadors, in partnership with the SPIFs, will coordinate and conduct college readiness activities for the GEAR UP cohorts, as well as all students enrolled in the schools. GEAR UP Ambassadors will develop a regular presence in and become a part of the GEAR UP schools, contributing to the general expectation of college as a natural extension of a student's education. The Ambassador Program also includes the GoToCollege Ambassadors who serve as near-peer mentors to the GEAR UP students.

## **WHAT HAS CHANGED**

Nevada requested a waiver from the Scholarship Component for this grant cycle. The GEAR UP program will provide scholarship information about existing financial resources for higher education. In addition, financial education and literacy for students will be a part of ongoing services provided by SPIFs and GEAR UP Ambassadors.

## Nevada State GEAR UP Ambassadors

The Nevada GEAR UP grant is a collaborate effort between K-12, higher education, and businesses in Nevada. The lead agency is the Nevada Department of Education. The Nevada System of Higher Education is a sub grantee and serves as the primary contact on higher education issues or questions.

### WHAT ARE GEAR UP AMBASSADORS' ROLE?

The GEAR UP Ambassadors' purpose is to enhance Nevada's college-going culture by increasing the number of low-income students from selected schools who apply, attend and graduate from post-secondary institutions.

The GEAR UP Ambassadors are responsible for building a network of support and collaboration with other GEAR UP Ambassadors, SPIFs, parents, teachers, and school district staff to empower students attending targeted schools with information, resources and strategies to achieve the GEAR UP goals.

The GEAR UP Ambassadors, in partnership with SPIFs, plan, develop and implement programs and activities for students and their parents. Topics can include Career Exploration, College Exposure and Planning, High School Planning, Financial Literacy, Parental Involvement Fostering, Academic Enrichment, Summer Programs, and other after-school activities aligned with the GEAR UP goals. In addition, GEAR UP Ambassadors will create "college corners" at their respective schools.

College corners should be places where GEAR UP students can find information about careers and postsecondary options and can meet with GEAR UP Ambassadors.

Ambassadors will receive training and professional development on a variety of topics and resources on how to build a successful GEAR UP program. This handbook identifies essential information for GEAR UP Ambassadors.

## NEVADA STATE GEAR UP Primary Contacts

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## Nevada State GEAR UP Schools

County	Middle Schools	High Schools	NSHE Institutions
<b>Clark County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harney Middle School</li> <li>• Mark Middle School</li> <li>• Woodbury Middle School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chaparral HS</li> <li>• Del Sol HS</li> <li>• Desert Pines HS</li> <li>• ECTA</li> <li>• Las Vegas HS</li> <li>• SECTA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSN</li> <li>• NSC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Elko County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jackpot Combined School</li> <li>• Owyhee Combined School</li> <li>• Wells Combined School</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBC</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Esmeralda County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dyer Elementary School</li> <li>• Goldfield Elementary School</li> <li>• Silver Peak Elementary School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Humboldt County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McDermitt Combined School</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Lyon County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Silver Stage Elementary School</li> <li>• Yerington Intermediate School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Silver Stage HS</li> <li>• Yerington HS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Mineral County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hawthorne Junior High</li> <li>• Schurz Elementary School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mineral County HS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> <li>• WNC</li> </ul>
<b>Nye County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amargosa Valley Elementary School</li> <li>• Gabbs Combined School</li> <li>• Rosemary Clarke Middle School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beatty HS</li> <li>• Gabbs Combined School</li> <li>• Pahrump Valley HS</li> <li>• Tonopah HS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Pershing County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pershing County Middle School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pershing County HS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GBC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>
<b>Washoe County</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean's Future Scholars</li> <li>• Traner Middle School</li> <li>• Vaughn Middle School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AACT</li> <li>• Dean's Future Scholars</li> <li>• Hug HS</li> <li>• Wooster HS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TMCC</li> <li>• UNLV</li> <li>• UNR</li> </ul>

Note: UNLV and UNR are required to reach all schools. Other institutions are encouraged to support beyond their service region.

