



Section 6: Communications

GEAR UP Iowa Communications Guidelines

Boilerplate Language/Elevator Speech

GEAR UP Iowa strives to raise the academic expectations of students across 12 of the highest need school districts in Iowa. Funded through a seven-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid), GEAR UP Iowa supports collaborative initiatives to promote college readiness, access and success.

Tagline

Because College Changes Everything

Benefits of GEAR UP Iowa

GEAR UP Iowa provides value to Iowa partner school districts through:

- Collaborative alignment with college- and career-readiness efforts;
- Capacity building for counselors and advisement;
- Assessment and development of students' non-cognitive skills; and
- Exposure of students

GEAR UP Iowa recognizes the importance of community support in promoting college access and supports a long-term commitment to sustaining the GEAR UP Iowa model in partner school districts.

Messages to Specific Audiences

Parents/Families

- You play a significant role in getting your student to college.
- Attending college is a major investment, but one that will pay off in the long term.
- The college process can be confusing, but with support, your student can find the right fit.
- GEAR UP Iowa is here to help you, not just your student, in getting him or her to college.

Policymakers and Community Leaders

- The success of GEAR UP Iowa relies on the resources and support of your community.
- Visible community support from leaders is critical to developing and growing the college-going culture in your area.
- The GEAR UP Iowa model will allow services to continue long after the life of the grant.



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General Public

- An educated workforce is vital for the continued economic prosperity of Iowa communities.
- Developing a college-going culture requires support from the larger community, not just parents and schools.
- GEAR UP Iowa initiatives will:
 - Reduce achievement gaps for minority and low-income students;
 - Sustain college-going practices in schools;
 - Prepare programming to reduce the need for remediation;
 - Ensure students find an optimal college fit that best meets their interests and abilities;
 - Improve college student retention; and
 - Implement counselor leadership models in college readiness.

Students

- College is a real and attainable goal.
- Having a college degree is important for your long-term goals.
- College isn't just a bachelor's degree at a four-year college or university; community colleges, trade schools and technical programs provide strong employment opportunities.
- GEAR UP Iowa will support you as you navigate the process and help you to make decisions.

School Personnel/Community Partners

- GEAR UP Iowa relies on your knowledge to help students build confidence so they aspire to attend college and have the resilience to overcome challenges along the way.
- College is a realistic goal for every student.
- Four-year colleges aren't the only choice; community colleges, trade schools and technical programs are strong postsecondary options.



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Logo and Print Materials

To help protect the GEAR UP Iowa name and ensure consistency in communication efforts, all schools and partner organizations are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- All widely disseminated promotional or informational materials will reference GEAR UP Iowa and display the language "This initiative/program is supported with funding provided through GEAR UP Iowa, a federally-funded initiative administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission."
- Schools and organizations will use the official GEAR UP Iowa logo as a prominent visual element on all materials.
- Organizations should avoid the creation or use of alternative GEAR UP Iowa logos.



Color Guidelines

The color palette for the GEAR UP Iowa logo is comprised of two colors and should be used in this way whenever possible. The color breakdown is as follows:

CMYK

Green = 95/0/100/0

Blue = 100/50/0/0

RGB

Green = 0/168/79

Blue = 0/114/188



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GEAR UP Iowa Media Outreach Toolkit

Reaching out to local media is a wonderful way to increase community awareness of and involvement in your GEAR UP Iowa partnership. GEAR UP Iowa events represent positive reflections of work happening in your community and inviting the media will shine a spotlight on the work you are doing through the program.

