

Supporting the Whole Student:

Findings from the ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative

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Overview

1. The ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative (BNI)
2. Promising results from Arkansas Community Colleges
3. Evaluation findings and implementation rubric from Education Northwest
4. Q & A

The Basic Needs Initiative

ECMC Foundation

Our Mission

To inspire and to facilitate improvements that affect educational outcomes—especially among underserved populations—through evidence-based innovation.

Our Vision

All learners unlock their fullest potential.

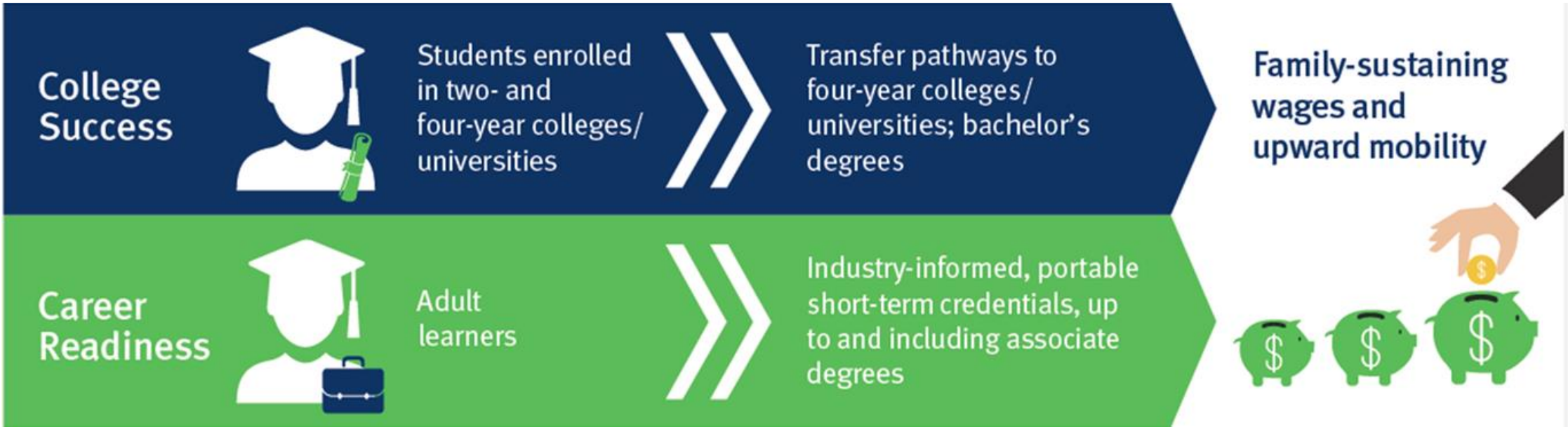
Our Approach

We believe in and practice a culture of humility—one that is built on a foundation of active listening, evidence-based innovation, a commitment to learning, and open dialogue with partners in the field.