## Timeline for 2012-2019

Year	
<b>Year 1</b>  <b>2012-2013</b>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> cohort will be identified and enrolled in the program by the SPIFs. Ambassadors set up an annual calendar and conduct/coordinate campus tours and college informational sessions with GU students, parents, and school personnel.</p>
<b>Year 2</b>  <b>2013-2014</b>	<p>Ambassadors assist the SPIFs to coordinate 1:1 mentoring for GU students through partnerships with the business community, college students, and other available mentors for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade GU students.</p> <p>Ambassadors will set up an annual calendar and conduct/coordinate campus tours and informational sessions with GU students, parents, and school personnel for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade GU students.</p> <p>Ambassadors and SPIFs will coordinate for a summer “bridge builder program” between middle school and high school for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders and include parent activities that focus on education resources and financial literacy.</p>
<b>Year 3</b>  <b>2014-2015</b>	<p>Ambassadors assist the SPIFs to coordinate 1:1 mentoring and assure that GU students receive necessary support, (e.g. tutoring, summer school, mentoring) to work toward goals defined in their ILP.</p> <p>Ambassadors and SPIFs will collaborate on a summer “bridge builder program” between middle school and high school for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders and include parent activities that focus on education resources and financial literacy.</p> <p>9<sup>th</sup> Grade students will receive 21<sup>st</sup> Century Certificates.</p> <p>Ambassadors will establish an annual calendar for campus tour and information sessions with GU 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students, parents, and school personnel. Parent activities focus on financial literacy and important considerations related to high school (e.g. credits earned, graduation requirements).</p>
<b>Year 4</b>  <b>2015-2016</b>	<p>SPIFs and Ambassadors will work with students and families from high schools.</p> <p>Ambassadors and SPIFs maintain and foster the mentoring relationships for GU students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade.</p> <p>Ambassadors establish an annual calendar for campus tours, informational sessions, and STEM activities with GU students, parents, and school personnel. Parent activities focus on financial literacy, FAFSA, high school graduation and college entrance requirements.</p> <p>Colleges and districts will collaborate to continue summer programs for GEAR UP students.</p>

<p><b>Year 5</b> <b>2016-2017</b></p>	<p>For the GU 10<sup>th</sup> grade students, Ambassadors will establish an annual calendar for campus tours, STEM opportunities, and informational sessions with GU students, parents, and school personnel. Parent activities focus on college entrance requirements and financial aid.</p> <p>For the GU 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, Ambassadors establish an annual calendar for campus tours and assistance with FAFSA preparation, college applications, and financial aid forms. Workshops focus on building bridges between local colleges and GU students. GU students will continue to participate in appropriate mentoring and job shadowing. Ambassadors actively recruit GU students and create campus support systems.</p>
<p><b>Year 6</b> <b>2017-2018</b></p>	<p>For the GU 11<sup>th</sup> grade students, Ambassadors will establish an annual calendar for campus tours and assistance with FAFSA preparation, college applications, and financial aid forms.</p> <p>For graduating seniors, Ambassadors put together workshops which focus on building bridges between local colleges and GU students. GU students will continue to participate in appropriate mentoring and job shadowing. Ambassadors actively recruit GU students for admission to local colleges and create campus support systems. GU 12<sup>th</sup> graders will participate in College Application Month, FAFSA Completion Season, and College Decision Days.</p> <p>Graduating seniors will be offered campus tours with emphasis in residential life and communication with Financial Aid offices and other resources.</p>
<p><b>Year 7</b> <b>2018-2019</b></p>	<p>For graduating seniors, Ambassadors put together workshops which focus on building bridges between local colleges and GU students. GU students will continue to participate in appropriate mentoring and job shadowing. Ambassadors actively recruit GU students for admission to local colleges and create campus support systems. GU 12<sup>th</sup> graders will participate in College Application Month, FAFSA Completion Season, and College Decision Days.</p> <p>Graduating seniors will be offered campus tours with emphasis in residential life and communication with Financial Aid offices and other resources.</p> <p>GU college freshmen will receive support services directly from GU Ambassadors to improve retention, progression, and completion.</p>

