



GEAR UP 101: The Basics of Program Management

NCCEP/GEAR UP Capacity-Building Workshop

February 6, 2017



Welcome: Who's in the Room?

- Raise your hand if you're part of the 2016 class of GEAR UP grantees
- Raise your hand if you're relatively new to GEAR UP, even if your grant isn't "new"
- Raise your hand if you have experience with GEAR UP but are just looking for a refresher



Who We Are



Goals for Today

- Identify foundational administrative requirements related to effective GEAR UP management
- Discuss the primary challenges that GEAR UP leaders face in ensuring sound grant compliance
- Share solutions and lessons learned for managing GEAR UP programs more effectively



Today's Structure*



*Also note that there is a important seminars tomorrow on “Tools and Resources for Managing Your GEAR UP Grant” (led by us) and “Documenting the Match and Cost-Share Requirements” led by ED.

Foundations for Effective Program Management

Administrative
Controls

Research &
Evaluation

Change
Management

Implementation
Excellence



Self-Assessment

Take 5 minutes to complete, and we'll discuss throughout the session.



Administrative Controls

The Constellation of Rules

Statute/Legislation

Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)

- Defines goals, allowable activities, and specific requirements for the grant award.

Program Regulations

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) & EDGAR

- Provides deeper elaboration on specific GEAR UP-related issues pertaining to program management, allowable costs, scholarships, and waivers.

Uniform Guidance

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

- Broader regulations for receiving and using federal awards, including cost principles, procurement, audit requirements, conflict of interest, etc.

Institutional Policy

- Additional administrative requirements imposed by LEAs, state agencies, or institutions of higher education.

Program Officer Guidance

- Specific guidance provided by ED GEAR UP program officers—always ask for guidance in writing!



Interacting With Your Program Officer

Uniform Guidance Part 200.308 and 200.407

Where You Have (Some) Flexibility

- Pre-award costs
- Carryover of funds from year-to-year
- Transferring funds from one budget line-item to another (there are some exceptions)
- No-cost time extension

Where You Need Prior Approval

- Changes to goals or objectives
- Changes to scope of you project—i.e. changing your activity type, number of participants, sequence of activities)
- Changes in “Key Personnel”

Site Visit and Audit Readiness:

Uniform Guidance Part 200.501 – 200.512



- Original Grant Application
- Grant Award Notifications
- Policies and Procedures Manual
- Time and Effort Reports
- Match
- Annual Performance Reports
- External Evaluations
- Job Descriptions
- Financial Reports
- Contracts
- Inventory List
- List of All Students Served by School and Grade Level
- List of All Services and Recipients of Said Service
- Proof of Participation
- Organizational Chart

Recordkeeping

Uniform Guidance Part 200.333 and EDGAR 75.730 – 75.732

- Retain all financial records, supporting documents and all other pertinent records for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report
- Have supporting documentation for all services (sign-in sheets, invoices, agendas, total cost of service, etc....)
- Document everyone who received a service (student, teacher, parent/guardian)
- Original signatures when feasible (sign-in sheets)
- Understand and have extensive supporting documentation for the APR
- Your records should be sufficient to establish an audit trail (that shows how money was used and the results/efforts produced)



Financial Control

Uniform Guidance Part 200.302 – 200.303

- Monitor Drawdowns (Red Flag - 50% or more of the grant in the first quarter, 80% or more in the second quarter, and/or 100% in the third quarter)
- Monitor the Budget (recommend at least a monthly review) – ensure all expenses are reasonable, allocable, necessary and consistent with all appropriate policies and procedures
- Retain documentation for all expenses charged toward your grant
- Reimbursements (if applicable) - document how you monitor and review
- Reconciliations (recommend monthly) - Be able to reconcile all expenditures to financials
- Chart of Accounts - listing of all accounts used in the general ledger of your institution from which GEAR UP funds are expended



GEAR UP Match

2 CFR 694.7 – 694.9 and Uniform Guidance Part 200.306

- Document the process you use to identify and record match
- Retain all records and supporting documentation used to verify reported match
- Matching funds may be accrued over the full duration of the grant award but substantial progress towards meeting the matching percentage stated in your approved application for each year of the project period must be made
- For every \$1 in federal funds you must provide \$1 in cash or in-kind contribution