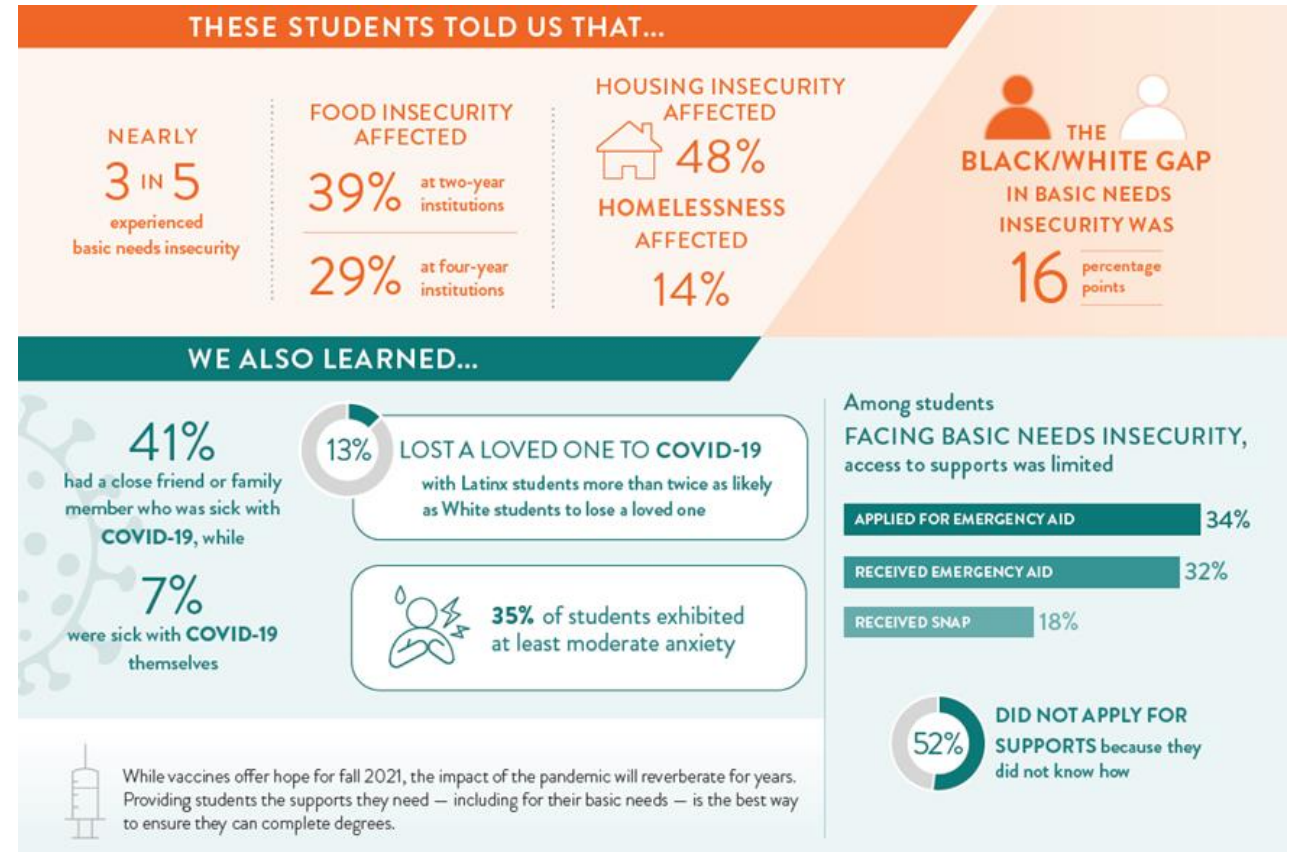
Core Funding Areas

ECMC Foundation makes investments in two focus areas:



Basic Needs Insecurity During the Pandemic

- **200,000** students completed Hope Center survey as part of their 2021 report
- **200+** institutions
- **42** states
- **\$6+** billion of federal emergency aid disbursed



ECMC Foundation – Basic Needs Initiative

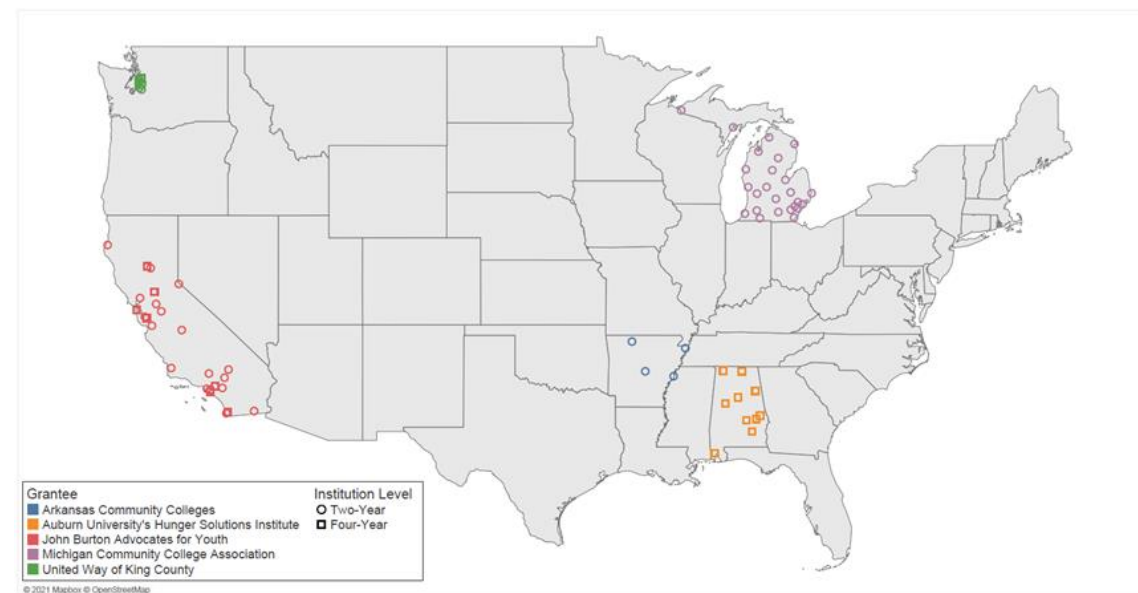
- In October 2019, ECMC Foundation received approval to award \$3.1M across seven organizations:
 - Auburn University
 - John Burton Advocates for Youth
 - Arkansas Community Colleges
 - Ithaka S+R
 - Michigan Community Colleges
 - United Way of King County
 - University of Tennessee, Knoxville



ECMC Foundation selected Education Northwest to facilitate evaluation and learning across the BNI cohort

Our Grantee Partners

- Grantee cohort to support a wide array of projects that aim to **increase students' access to such basic needs** as food, housing, childcare, mental health, financial assistance and transportation.
- Funded **seven grantees** to **further the development of basic needs services** at two-year and four-year colleges
- Grantees are working with **76 partner institutions** including:
 - 31 MSIs
 - 58 2-year institutions
 - 18 4-year institutions
- Participating institutions enrolled more than **800,000 students**
 - Over 60% students of color
 - Over 30% Pell eligible



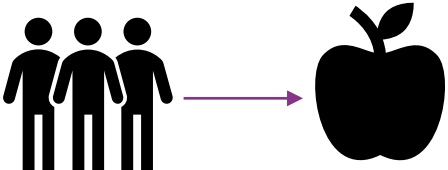
Promising results from Arkansas Community Colleges