# SUGGESTED BENCHMARKS

## 7<sup>TH</sup> – 12<sup>TH</sup> Graders and College Freshmen



## 7th Grade Benchmarks

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these grade level specific benchmarks in order to graduate from high school ready for the postsecondary program or college of their choosing. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Attend GEAR UP 7th grade orientation.		Participate in GEAR UP activities.
	Family attends GEAR UP 7th grade orientation and participates in quarterly family workshops.		Visit a postsecondary school campus.
	Perform at or above grade level in math, language arts, and science classes. Prepare for taking pre-algebra next year.		Attend events to learn about going to college and financial aid.
	Earn a minimum cumulative GPA above 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. A 3.0 GPA is the minimum for many colleges.		Complete the financial literacy curriculum.
	Stay alcohol-free, drug-free, crime-free, and tobacco-free.		Learn about 3 or more postsecondary schools or programs.
	Complete the Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) and earn a 3 or higher in math, reading, and writing.		Learn about 3 or more careers.
	Participate in study skills and tutoring activities.		Promote to eighth grade

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## 8th Grade Benchmark

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these grade level specific benchmarks in order to graduate from high school ready for the postsecondary program or college of their choosing. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Attend GEAR UP 8th grade orientation.		Participate in GEAR UP activities.
	Family attends GEAR UP 8th grade orientation and participates in quarterly family workshops.		Take grade-specific ACT assessment.
	Perform at or above grade level in math (pre-algebra or above is recommended), language arts, and science classes. Prepare for taking algebra next year.		Attend events to learn about going to college and financial aid.
	Earn a minimum cumulative GPA above 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. A 3.0 GPA is the minimum for many colleges.		Complete the financial literacy curriculum.
	Stay alcohol-free, drug-free, crime-free, and tobacco-free.		Learn about 3 or more postsecondary schools or programs.
	Complete an Individual Learning Plan (ILP).		Receive 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Scholar Certificate
	Participate in study skills and tutoring activities.		Promote to ninth grade

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## 9th Grade Benchmarks

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these grade level specific benchmarks in order to graduate from high school ready for the postsecondary program or college of their choosing. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Attend GEAR UP 9th grade orientation.		Participate in GEAR UP activities.
	Family attends GEAR UP 9th grade orientation and participates in quarterly family workshops.		Visit a postsecondary school campus.
	Perform at or above grade level in math (algebra or above is recommended), language arts, and science classes.		Know the Nevada minimum college admission requirements and choose courses that will help to meet these requirements while also working toward high school graduation.
	Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. A 3.0 GPA is the minimum for many colleges.		Learn the minimum GPA required to qualify for the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship.
	Stay alcohol-free, drug-free, crime-free, and tobacco-free.		Learn about 5 to 10 postsecondary schools or programs.
	Update the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).		Work with GU Ambassadors and SPIFs for a High School and Beyond Plan.
	Create a Student Portfolio to use during high school years with Career Cruising.		Enroll and pass foreign language class
	Participate in study skills and tutoring activities.		Promote to 10th grade and be on track to graduate on time.

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## 10th Grade Benchmarks

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these grade level specific benchmarks in order to graduate from high school ready for the postsecondary program or college of their choosing. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Attend GEAR UP 10th grade orientation.		Participate in GEAR UP activities.
	Family attends GEAR UP 10th grade orientation and participates in quarterly family workshops.		Conduct in depth research of postsecondary options and careers, including going on postsecondary campus visits to 3 to 5 programs aligned with career interests.
	Perform at or above grade level in math (geometry or above is recommended), language arts, and science classes.		Know the Nevada minimum college admission requirements and choose courses that will help to meet these requirements while also working toward high school graduation.
	Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. A 3.0 GPA is the minimum for many colleges.		Work with GU Ambassadors and SPIFs for a High School and Beyond Plan.
	Update the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).		Complete the FAFSA 4caster.
	Enroll and pass foreign language class.		Prepare for and take the PSAT.
	Participate in study skills and tutoring activities.		Take grade-specific ACT assessment
	Earn the minimum GPA required to qualify for the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship.		Promote to 11th grade and be on track to graduate on time.

