**Instructions**

Priority students are defined in the law as any student in secondary school who is eligible to be counted under section 1124 (c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; eligible for assistance under a State program funded under part A or E of Title IV of the Social Security Act; eligible for assistance under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; or otherwise considered by the applicant to be a disconnected student.

Priority Model schools must document student eligibility for GEAR UP services. Below are the guidelines for determining eligibility.

1. Students are eligible to participate in GEAR UP activities and receive GEAR UP services if they meet any one of the following poverty indicators:
	1. Eligible for free/reduced meals at school (whether they apply or not).
	2. Family receives public assistance such as TANF, food stamps, or state Medicaid.
	3. Family receives social security disability.
	4. Student is in foster care or homeless.
	5. Other measures of poverty, including: family has been unemployed recently, incarcerated parent, student lives with a grandparent, or other known circumstance.
	6. Students who are determined to be disengaged from the school community.
2. Once a student is determined to be eligible for GEAR UP services, the student remains eligible through high school graduation – even if the student’s eligibility status changes.
3. Schools may add eligible students to the roster at anytime during the grant cycle. For example:
	1. If a new student enrolls in the district and meets the eligibility criteria, that student is eligible for services.
	2. If a previously non-eligible student’s status changes so that the student is now eligible for GEAR UP services, then the student may begin to receive services immediately.

**Required Documentation**

1. Complete the **“Priority Model Eligibility Verification – School Form.”** The form must be signed by the building administrator verifying student eligibility. Since this information is confidential, it should be retained in a secure file by the school. *Do not send this form to WSAC.*
2. Complete the **“Priority Model Eligibility Verification – WSAC Form.”** The form must include all students who are eligible for GEAR UP services during the current school year, whether they have participated or not.
3. The “Date Eligible” must equal one of the following criteria:
	1. September 1, 2018 if the student was enrolled on that date and is determined to be eligible on that date.
	2. The date of enrollment, if the student enrolled **after** September 1, 2018 and was determined to be eligible on the date of enrollment.
	3. The date the student was determined to be eligible, but not earlier than September 1, 2018.
4. Submit the scanned form (see submittal instructions below) to WSAC by the following dates:
* **October 15: Submit a complete roster of ALL eligible students.**
* **January 15: Submit a roster of students who are newly eligible since October 15.**
* **March 15: Submit a roster of students who are newly eligible since January 15.**
* **June 15: Submit a roster of students who are newly eligible since March 15.**
1. Submit the **“Priority Model Eligibility Verification – WSAC Form”** using the WSAC Portal:
	1. Please note, before submitting electronically, you will need to have the document signed, scanned, and saved to your computer.
	2. Go to: [https://fortress.wa.gov/WSAC/portal](https://fortress.wa.gov/wsac/portal/)
	3. Enter your User Name (your e-mail address) and Password.
	4. Under Common, select *Messages and Files*, and then select *Inbox*.
	5. Click on the *Create a new secure message to WSAC* link on the top right of the page.
	6. Select GEAR UP from the *Select a Program Mailbox* drop down box.
	7. Fill in the *Subject* line accordingly.
	8. Select the file (from your computer) that you want to add to the Attachments field, by clicking on the *Browse...* button.
	9. Add a comment to the blank box, if necessary.
	10. Click on the *Send Message* link on the top of the page.

***All information submitted to the WSAC will be kept confidential, and will be used for service eligibility determination only.***