Project Objectives

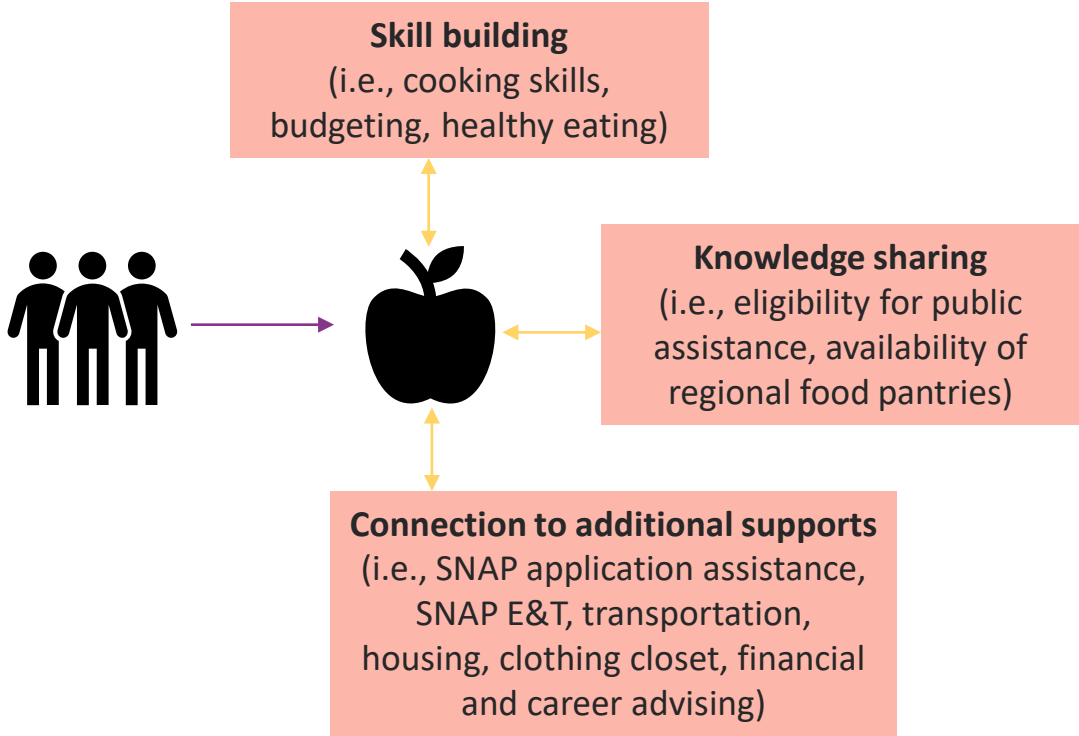
- To leverage campus food pantries and a variety of other direct contact activities with students to encourage students to apply for SNAP benefits
- To connect students receiving SNAP with SNAP E&T benefits to provide them additional support services (e.g., transportation benefit)
 - AHRA worked directly with students on SNAP application and submission.
 - Quantitative evaluation is designed to measure if food pantry utilization is correlated with student educational outcomes.
 - Qualitative evaluation is intended to give all other ACC member colleges insights into best practices for food pantry operations, including strategies for effective SNAP outreach and enrollment.

A New Food Pantry Model

Pantry as food distribution center



Pantry as hub connecting students to other basic needs resources



Build a Culture

Building a campus culture of basic needs supports requires senior-level support (resources, communication), widespread faculty and staff awareness & buy-in, and a campus leader to champion and own the work.

Other innovations from Arkansas BNI colleges include:



**Forming a basic needs
committee**



**Embedding basic needs
information in faculty and staff
training**



**Creating a “go to person”
handout**

Create the Structure

Arkansas BNI colleges are re-framing their food pantries from supplemental food distribution centers to key hubs connecting students to additional basic needs supports.

Strategies include:



Using the food pantry intake form to let students self-identify additional basic needs supports



Partnering with organizations like the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance



Connecting students to additional resources both on and off campus

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Get the Word Out

Maximizing student awareness and combating stigma are key to ensuring that students who could benefit from basic needs supports actually take advantage of them. Arkansas BNI colleges are taking the following steps to achieve this goal:

- ✓ Proactively outreaching to student groups who may especially benefit from basic needs supports
- ✓ Stressing that the food pantry is for EVERYONE
- ✓ Offering on-line ordering and quick pick-up
- ✓ Employ student workers and volunteers in the pantry