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## 11th Grade Benchmarks

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these grade level specific benchmarks in order to graduate from high school ready for the postsecondary program or college of their choosing. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Attend GEAR UP 11th grade orientation.		Participate in GEAR UP activities.
	Family attends GEAR UP 11th grade orientation and participates in quarterly family workshops.		Conduct in depth research of postsecondary options and careers, including going on postsecondary campus visits, to 3 to 5 programs aligned with your career interests.
	Perform at or above grade level in math (Algebra II and above is recommended), language arts, and science classes.		Know the Nevada minimum college admission requirements and choose courses that will help to meet these requirements while also working toward high school graduation.
	Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. A 3.0 GPA is the minimum for many colleges.		Work with GU Ambassadors and SPIFs for a High School and Beyond Plan.
	Update your Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and earn a 3 or higher in math, reading, and writing.		Complete the FAFSA 4caster.
	Prepare for and take the ACT and SAT.		Attend one or more college recruiting event at school or in the community.
	Participate in study skills and tutoring activities.		Research and apply for scholarships and request letters of recommendation from teachers, mentors, supervisors, etc.
	Assess eligibility for the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship.		Promote to 12th grade and be on track to graduate on time.

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## 12th Grade Benchmarks

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these grade level specific benchmarks in order to graduate from high school ready for the postsecondary program or college of their choosing. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Attend GEAR UP 12th grade orientation.		Participate in GEAR UP activities.
	Family attends GEAR UP 12th grade orientation and participates in quarterly family workshops.		Apply to multiple colleges or universities during College Application Month (October).  Visit all postsecondary school(s) you want to attend.
	Perform at or above grade level in math (calculus or above is recommended), language arts, and science classes.		Apply to three or more postsecondary schools or programs.
	Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale. Push for a final boost in GPA.		Know the Nevada minimum college admission requirements and choose courses that will help to meet these requirements while also working toward high school graduation.
	Stay alcohol-free, drug-free, crime-free, and tobacco-free.		Work with your GU Ambassadors and SPIFs for a High School and Beyond Plan.
	Update the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).		Complete the FAFSA application during FAFSA Completion Season at a high school.
	Prepare for and take the ACT or SAT.		Apply for scholarships.
	Participate in study skills and tutoring activities.		Participate in College Decision Days.
	Complete at least one job shadow in a career or field of interest.		GRADUATE!!!

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## 1<sup>st</sup>- Year College Freshman Benchmarks

GEAR UP recommends that all students meet these year college level benchmarks in order to successfully complete freshman year and transition into sophomore year of college. Use this checklist to help you plan and keep track of the progress of GEAR UP students.

	<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>ACTIONS</b>
	Get to know academic advisor. Meet with them on a regular basis to discuss classes, schedule, and degree progression.		Find out what degree requirements are and how to meet requirements within four years of college.
	Get to know roommate and residence hall.		Find out where the campus library is located and utilize their services.
	Get to know professors and meet with them on a regular basis.		Make memories with new friends.
	Take advantage of study resources offered on campus (e.g., Writing centers, tutoring, math centers).		Continue to apply for scholarships, particularly in department of declared major.
	Get involved on campus. Attend involvement fairs for more information.		Fill out the FAFSA for the following school year (sophomore year).
	Make a visit to the career services office. Utilize the services they offer.		Get organized and plan ahead. Avoid procrastinating in college.
	Make time for yourself to relax.		Speak up in class. Ask questions!
	Sleep well and eat right. Maintain a healthy lifestyle.		Attend events hosted by the campus (e.g., sports, festivals, speakers, forums).
	Attend tutoring sessions as needed.		Balance your social and academic life. Use a calendar!

Additional resources can be found at [GoToCollegeNevada.org](http://GoToCollegeNevada.org)

## Career Cruising ([careercruising.com](http://careercruising.com))

Career Cruising is a college and career readiness online program available to all GEAR UP students at their schools and Nevada colleges and universities. The purpose of the program is to provide students, educators and parents with resources and information on career and postsecondary options and pathways.

GEAR UP students will have an account and are expected to participate and use the program throughout their educational journey.

GEAR UP Ambassadors and Student-Parent Involvement Facilitators will receive training throughout the grant cycle on how to use Career Cruising. For additional information see the GEAR UP Handbook or contact a primary GEAR UP contact (page 6).

Career Cruising offers a variety of interactive programs and products for GEAR UP students. These include:



[ccSpringboard:](#)

The heart of ccEngage

Helping people of all ages achieve their full potential in school, career and life, ccSpringboard is the heart of ccEngage.



[ccPathfinder:](#)

High school course planner

Encourages high school students to think about the impact their studies have on achieving their future goals.



[ccAchieve:](#)

College application planner

Gives high school students the tools to successfully manage and organize the complex process of applying to college.



