External Communications – Program-Wide

PURPOSE: To establish a consistent program voice, avoid confusion among project audiences and to provide guidance and clarity to staff about program-wide communications.

- **This policy will apply to all GUK staff.**
- **This policy will apply to all program-wide communications.**

Communications on behalf of the *entire* GUK project must be vetted by the Director of Operations and Partnership and receive approval from the Executive Director.

Audiences for GUK external program-wide communications
- **ALL** (by entire groups, not individuals or selected groups) superintendents, principals, school site teams, postsecondary education (PSE) partners, students and/or parents

Communications that require program-wide dissemination from Executive Director or Director for Project Services and Evaluation may include:
- Matters that impact the entire project as a whole
- Changes in services
- New program-wide partners
- New initiatives or processes
- Launch/introduction of GUK service or product
- Changes to GUK policies and procedures
- Non-routine issues arising that impact the entire project and must be addressed

Key message points to be communicated include:
- Description of the product or service
- Timeframe
- Beneficiaries of the product or service
- Provider of the product or service
- Any associated cost not covered by GEAR UP Kentucky
- Any direct responsibility or required action not borne by GUK or its representatives
- Contact information for response, details and/or questions

The staff responsible for coordination or implementation of the product or service is required to:
- Establish a communication timeline
- Draft initial communication
- Submit draft communication to direct supervisor
- Document communication is delivered
- Respond to questions and provide additional information, as requested by Director of Operations and Partnership and/or Executive Director
- Submit final for compliance and retention

Resource(s):

- **Branding Guidelines**

External Communications by a Vendor or Partner

PURPOSE: To avoid confusion among project audiences and make it clear in both process and content that the work of our partners is done on behalf of GEAR UP Kentucky**.**

- **This policy will apply to all GUK staff, vendors and partners.**

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1. The Director of Operations and Partnership will notify each vendor of this policy with each vendor and/or partner during initial contract process.

2. **Introductory communications**: Initial communications to project schools regarding partner service(s) will come from the Executive Director or Director of Project Services and Evaluation. This communication will restate the partnership with the vendor or partner, detail the process(es), and reiterate the goals of the product or service being provided. GUK will copy vendors/partners when that initial communication goes out and any subsequent communications related to this specific service or intervention may then come directly from the vendor/partner organization on GEAR UP Kentucky's behalf. All formal written communication should be cc'd/bcc'd to the appropriate GUK staff liaison.

3. **Avoid "selling your wares":** During all of vendor/partner communications and interactions with school and district personnel, it is expected that vendors/partners will represent themselves as a service provider for GEAR UP Kentucky. Overt "sales pitches" of a vendor or partner's products and services is not appropriate.

4. **Branding of resources and communication tools**: GEAR UP has numerous partners providing services to students, parents, schools staff and school communities. To minimize confusion in all of our interactions and communications, vendors and partners should present their service or product as being provided on behalf of GEAR UP. All documents and resources created or customized for GEAR UP should be branded in adherence to the GEAR UP branding guidelines and must be approved by the Director of Operations and Partnership. Other documents and tools created by the partner prior to a GUK partnership but *customized* by agreement for GUK may include the partner's logo. The GUK logo should also be included and must be of appropriate size and prominence in order to establish a clear connection to the GUK program.

Resource(s):

- **Branding Guidelines**

Quarterly School Email

PURPOSE: To proactively and consistently communicate the activities and outcomes of the GUK program to schools and other stakeholders as well as provide clarity for GUK staff.

- **This policy and procedure will apply to all GUK staff.**

1. At the beginning of each school year, the Senior Associate, Operations and Partnership (SAOP), will solicit and compile updated school and district staff contact information, including that of principals, superintendents, school site team members, and additional points of contact. The SAOP will also maintain and update these documents throughout the year, as necessary.
2. GUK will produce an email update four times annually.
3. Content and distribution calendar will be proposed by the Director for Operations and Partnership annually to the Program Development and Implementation Teams (PDT, PIT).
4. The PDT will approve a distribution calendar aligned to the delivery of key services and products throughout the school year.
5. Statewide content will be solicited through the GUKrew, provided by the Program Management Team (PMT) and coordinated through the PDT and PIT.
6. The primary audience is established as :
   - School Principals
   - District Superintendents
   - GUK school site team members
   - Additional school and district points of contact
   - GUK staff
7. Content for quarterly updates will be concise and relevant and will include:
   - GUK activities in the upcoming quarter
   - Program outcomes/activities and news items from the previous quarter
   - Administrative items and deadlines (e.g. budget, staffing, etc.)
   - Key calendar dates