SNAP Outreach & Food Pantry Use: AY 2020-21

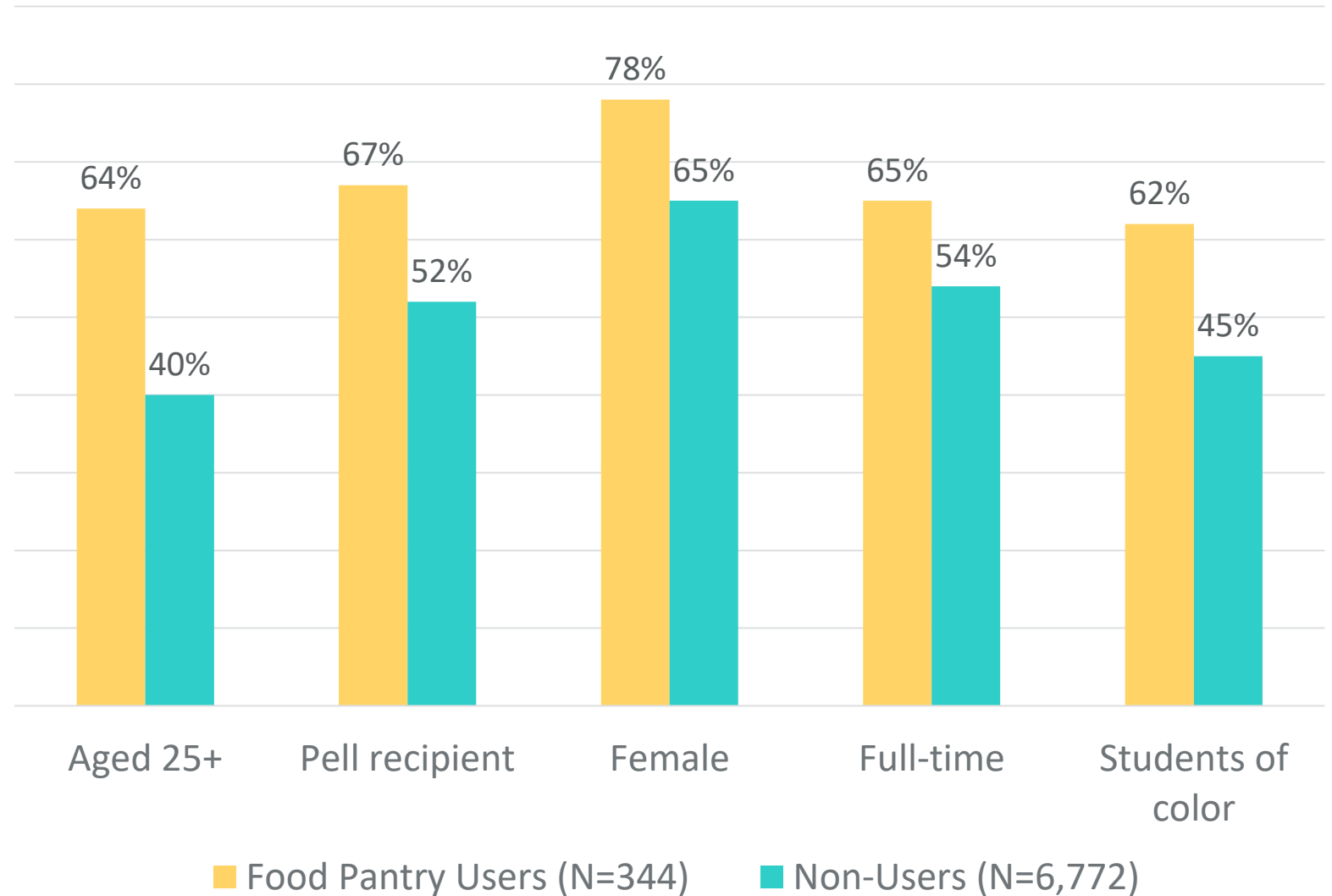
Of the ~7,000 students enrolled in credit courses at the four Arkansas BNI colleges in Fall 2020:

- 5% (~370 students) accessed their campus food pantry
- 7% (~480 students) received SNAP 1:1 outreach
- 19% (~1,300 students) received group-level SNAP outreach

* All students accessing campus food pantries are also getting 1:1 SNAP outreach, given that colleges are structuring their pantries in this way