[ccTheRealGame:](#)

Classroom experiential learning

ccTheRealGame brings the real world into the classroom, where students learn by role-playing adults in careers and working together to build better communities.



[Method Test Prep:](#)

Online SAT / ACT prep

The best way to help students raise their ACT and SAT scores, using highly effective web-based test preparation cour\

## Use of Student Information & FERPA

GEAR UP Ambassadors interact with and have access to student personal information. Ambassadors should consult the Family Educational Rights and Primary Act (FERPA) available at:

[www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html)

Additional training will be provided throughout the grant cycle on appropriate uses of student information for surveys, participation logs, and academic purposes.

## Marketing & Public Relations Information

The following section provides specific language you can use with students, parents, educators and GEAR UP partners.

**GEAR UP Mission:** To facilitate strategic partnerships in order to leverage funding and resources that provide direct, early intervention services to students in high-need schools in order to help them prepare for and succeed in college.

**Elevator Statement:** GEAR UP helps middle school and high school students get ready for college. We work with students from low-income and underserved communities who will likely be the first person in their family to go to college.

**Slogan:** DREAM, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE



**Logo:** See [GearUpNV.org](http://GearUpNV.org) for instructions on how to download and use logo.

### Attributes or Messages

#### Students:

- You can go to college.
- A college degree gives you more choices, more opportunities and more control over your future.
- Going to college is exciting (new friends, new surroundings, new challenges).
- It is never too soon to get ready for college.
- Paying attention to your classes and grades now can pay off later when applying to college.
- Having a plan to prepare, apply for and enter college is just as important as good grades, high test scores and extracurricular activities.

#### Parents/Significant Adults:

- Your student can go to college.

- It's okay if you don't know where to begin.
- It's okay to ask for help in preparing your child to be a college student.
- GEAR UP staff want to help your child create a plan to get into and graduate from college.

#### School Personnel

- Every student can go to college.
- Parents want the best education available for their children.
- Parents that have not attended college need your help to make college a reality for their student.
- Your students need help seeing themselves as college students.
- Most students and parents don't know where to begin, which is one of the biggest obstacles that keeps students from going to college.

## GEAR UP Student Service Definitions

**Financial aid counseling/advising services** provide assistance to students to understand and navigate the complexities of financial aid, including providing hands-on assistance with the FAFSA and scholarship applications, financial aid or literacy presentations, financial aid or literacy curriculum, and participation in college savings plans.

**FAFSA Completion Season** takes place in January/February and is the second event, in a three-part series known as College Journey initiatives, part of the GoToCollegeNevada.org Campaign and brought to you by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). Participating high schools provide their students and families with support and guidance while completing the FAFSA.

**Comprehensive mentoring services** are school- or community-based mentoring programs where teachers and other school staff target and identify academically and/or social/emotionally at-risk students whom they feel would benefit from mentoring. These programs then pair these at-risk students with volunteers who meet with them regularly at school or in the community (typically one hour per week) either during or after the school day. This type of comprehensive mentoring is long-term and can include academic, social, organizational, or life skills elements.

**Counseling/advising services** span a spectrum of activities that can include one-on-one or small group advising for parents/guardians/adult family member. These services include when a parent/guardian or adult family member meets with the GEAR UP school staff or counselor, with or without a student, to discuss student's academic goals, college plans, school progress, etc.

**Counseling:** Meeting with students one-on-one or in a small group to discuss personal growth issues such as decision making, goal setting, behavior concerns, family issues, or home visits.

**Advising:** Providing individual assistance to parents/guardians on college choices, college planning, financial aid planning, etc.

**Academic planning:** Providing individual or small group assistance to students on coursework selection, course of study choices, college major selection, assessment advising or interpretation of scores, or assistance with placement tests.

**Career counseling:** Providing individual or small group assistance to students about career choices, career planning, internships, or career interests.

**College visit/college student** shadowing services take place on college campuses or in a virtual environment.

**College visit:** A physical visit to a college campus by a student. The primary objective of the event would be to conduct a college visit. It should include an official tour, presentation(s) by admissions, academic departments, athletics, student affairs, residence life, multicultural affairs, or other college departments. Refer to the Handbook for Nevada GEAR UP Campus Visits for further guidance.

**Virtual college visit:** A virtual college tour by a student via remote access including the internet, webinar, etc. Virtual college visit must be supervised/led by a teacher or GEAR UP staff.