TIMELINE	STAFF ROLES
3 weeks prior to distribution deadline	• The PDT reviews topics to be communicated per calendar and add/change as needed (can be done in a meeting or via email) • Responsible staff members draft content
By content deadline per annual calendar **(1.5 weeks prior to distribution)**	Staff members responsible for each item will share content they've created with PDT for review
1 week prior to distribution	Responsible staff members will submit their reviewed/revised items to the Director of Operations and Partnership via email.
3-4 days prior to distribution	Director of Operations and Partnership, in conjunction with Senior Associate of Operations and Partnership will: • Combine and edit all content • Post relevant content on website • Send draft copy to Project Development Team for feedback and additions/revisions
2-3 days prior to distribution	Director of Operations and Partnership solicits review and approval of final copy by Executive Director

At least 1 day prior to distribution	Preview copy of email sent to all staff.
Designated distribution date (per calendar)	Email is sent to distribution list (schools, statewide partners, GUK staff and other stakeholders) and submitted for official retention.

Regular and Administrative Communication with Schools

PURPOSE: To provide clarity for GUK staff concerning the day-to-day communication with school partners.

- **This procedure will apply to all GUK staff.**

1. District Program Managers serve as the primary GUK contact for the dissemination of programmatic and administrative communication to school personnel and in-school GUK staff from the Program Management Team (PMT).
2. All regular programmatic and administrative communication with schools should be routed through and delivered by the District Program Manager.
3. Any programmatic and administrative emails sent to DPMs for dissemination should include a CC (carbon copy) to RPCs

NOTE: Refer to 'External Communications – Program Wide' for protocol for program-wise communications.

Resource(s):

- **Branding Guidelines**

PMT → DPMs (CC RPCs) → Schools

Communication Review and Approval Process

PURPOSE: To establish clarity for GUK staff concerning the communication review and approval process.

- **This procedure will apply to all GUK staff.**
- **This policy applies to all GUK communication that may require the approval of the Executive Director and/or is targeted to audiences across multiple service regions.**

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1. External communications targeted to stakeholder audiences in multiple service regions (e.g. all summer academy participants, all registered attendees at a GUK event) require the review and approval of the Director of Operations and Partnership prior to distribution.
2. The Director of Operations and Partnership (DOP) will determine if communication requires approval by the Executive Director (ED); if so, DOP will provide to ED for approval.
3. Staff responsible for coordination or implementation of the product or service is responsible for initiating, drafting and shepherding the communication content through the stages of review and approval.

Resource(s):

- **Branding Guidelines**

Communication Development Process

PURPOSE: To establish the approved process for the development of new or revised GUK promotional or informational publication, message or media

- **This procedure will apply to all GUK staff.**
- **This policy applies to all GUK-branded materials and/or media.**

Planning & Development

1. Upon identifying a need for a GUK publication, message or media (e.g., flier, poster, graphic, application form, video, etc.), the requesting staff must discuss the need and request with his/her immediate supervisor and receive approval to submit a request to the Director of Operations and Partnership.
2. The requesting staff member will send an email request to the Director of Operations and Partnership (and copy direct supervisor) outlining the request, including the purpose, audience, content, product specifications, printing specifications, and timeline. This information should be provided in a reasonable amount of time* prior to anticipated delivery deadline.
3. If needed, the Director of Operations and Partnership (DOP) will schedule a planning meeting to review and refine the request.
4. Once project is approved, write the content and submit to the DOP for editing and approval.
5. For fliers, posters and other print documents, DOP will determine how/where the items will be printed, based upon type of product, quantity needed, etc. The DOP will provide the coordinating staff member an estimated product availability date. The amount of time required depends upon the project requested. The guidelines below provided an estimated time needed for design and development for standard project types and may vary dependent upon DOP's availability:

Project	*Estimated Prior Time Required
Flier and/or Poster	14 working days
Application or other mostly text-based document (up to 5 pages)	10 working days
Mostly text-based document (formatting, etc.) – 5-50 pages	20 working days
Video	35 working days

Design & Production

6. Submit the final content to the Director of Operations and Partnership for design development.
7. Review proof of design and negotiate edits until a final version is approved.
8. The Director of Operations and Partnership will coordinate a final proofreading and resolve any grammatical, design or style issues. All final products should be proofread and signed off on by the coordinating staff member, the Director of Operations and Partnership, and the Senior Associate for Operations and Partnership before proceeding to production.