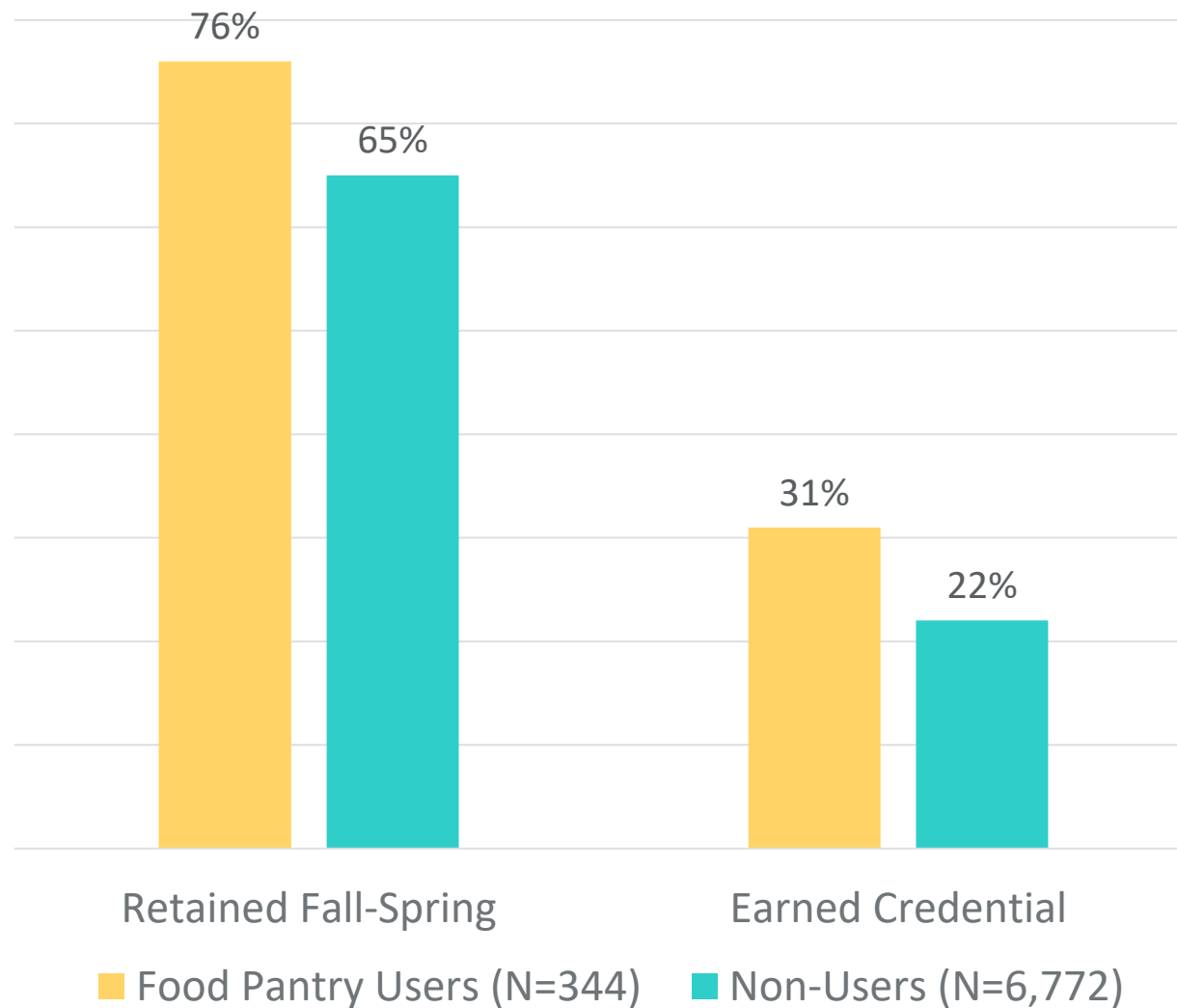
Characteristics of Students Accessing Food Pantry

Students accessing food pantry are significantly more likely than other students to be older students (25+), students of color, Pell recipients, female, and enrolled full-time



Preliminary Academic Outcomes for Students Accessing Food Pantry

Students accessing food pantry are significantly more likely than other students to be retained to the next semester (Fall-to-Spring) and to earn a credential.



Evaluation findings and implementation rubric



Who we are

- Our **mission** is to use evidence to help partners solve educational challenges and improve learning.
- Our **services** include professional development, learning design and development, evaluation, and research.



Education Northwest's role

- Our **external evaluation** is examining
 - how grantees support implementation of basic needs services,
 - progress among partner institutions in implementing basic needs services, and
 - the impact of basic needs services on academic outcomes.
- We facilitate a **learning community** so that grantees can share successes and challenges and learn about promising practices.

ECMC Foundation grantees

Grantee	Focus
Arkansas Community Colleges	Increasing student enrollment in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) benefits
Auburn University’s Hunger Solutions Institute	Building capacity to systematically address food and nutrition insecurity
Ithaca S+R	Developing new, holistic measures of student success
John Burton Advocates for Youth	Supporting implementation of rapid rehousing programs and basic needs centers
Michigan Community College Association	Building capacity to understand students’ basic needs, scale support services, and increase student access to MI Bridges
University of Tennessee at Knoxville	Building capacity to evaluate basic needs services
United Way of King County	Implementing on-campus Benefits Hubs that provide housing, food, and financial supports

Evaluation questions

Question	Data source
1. How has support from the learning community shaped each grantee's efforts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning community feedback survey
2. What basic needs services are being implemented at grantees' partner institutions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grantee interview• Partner institution survey
3. How are grantees increasing institutions' capacity to meet the basic needs of students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grantee interview• Partner institution survey• Site visit
4. What constitutes full implementation of basic needs services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic needs services implementation rubric• Partner institution survey• Site visit
5. At partner institutions, what are the characteristics and outcomes of the students accessing basic needs services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of individual-level administrative data