**College student shadowing:** A one-on-one experience in which a middle or high school student spends a day on a college campus with an undergraduate student seeing college life for a typical undergraduate.

**Job site visit/job shadowing services** offer students exposure to the workplace in an occupational area of interest and reinforces the link between classroom learning and work requirements. Students witness firsthand the work environment, employability and occupational skills in practice, the value of professional training, and potential career options. These activities include visits to local businesses, employers, and agencies to explore different professions career selections and can be followed by job shadowing. Includes visits to Nevada's primary industries: mining, solar energy plants, DRI, Hoover Dam, gaming/casino, etc.

**Summer programs** are services that include an intensive experience over a period of time during the summer (or other non-school year time) that includes an academic enrichment, credit recovery, or college preparatory program/camp. Summer programs could be a statewide GEAR UP summer camp, a local summer camp funded by GEAR UP, or a residential GEAR UP program hosted by a college/university/community organization, or another camp attended by a GEAR UP student that supports the GEAR UP mission. NOTE: Data entry should include the name of the camp.

**Educational field trips** are services that include an activity that occurs when students leave their school or travel to another location that includes an academic component and is linked to classroom activities. Examples would include a science demonstration on a college campus under the STEM program (the purpose of the event was the science demonstration not a college visit), a class trip to attend a science or history museum linked to curriculum, academic competitions, cultural experiences such as performing arts, museums, or similar activity, and field trips that complement and

enhance existing curriculum in key content areas such as math, science, or language arts.

**Workshops** are services that include interactive informational classroom-level or larger-group sessions focused on the elements of college awareness and readiness such as study skills, self-monitoring, goal-setting, time management, and problem-solving. Activities should be grade-appropriate and engaging activities that convey information needed to understand "how college works." This includes guest speakers that motivate students and highlight careers.

**College Application** completion must be tracked by the individual student. Create an activity named "College Applications Completed" and enter each student for each time they complete and submit a college application.

**College Application Month (CAM)**, known nationally as the American College Application Campaign (ACAC), is supported by the American Council on Education (ACE) with the goal to provide every graduating high school senior the opportunity to apply to college. CAM is the first event in a three-part series known as College Journey Initiatives, part of the GoToCollegeNevada.org Campaign and brought to you by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). Participating high schools provide their students and families with support and guidance while completing college admission applications.

**Workshops of college prep/financial aid services** include a parent/guardian or adult family member's attendance at a workshop that demonstrates how to assist their student with college preparation or financial aid information. These services include informational sessions for parents in the topics of Financial Planning, Requesting Financial Aid, Career Exploration, Middle School to High School Transition Planning Activities, Successful Parental Involvement, Accepting the Challenge to Academic Excellence, etc.

**Family events** are services in which parents or families participate. These services involve GEAR UP students and their families/guardians or just their parents/guardians. Family Events includes such as: Bingo Night, College Scavenger Hunt, Science and Technology Family Night, Administering Career exploration tests, Creating the "Road Map of My Life-My Dreams and Expectations", Open house.

## Assessment Definitions

**ACCUPLACER-** The ACCUPLACER is an academic placement exam for math, English, and reading typically used by community colleges when ACT and SAT test scores are not available. Students take the ACCUPLACER prior to class enrollment at the community college.

**ACT ASPIRE-** The ACT Aspire maps students' academic progress and growth from the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Regardless of the future career path, the ACT Aspire can help all students acquire the readiness they will need for future success. Subject areas include English, math, reading, science, and writing. The ACT Aspire test scores can identify gaps in a student's knowledge and skills that can be addressed before the student moves on to the next level of learning. The ACT Aspire helps students understand if their academic growth is on pace for college and career success.

**ACT-** The ACT assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The multiple choice test covers English, mathematics, reading and science and includes an optional writing portion.

**PSAT/NMSQT-** The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a pretest for the SAT and is used as a qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program. It should be taken in the Fall of 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

**SAT-** The Scholastic Assessment Test is a widely used college admissions test. It tests students' knowledge in the subjects of reading, writing, and math. It should be taken in the Spring of 11<sup>th</sup> grade and can be taken again in the Fall of 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

## Nevada College & University Admissions Requirements

### Community College Requirements

- High School diploma or equivalent GED

### State College Requirements

- High School diploma or equivalent GED; and
- Required high school courses\*;
- At least a 2.0 GPA

### University Requirements

- High School diploma or equivalent or GED; AND
- At least a 3.0 (weighted) GPA in the required high school courses\*; or
- A combined SAT Critical Reading and Math score of at least 1040; or
- An ACT composite score of at least 22; or
- A Nevada Advanced high school diploma.