Steps for Reaching Out to the Media

1. Designate a media point of contact: Choose someone closely involved in your GEAR UP Iowa initiative to be the point person for any members of the media who may want more information. If you are hosting an event, the media point-of-contact should be prepared to greet anyone from the media who attends the event and direct them to students, faculty or anyone else willing to be interviewed.
2. Write a press release or media advisory: Write a brief press release or media advisory for your event or program. Typically, a press release is used for a news story where there isn't a specific event for the media to attend (but many people also use press releases for events). For example, you may want to write a press release about an innovative new partnership that has been established as a result of your GEAR UP Iowa partnership.
In each press release or media advisory, be sure to include contact information, such as a name, telephone number and email address, for your designated media point of contact. In the body of the press release, make sure you cover the basic questions (when applicable) of: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? Please see page X for a sample press release for College Application Campaign.
A media advisory should be used for a specific event, such as a kickoff. The media advisory will highlight the date, time and location of the event as well as provide background information. Please see page X for a sample media advisory for the College Application Campaign kickoff event.
3. Distribute the press release: When you are ready to announce your news event, send out the press release or advisory to the local media. For print, keep in mind specific submission deadlines. When inviting media to an event, send the advisory out a week ahead of time.
4. Follow up once you send the advisory: Once you have sent the press release or advisory, follow up by phone to make sure the newsroom received it. Prepare a small script ahead of time with the most important information.
5. Follow up the day before any big events: Follow up with your media contacts the day before any big events to remind them of the event and to confirm their attendance.
6. The day of your news release or event: Ensure that your media point of contact is prepared to answer basic questions about your news release, including pertinent information about your GEAR UP Iowa program, such as the number of students being served, the amount of funding your program received and current college-going rates in your school or district.
If you are hosting an event, make sure parking is available for any media and that your school's front office is aware that media will be arriving.
7. Share on social media: After the event, make sure to share news articles and coverage via social media and at-mention GEAR UP Iowa. GEAR UP Iowa's Twitter handle is @GEARUP_Iowa



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (Name of media point-of-contact)
(School name)
(School address)
(Phone number)
(Email of contact person)
(High school website)

Iowa College Application Campaign to be held (Dates) at (Name of High School)

Your City, IA., Month XX 2014 – (Name of Your High School) will participate in the Iowa College Application Campaign sponsored by GEAR UP Iowa, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission and the Iowa Association of College Admission Counseling during [Dates of ACAC Program].

As part of Iowa's college access initiative, (Name of Your High School) will work with its seniors on (Your School's Event Dates) to complete and submit at least one college application. The goal of the Iowa College Application Campaign is to get more students applying to colleges early in their senior year.

(Name of Site Coordinator), event site coordinator for (Name of Your High School), expects more than (Insert Number) seniors to participate with the help of (Insert Number) volunteers from (Insert school staff, administration, college and community resources, and others who are assisting).

This initiative is part of the American College Application Campaign (ACAC), a national initiative that is an effort of the American Council on Education. In 2013, ACAC campaigns took place in 39 states and the District of Columbia. The goal is for all states to hold College Application events in 2014. This is the third year that Iowa has participated in the campaign.

(Name of Your High School) is also a GEAR UP Iowa partner school. GEAR UP Iowa strives to raise the academic expectations of students across 12 of the highest need school districts in Iowa. Funded through a seven-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid), GEAR UP Iowa supports collaborative initiatives to promote college readiness, access and success.

For more information about (Name of Your High School)'s event and GEAR UP Iowa, contact (Name media point-of-contact) at (email or telephone number). For more information about the statewide initiative, contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456 or go to the College Application Campaign section of Iowa College Aid's website: <https://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/content/iowa-college-application-campaign>.

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MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (Name of media point-of-contact)
(School name)
(School address)
(Phone number)
(Email of contact person)
(High school website)

**[Name of Your School] Celebrates College Planning and Awareness with
GEAR UP Iowa College Day Cookout**

Students, parents and community members are invited to attend a free event at [Location of Event] to enjoy food and fun while learning more about the college planning process. The event is made possible through the collaborative efforts of GEAR UP Iowa, [Name of Your School], and [Name of other event contributors such as area colleges].

LOCATION: [Name and address of event]

WHEN: [Date of event]

TIME: [Time of event]

AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT: [List of individuals available for media to interview]

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As a GEAR UP Iowa partner school, [Name of Your School] will serve a cohort of [Number of Students] 7th grade students over the next seven years through high school graduation and into their first year of college.

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