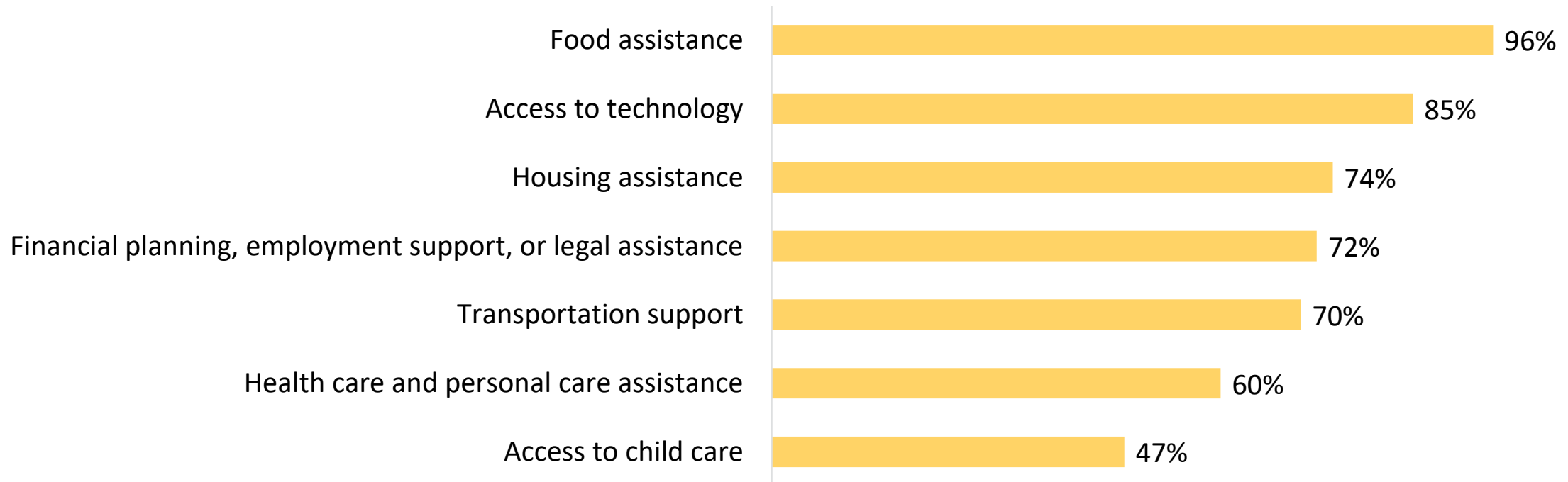
What does it look like to address questions about student access to basic needs services and impact on outcomes?

Grantee	Student-level academic and demographic data source	Student-level basic needs services data source
John Burton Advocates for Youth	Individual institutions (IR office)	<p>Access to what?: Use of basic needs center services</p> <p>Data source: Individual institutions (Basic needs center)</p>
Michigan Community College Association	Michigan Education Data Center	<p>Access to what?: Online portal to public benefits (MiBridges) and benefits accessed via MiBridges</p> <p>Data source: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)</p>
United Way of King County	Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges	<p>Access to what?: Benefits Hub Services</p> <p>Data source: United Way of King County Benefits Hub intake form</p>

Background on survey data collection

- In spring 2021, Education Northwest administered a survey to contacts at 75 institutions working with: Arkansas Community Colleges, Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute, John Burton Advocates for Youth, Michigan Community College Association, and United Way King County.
- 47 colleges completed or partially completed the survey for a **response rate of 63 percent**.
- Partner institutions received a similar survey in April 2022 and results will be included in the interim and final evaluation reports.

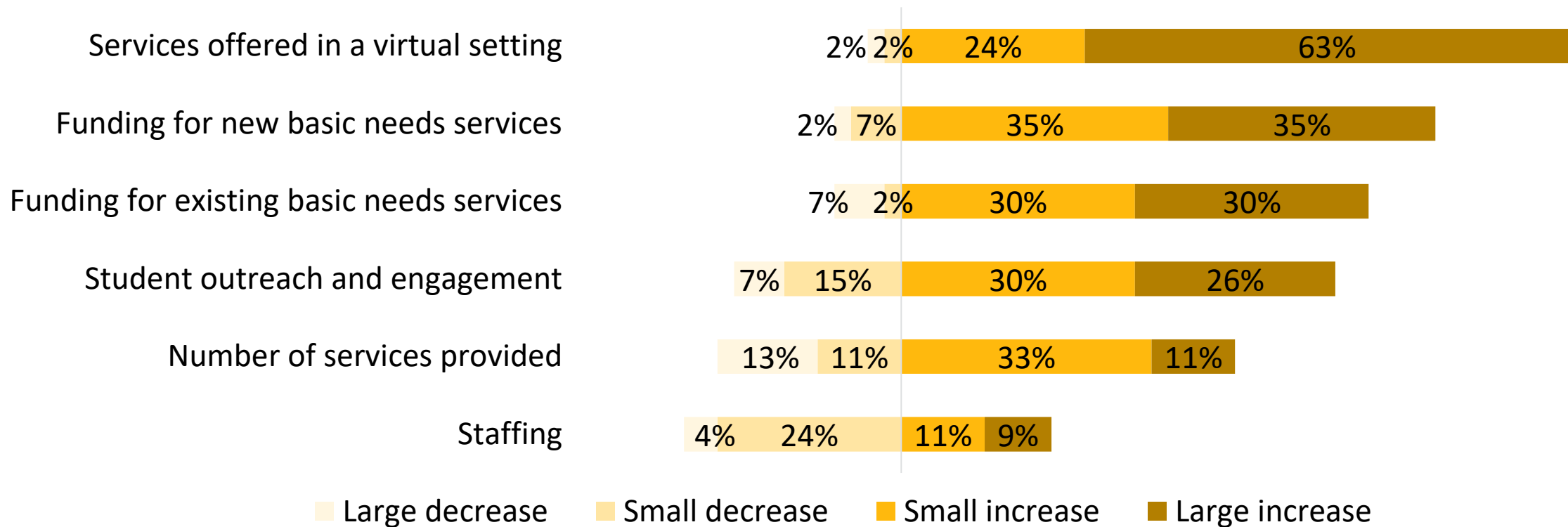
Postsecondary institutions that responded to the survey provided a wide variety of basic needs services, the most common being food assistance