## Nevada Colleges and Universities

### College of Southern Nevada

[www.csn.edu](http://www.csn.edu)

The College of Southern Nevada offers two year associate degrees, one-year certificates of achievement in more than 200 career fields, university transfer preparation, select bachelor's degrees, and skill training to secure employment or professional development.

Locations: Las Vegas & Henderson Campuses

### Great Basin College

[www.gbcnv.edu](http://www.gbcnv.edu)

Great Basin College serves five counties in northeastern Nevada and offers select bachelor's degrees and one-year certificates of achievement

Location: Elko

### Truckee Meadows Community College

[www.tmcc.edu](http://www.tmcc.edu)

Truckee Meadows Community College offers more than 100 associate degrees and certificates of achievement programs ranging from automotive technology to nursing to paralegal.

Location: Reno

**Western Nevada College**

[www.wnc.edu](http://www.wnc.edu)

Western Nevada College is located in Carson City and offers more than 50 associate degrees or certificate of achievement programs, as well as a Bachelor of Technology. Location: Carson City

**Nevada State College**

[www.nsc.nevada.edu](http://www.nsc.nevada.edu)

Nevada State is a 4 year college dedicated to outstanding teaching, mentoring, and advising on a personal level. Nevada State College offers bachelor's degrees in Business, Education, Nursing, Visual Media and Computing, Biology, Environmental Science, Psychology, English, History, Integrated Studies, Law Enforcement and more... Location: Henderson

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

[www.unlv.edu](http://www.unlv.edu)

UNLV's academic colleges and schools offer more than 180 undergraduate, master's and doctoral degree programs. It is the state's largest comprehensive doctoral-degree granting institution with more than 28,000 students. UNLV provides traditional and professional academic programs for a diverse student body. Location: Las Vegas

**University of Nevada, Reno**

[www.unr.edu](http://www.unr.edu)

The University of Nevada, Reno offers more than 70 undergraduate majors and 150 academic programs. More than 91 percent of classes are taught by faculty members and the student-to-faculty ratio is 17:1. All the University, undergraduate students have the opportunity to participate in a diverse range of research projects, working closely with faculty mentors. Location: Reno.

## Additional GEAR UP Resources and Handbooks

GEAR UP Ambassadors have access to additional training and resources to ensure a successful GEAR UP program. Additional GEAR UP resources and handbooks can be found at [GearUpNV.org](http://GearUpNV.org) and include:

### GEAR UP Handbook

A binder issued at Nevada Department of Education GEAR UP Trainings which includes information on GEAR UP goals, SPIFs, STEM, GEAR UP database, career cruising, student/parent forms, financial literacy and contacts.

### A Handbook for Nevada GEAR UP Campus Visits

Includes information on campus visits, checklists, logistics, handouts and activities, games, surveys and additional campus visit resources.

### Nevada GEAR UP Digest

A monthly email newsletter with important upcoming dates and student resources to use for GEAR UP programs.

### Ambassador and SPIF One-Pagers

One-page, topic-specific resources which include research and data on a topic along with useful websites and tools to address the topic with GEAR UP students and families.

Connect with us on social media!



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Additional resources were used to create this handbook:

U.S. Department of Education's Supplemental Educational Services Non-Regulatory Guidance. Retrieved from: [www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc](http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.doc)

U. S. Department of Education's Mentoring Resource Center. Retrieved from: <http://www.edmentoring.org/>

Washington State GEAR UP Coordinator Manual from: <http://www.gearup.wa.gov/resource/washington-state-gear-up-coordinator-manual-and-forms>

2011 Nevada State GEAR UP Grant Application July 2011, Nevada Department of Education

National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, handout "About GEAR UP" from: [www.edpartnerships.org](http://www.edpartnerships.org)

GoToCollegeNevada.org campaign handout "The College Journey 2012-2015", from: [www.gotocollegenevada.org](http://www.gotocollegenevada.org)



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