Video Projects: Online videos will be posted to the GUK website and YouTube channel by the Director of Operations and Partnership or designee.

Online content: The DOP is the sole authority on content shared on GUK-branded social media channels. Content will be posted on GUK social media channels and/or website by the Director of Operations and Partnership or the Senior Associate for Operations and Partnership.

Communication Development Process – (continued)

The Operations and Partnership Team will coordinate product distribution as follows:

- Assemble, package and ship any external deliveries
- Make electronic copies available to the appropriate audiences.
- Post to appropriate GUK online locations (e.g., Teams, OneDrive, GUK website, social media)

9. A printed or digital copy of the final product should be placed in a central repository and submitted to the Senior Associate, Operations and Partnership, for retention in GUK official records.

Resource(s):

- **Branding Guidelines**

Internal Communications – New Task Assignment

PURPOSE: To establish the approved process for assignment of new tasks to District Program Managers and College and Career Coaches by the Project Management Team.

- **This procedure will apply to all members of the Project Management Team (PMT) [Project Administrative Team (PAT) and Regional Program Coordinators (RPCs)].**
- **This policy applies to all new tasks created for District Program Managers (DPMs) and/or College and Career Coaches (CCCs) by members of the PMT.**

New, Non-Urgent Tasks Created by PAT Member for DPMs and/or CCCs.

When a PAT member creates a new, non-urgent task for DPMs and/or CCCs, the following protocol shall be followed:

1. PAT member makes RPCs aware and seeks feedback on timing of delivery of task assignment, as based upon current task load of DPMs and/or CCCs. Will seek other feedback, as appropriate, before communicating task to staff.
2. When task is related to RPC's state focus area, PAT member will seek more in-depth feedback (and, when appropriate, approval) on new task.

New, Urgent Tasks Created by PAT Member for DPMs and/or CCCs

When a PAT member creates a new, urgent task for DPMs and/or CCCs, the following protocol shall be followed:

1. PAT member makes RPCs aware of task being assigned.
2. PAT member communicates task directly to appropriate staff members.

New, Non-Urgent Tasks Created by RPC in their statewide focus area for DPMs and/or CCCs

When an RPC creates a new, non-urgent task in their focus area for DPMs and/or CCCs, the following protocol shall be followed:

1. RPC makes Director of Project Service and Evaluation and other RPCs aware and seeks feedback on timing of delivery of task assignment, as based upon current task load of DPMs and/or CCCs. Will seek other feedback, as appropriate, before communicating task to staff.

New, Urgent Tasks Created by PAT Member for DPMs and/or CCCs

When an RPC creates a new, urgent task in their statewide area of focus for DPMs and/or CCCs, the following protocol shall be followed:

1. RPC makes Director of Project Service Evaluation and other RPCs aware of task being assigned before communicating task directly to appropriate staff members.

New, Non-Urgent Tasks Created by RPC for CCCs in their region

When an RPC creates a new, non-urgent task for CCCs, the following protocol shall be followed:

1. RPC makes DPMs aware and seeks feedback on timing of delivery of task assignment, as based upon current task load of CCCs. Will seek other feedback, as appropriate.
2. Once finalized, DPM will deliver task to appropriate staff members.

New, Urgent Tasks Created by RPC for CCCs in their region

When an RPC creates a new, urgent task for CCCs, the following protocol shall be followed:

1. RPC makes DPMs aware of task being assigned.
2. RPC communicates task directly to appropriate staff members.

Internal Communications – Methods of Communication

PURPOSE: To establish protocol for methods of communication based upon content and urgency of message.

- **This procedure will apply to all GUK staff members. (Please note that regional teams may have their own team-based procedure and policy to which they adhere; however, this policy and procedure should be adhered to in communicating with Frankfort-based staff.)**
- **This policy applies to all communications amongst GUK staff.**

Potential Methods of Communication

GEAR UP Kentucky employs the following methods of internal communication:

- Face to Face
- Phone
- Email
- Text
- Microsoft Teams
- Video Conferencing
- *In the GUKnow* Internal Newsletter
- Team Meetings (PAT, PMT, PDT, PIT)

Determining Urgency of Communication

Before determining the method of communication to be employed, determine the urgency of the situation being conveyed by the message.