Key partners in implementing basic needs services included campus leadership, counselors/advisors, the dean of students, community-based organizations, and funders

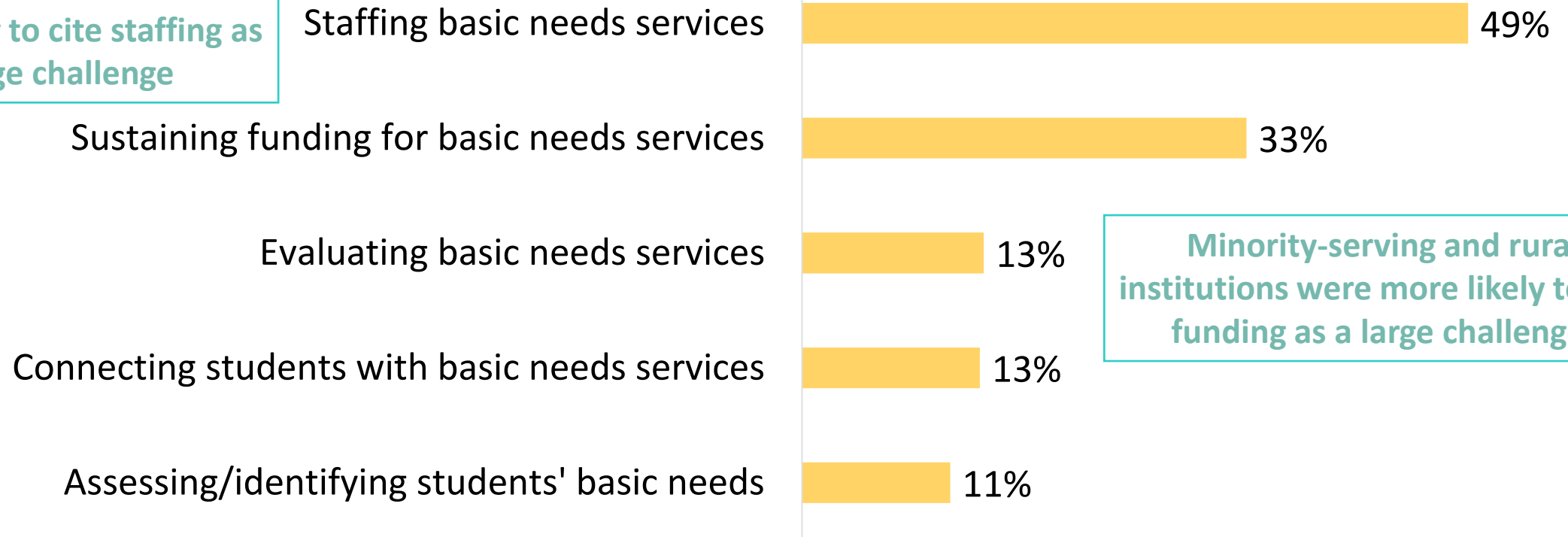
- Most institutions reported that **key college partners** in implementing basic needs services were **campus leadership** (87%), **counselors/advisors** (85%), and **the dean of students** (77%).
- Most institutions reported that **key external partners** in implementing basic needs services were **community-based organizations** (94%) and **foundations or individual donors** (80%).

As a result of the pandemic, institutions experienced an increase in basic needs services offered virtually and an increase in funding for services



Staffing basic needs services and sustaining funding were large challenges

Institutions in cities were more likely to cite staffing as a large challenge



Minority-serving and rural institutions were more likely to cite funding as a large challenge.