Examples of Match



- Financial assistance obligated to students
- Waivers: the amount of tuition, fees, room, board waived or reduced for GEAR UP students
- The amount expended on documented, targeted, long-term mentoring and counseling provided by volunteers or paid staff of non-school organizations, including businesses, religious organizations, community groups, philanthropic organizations and other organizations
- Teachers, or other school district personnel, who provide services that are specifically related to GEAR UP and are outside of their normal duties and hours, then a portion of their salary/benefits related to those activities may count as match (suggest you document this very thoroughly)
- Other resources recognized by the Secretary including equipment and supplies, cash contributions from non-Federal sources and facility usage



Time and Effort

(Uniform Guidance Part 200.430 – 200.431)

- Time and Effort forms must be maintained for all individuals whose salary is paid in whole or in part with federal funds or is used to meet a match or cost-share requirement for a grant
- Payroll allocations cannot be based on budgeted distributions alone but by actual hours worked
- If budgeted numbers are used to allocate salaries and wages among grant programs, the entity's system of internal controls should include an after-the-fact review of the grant programs. If actual time worked differs from the budgeted allocations, adjustments should be made such that the final amount charged is accurate, allowable, and appropriately allocated



Time and Effort

(Uniform Guidance Part 200.430 – 200.431)

- Must report the exact date, time and hours worked, and activities completed
- Hours reported must reconcile to actual wages paid
- Time and Effort form must be authorized (either signed or electronically approved by payee and an authorizing official from your institution)



Revisit the Self-Assessment

Take 2 minutes: based on what you heard, what immediate action steps should you be taking to strengthen your financial controls?



Research & Evaluation



Key Takeaways

- This work is the foundation for improvement and should be a central focus of your leadership's efforts
- GU programs should create evaluation strategies including benchmarks and methodology that accommodate both APR expectations and individual program goals
- Given the complexity of GEAR UP, you will spend a substantial portion of your time on research and evaluation efforts
- There are several reporting and evaluation obligations that will trickle down into nearly all phases of your work and is the responsibility of your entire team

Data Collection and Reporting Requirements

Annual Performance Report

- Submitted each April, the APR is the foundation for processing your “continuation awards.” You demonstrate that you’re making sufficient progress to earn your next year’s award. Data is also aggregated at the national level for reporting to Congress.

Final Performance Report

- Submitted at the close of your grant, the FPR communicates the results of your program after 6 or 7 years of implementation. Data is also aggregated at the national level for reporting to Congress.

Biennial Evaluation

- The statute requires a stand-alone evaluation report to be submitted to ED every other year. This differs from the APR in that you will have much greater freedom to conduct the evaluation as long as it complies with well-established norms.

Formative Evaluation

- While not formally required by statute or regulation, the expectation is that you will be using formative evaluation during the duration of your grant to inform program decision-making and improvement.



What is Expected Across All Domains

- Access to high-fidelity data from your stakeholders and partners
 - Students, families, activities—the amount and specificity of data is probably greater and harder to get than you think! Review the APR/FPR carefully.
- Implementation of sound evaluation methods and systems
 - Data management
 - Establishing comparison groups or baselines
 - Tracking performance relative to your goals and objectives
- Applying data for program improvement
 - Ensuring that leaders and stakeholders understand the data/evaluation
 - Incorporating evaluation into decision-making and annual planning



Change Management



Change is inevitable and the following characteristics create the foundation for lasting success.



Preparing for Change

- Turnover among your staff, partners, and stakeholders will be a constant challenge, so plan for it
- Be proactive, flexible and “ready” to adapt to change
- Be inclusive: strong communication and collaboration with your stakeholders and partners is a must
- Be self-aware, realistic, objective, and persistent
- Be aware that the context can change fast, so stay on top local and national trends regarding policy and practice to remain relevant



Revisit the Self-Assessment

Take 2 minutes: Based on what you heard, what immediate action steps should you be taking to strengthen your approach to research, evaluation, and change management?



Okay. Let's Talk.



Program Management Dialogues

Self-Select into One of Three Groups

- Administrative Controls (Kevin)
- Research & Evaluation (Linda S)
- Change Management (Linda M)

Document Your Conversation

- Assign a recorder
- Capture Q & A on flipchart
- Capture “parking lot” questions that we’ll try to answer later
- NCCEP will summarize notes and post to conference website



Discussion Questions

- What specific questions or burning issues do you have?
- What barriers or challenges are you dealing with for which others may have solutions?
- What are things you are doing really well that you think others may benefit from (i.e. a strategy, resource, or tool)?

Thank You!



To download materials used during this session, please visit
<http://www.edpartnerships.org/materials>