Emergency Situations include:
- o Matters related to safety and/or health of self, students, or other staff and require an immediate response

High-Urgency Situations include:
- o Time-sensitive issues that may negatively impact ability to provide GUK services or may damage relationships with school or other partner and need to be addressed within 24-48 hours
- o Notification of last-minute changes (i.e., meeting cancellation, location, time)

Moderate-Urgency Situations include:
- o Matters that require attention within 3-5 working days
- o Issues that arise with schools or other partners that may require attention within 3-5 working days
- o Notification of changes occurring within a day or two (i.e., meeting cancellation, location, time)

Low-Urgency Situations include:
- o Matters that will require attention in 5 working days or beyond
- o Information that is being provided as an 'FYI'
- o Notification of changes occurring within a week or more (i.e., meeting cancellation, location, time)

Matching Method to Level of Urgency

The following communications protocol should be followed by all GUK staff:

Urgency of Situation	Method(s) of Communication	Individual Receiving Communication
EMERGENCY	• Phone (office and/or cell) • Text • Face to face	Direct supervisor • Attempt making contact with your direct supervisor twice. • If contact is not made with direct supervisor, contact supervisor's supervisor. • If contact is not made with supervisor's supervisor, contact members of Frankfort-based staff until personal contact is made.
URGENT	• Phone (office and/or cell) • Text • Face to face	Direct supervisor • Attempt making contact with your direct supervisor at least twice. • If contact is not made with direct supervisor within 24 hours, escalate your communication by contacting your supervisor's supervisor.
MODERATE	• Email • Microsoft Teams (for all-staff communications) • Team Meeting(s) • *In the GUKnow* • Phone or video conferencing • Face to face	All individuals whom the communication impacts. • Share the information in team meetings, as timing allows. • Email all individuals who need to know the message being conveyed. • A pre-scheduled phone call or video conference may also be an appropriate method of communication, depending upon message and desired feedback. • If it's something that impacts all staff, in addition to sending an email, post on appropriate Microsoft Teams channel, and, when appropriate (and as timing allows), submit for inclusion in *In the GUKnow*.
LOW	• Email (indicate 'low importance') • Microsoft Teams (for all-staff communications) • Team Meeting(s) • *In the GUKnow* • Phone or video conferencing • Face to face	All individuals whom the communication impacts. • Share the information in team meetings, as timing allows. • If it's not something all staff needs to know, email the individuals who need to know the message being conveyed. • A pre-scheduled phone call or video conference may also be an appropriate method of communication, depending upon message and desired feedback • If it's something that impacts all staff, post on Microsoft Teams and, when appropriate, include in *In the GUKnow*.

As communications move up the "urgency" spectrum, follow the protocol for the appropriate methods of communication. For example, a low-urgency 'FYI' may move up to moderate urgency as a deadline or event approaches.

Internal Communications – *In the GUKnow* Internal Newsletter

PURPOSE: To establish content, submission and dissemination protocols for the GUK internal newsletter, *In the GUKnow*.

- **This procedure will apply to all members of the GUK Project Management Team.**
- **This policy applies to content, submission and delivery protocols of the GUK internal newsletter *In the GUKnow*.**

Overview of *In the GUKnow*
In the GUKnow is the biweekly internal newsletter designed to keep District Program Managers, College and Career Coaches and Family Engagement Coordinators apprised of need-to-know info. It was created to help reduce the amount of internal informational emails being sent and thus increase ability of staff to keep track of important dates, deadlines and other information. **All GUK staff are expected to read *In the GUKnow*.**

Content
Each issue of *In the GUKnow* features the following content:
- Important dates and deadlines
- Key information from Frankfort-based staff as well as RPCs, as it relates to their statewide areas of focus

The information is presented in an easy-to-read format, using bullet points (when appropriate) and short paragraphs.

Submission and Dissemination Processes
In the GUKnow is a biweekly newsletter; it is posted in the *In the GUKnow (ITG)* channel on Microsoft Teams every other Monday morning.
- The Director of Operations and Partnership places a 'clean' version of ITG in the ITG folder on OneDrive. This version will feature the previously submitted dates and deadlines which have not occurred yet, as well as designated spaces for the Project Management Team to type in their information.
- Members of the Project Management Team shall access this document and enter their information no later than noon on the Thursday preceding the Monday on which ITG will be posted.
- The Director of Operations and Partnership will access this document late Thursday afternoon, edit as necessary, and then send the document to the Senior Associate for Operations and Partnership, who will do a final proofread and edit on Friday. The Senior Associate will then send the edited document to the Director of Operations and Partnership.
- The Director of Operations and Partnership will post ITG in the Microsoft Teams ITG channel on the following Monday and will notify the team via Microsoft Teams that it is available for viewing.
- All issues of the ITG will remain in "Files" in the ITG channel.