Draft implementation rubric

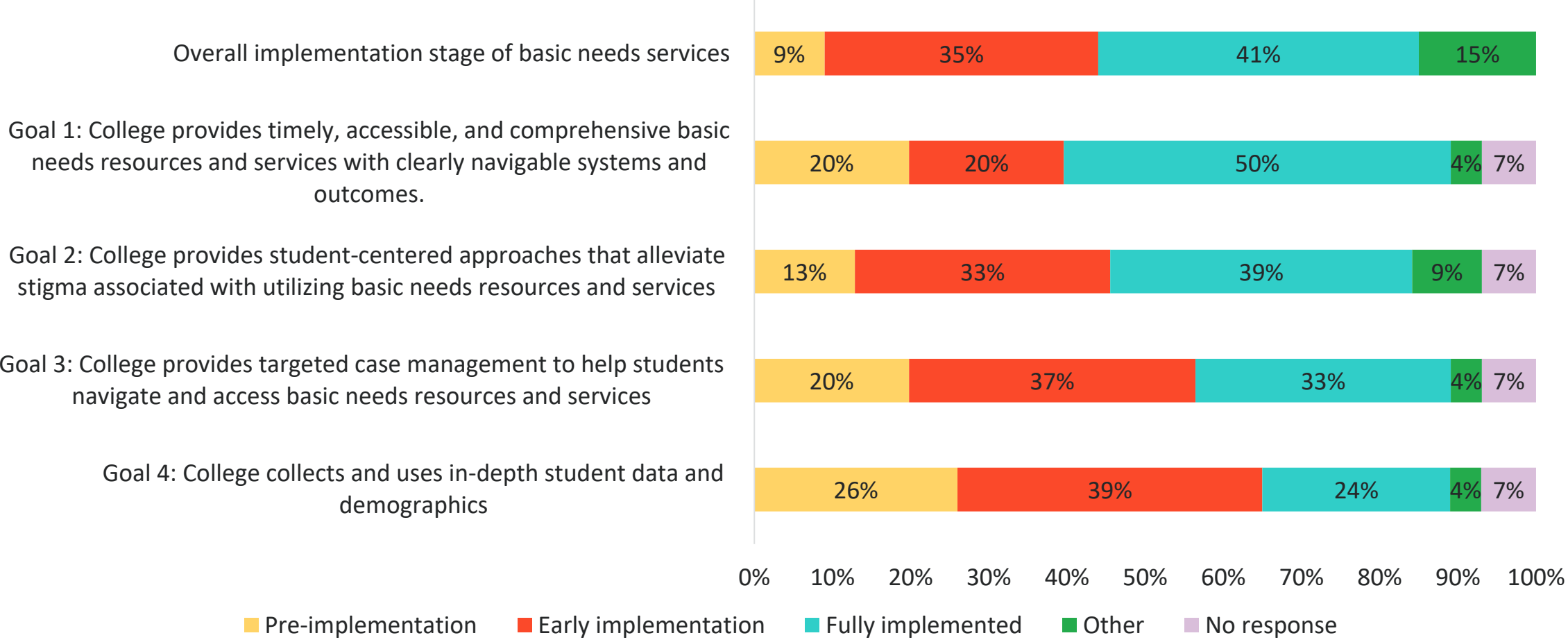
- Developing a rubric that can be used by state systems and colleges to assess progress and set goals toward full implementation of basic needs services under different goals and indicators.
- The rubric's four goals were informed by literature on basic needs services and feedback from the learning community
- Survey data from 47 partnering institutions informed rubric indicators for each goal, activities under each implementation stage, and examples of “full implementation” practices
- A final version of the rubric will be shared in our final evaluation report (Fall 2023)

Rubric goals

- **Goal 1:** College provides timely, accessible, and comprehensive basic needs resources and services with clearly navigable systems and outcomes.
- **Goal 2:** College provides student-centered approaches that alleviate stigma associated with utilizing basic needs resources and services
- **Goal 3:** College provides targeted case management to help students navigate and access basic needs resources and services
- **Goal 4:** College collects and uses in-depth student data and demographics

Goal	Indicator	Pre-implementation	Early implementation	Full implementation	Example practice
Goal 1. College provides timely, accessible, and comprehensive basic needs resources and services with clearly navigable systems and outcomes	Comprehensive services	Preparing to launch new services, identifying gaps in services	Services not yet comprehensive, implementing new services, identifying gaps in services	Embedded institutional practices support access to a range of comprehensive services	<i>Institution provides a range of services: food, childcare, housing, transportation, technology, access to health care, and financial planning</i>
	Leadership support	Engaging leadership	Engaging leadership	Campus leadership is engaged	<i>Basic needs task force, Foundation provides funds</i>
	Streamlined application process	Outreach and services fragmented, planning to develop systems to align services	Developing systems to align access across services	Students access services through a single intake or application process	<i>'One stop shop' approach, Basic Needs Center, Benefits Hub</i>
	Cross campus collaboration	Building relationships with offices across campus	Some partnerships across campus, developing others	Collaborating with key offices across campus, including financial aid and any DEIA leaders or offices	<i>Basic needs staff work closely with financial aid office, advisors, and DEI leaders to support student access to basic needs services</i>
	Community partners	Limited support from community partners	Building relationships with community partners to supplement on campus services	Community partners support access to resources available on and off campus	<i>Partnerships with local food suppliers/farms, DHS staff on campus to increase access to federal programs</i>

Implementation varied across institutions and by goal



Note: Based on survey responses from 47 institutions. "Other" category includes being in between implementation stages or basic needs services being at different stages.

How might state systems support postsecondary institutions to meet students' basic needs?

- Identify **key partners** to work with postsecondary institutions in your state.
- Explore opportunities to **improve data linkages** between postsecondary institutions, departments of health and human services, and other service providers.
- Provide **training and professional development** to support postsecondary institutions' implementation and growth of basic needs services (guided by Implementation Rubric)
- Seek **foundation support** to implement, grow, and sustain basic needs services

Q & A



Speakers

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References

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. (2021). #RealCollege 2021: Basic needs insecurity during the ongoing pandemic.

<https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/RCReport2021.pdf>

Resources

Education Northwest evaluation findings:

educationnorthwest.org/resources/ecmc-foundation-basic-needs-initiative-evaluation