



Emergency Aid for Student Success

Continuing the Investment at the Federal & State Levels

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Today's Presenters

- ❑ **Bryce McKibben**, Senior Director of Policy & Advocacy, The Hope Center at Temple University
- ❑ **Antoinette Flores**, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education
- ❑ **Ami Magisos**, Associate Director, Strategy and Partnerships, Washington Student Achievement Council
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Today's Session

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Why emergency aid?

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What is emergency aid?

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Federal experiences
with emergency aid

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State experiences
with emergency aid
(WA & MN)

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Q&A

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Why emergency aid?

Basic needs insecurity is **rampant**

Life happens: can't anticipate all needs at the beginning of a term

Support for non-tuition costs has been limited

Moving beyond the "food pantry" as a solution

Solving basic needs insecurity is key to **student success**



1 in 4 undergrads (**4 million**) face food insecurity



1 in 10 undergrads (**1.5 million**) experience homelessness

2

What is emergency aid?

What is **emergency aid**?

- Emergency Aid = Emergency Financial Assistance
- Can be disbursed at any time during award year
- Generally smaller grants (\$500 - \$2000)
- For “unexpected” expenses
- Related to a “cost of attendance” component - e.g. *food, housing, transportation, child care* – **but not already included in COA**
- Exempt from “other financial assistance” (OFA)

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Federal experiences with emergency aid

Federal emergency aid

Basics

- \$76 billion in emergency relief to institutions of higher education, including \$40 billion through American Rescue Plan
- \$30 billion as student aid emergency relief

Eligibility

- ALL students enrolled, prioritizing students with exceptional need
- Cover any component of cost of attendance
- No conditions on receipt of aid
- Not considered financial aid, income, not taxable

Distribution

- Up to institutions
- Transparent, clear process

Federal Emergency Aid Impacts

Provided nearly **20 million** students with critical relief

- Bulk of funds distributed in 2021
- Nearly half of all students received emergency aid

Helped to keep students enrolled

Pell grant recipients, students at under-resourced institutions more likely to receive aid

Majority of students report aid allowed them to experience less stress, stay enrolled, focus on studies

Also: SEOG emergency aid (exp. 2023)



colleges report **funds helped keep students enrolled** at risk of dropping out



80% of Pell Grant recipients received aid and at higher levels, average award of \$2,000 compared to \$1,200 for non-Pell

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State experiences with emergency aid

States using emergency aid

- Washington
- Minnesota

- Massachusetts (TBD)
- Virginia (new)

- California
- North Carolina
- Wisconsin



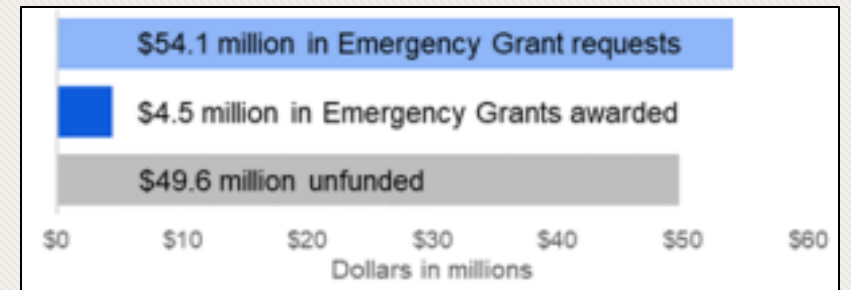
Washington

Context

- ❑ **Decentralized:** CTC system; 6 independent public baccalaureates
- ❑ **WA Grant:** Full tuition and fees for up to 65% Median Family Income for students at public, tribal, independent postsecondary education and training
- ❑ **State Strategic Action Framework:** Student supports for basic needs as core to postsecondary attainment
- ❑ **WSAC partners with WA Postsecondary Basic Needs Coalition:** Student leadership, institutions, non-profits, agencies with recent wins –
 - *Emergency Assistance Grants*
 - *Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness Grants*
 - *2023 Postsecondary Basic Needs Act: Navigators, Strategic planning, food security pilot*

Washington Student Emergency Assistance Grant (**SEAG**) Grant Program

- 2019 pilot grant program -> 2022 permanent
- Principles
- \$4.5 million awarded (FY2022)
 - \$170k/college annually to most CTCs
 - Top request categories: Housing, transportation, food, utilities
 - Over 15,000 requests - about half funded
 - 4,177 students received funds - average award amount \$580
- Connecting to additional assistance resources
- Persistence data



Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs outstripping funds• Infrastructure and cross-divisional lift• Evaluation of impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New federal guidance on Emergency Assistance• Integration / leveraging multiple aid programs• Increasing awareness and supported access to public benefits• Lessons for public and tribal baccalaureates



Minnesota

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HIGHER EDUCATION
MINNESOTA AID

Context

- Robust higher education ecosystem: University of Minnesota system, Minnesota State college and university system, Tribal Colleges, and private non-profits all participate in the majority of state financial aid programs
- Strong student advocacy groups: LeadMN (representing 2 year college students), Students United (representing Minnesota State university students), Government and Legislative Affairs team (U of MN student government), Minnesota Private College Council (private colleges)
- Significant focus on student basic needs:
 - Hunger Free Campus Grants (\$500,000 appropriation in 2023 session)
 - Basic Needs Working Group
 - Minnesota State Basic Needs Resource Hub

Minnesota: Emergency Assistance for Postsecondary Students (**EAPS**) Grant Program

- 2017 Legislature appropriation of \$350,000 for academic year 2018-2019
- Current appropriation: \$3,579,000 annually to “meet immediate student needs that could result in a student not completing the term or their program including, but not limited to, emergency housing, food, and transportation”
 - \$2,250,000 to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
 - All campuses receiving some funds
 - New partnership with Beam platform to standardize emergency grant applications
 - \$779,000 to University of Minnesota
 - \$500,000 to Minnesota Tribal Colleges and “eligible nonprofits”
 - \$50,000 agency admin
- Institutions shall “minimize any negative impact on student financial aid resulting from the receipt of emergency funds”
- One of the goals is to use emergency grant applications to connect students with longer term resources (“the net that catches them”)

Challenges & Opportunities

Campus-level

- Appropriate level for max award given rising costs for housing and childcare
- Finding the right balance for how to promote emergency grant programs vs. “the run on the bank”
 - Importance of educating faculty
- Some philosophical questions still linger: What is the role of a campus in meeting on-going basic needs? Is it ever appropriate to encourage a student to address basic needs first?
 - “Identify, respond, refer” model

State-level

- How do we address structural inequities that create basic needs insecurity?
- What is our role in facilitating solutions for problems (like transportation) that schools can’t solve on their own?
- How do we break out of two year budget cycle thinking to address longer, more expensive solutions?
- What is our role in identifying better pathways to public benefits programs for eligible students and how do we eliminate barriers at the state level, particularly when agencies have competing visions (DEED vs. OHE)

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Considerations for federal & state policy

What works in **emergency aid**?

- Clear application process
- Minimal eligibility barriers
- Flexibility to meet student needs
- Timely distribution

Federal and state policy considerations

- Allocation method to colleges (headcount, FTE)
- Amount per-student
- Funding sources – stability is key
- Unexpected vs. anticipated expenses
- Repeat customers
- Interaction with other financial aid processes (*e.g. PJ, provisional independence, unaccompanied homeless youth determinations*)

Road ahead: federal & state emergency aid

- Impact of OFA exclusion
- Reviving SEOG emergency aid
- Next national emergency period
- State emergency aid programs - create or expand
- Integration with other approaches to basic needs
- Need for further evaluation

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Q&A

Thanks!

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References

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