SUPPORTING STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (SSEH) PILOT PROGRAM

Report to the Legislature, December 1, 2023

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Executive Summary

Washington college students experience homelessness; support keeps them enrolled

Basic needs insecurity is a critical barrier to college students' access[1] and success, undermining persistence and completion rates for postsecondary students.[2] In Washington, college students face significant challenges in meeting their housing and other basic needs while completing their credentials. Gaps in covering critical costs such as housing and food are pervasive among students in both two-year and four-year institutions. Students of color and students who experience marginalization based on their identities and circumstances — such as former foster youth, LGBTQI+ students, and students with dependents — are disproportionately impacted.[3]

To address this need, the Washington state Legislature enacted the Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness (SSEH) pilot program with 2SSB 5800 (2019). The Legislature expanded the pilot program twice — first by passing SHB 1166 (2021) and again through a proviso in the 2022 supplemental budget. The Legislature made the SSEH pilot permanent through the passage of ESSB 5702 (2023).

> "[SSEH] has been instrumental in me getting out of the shelter and finding my own place to live. Without them and their help I would not have been able to continue school. — Student, Highline College

SSEH provides grants for colleges to build systems to identify and support students facing homelessness and students who aged out of the foster care system. The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) administered the four-year SSEH pilot program, which consisted of 33 programs across six public baccalaureate institutions (PBIs) and 27 in the community and technical college system (CTCs).

What were the cumulative outcomes of the pilot program?

The SSEH pilot served a total of 6,726 students over a four-year period. The number of students served increased each year as the pilot grew from six programs in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to 12 programs in fiscal year 2022, to 33 in fiscal year 2023.

SSEH Students Served

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
PBI	19	87	252	450
CTC	108	217	1975	3618

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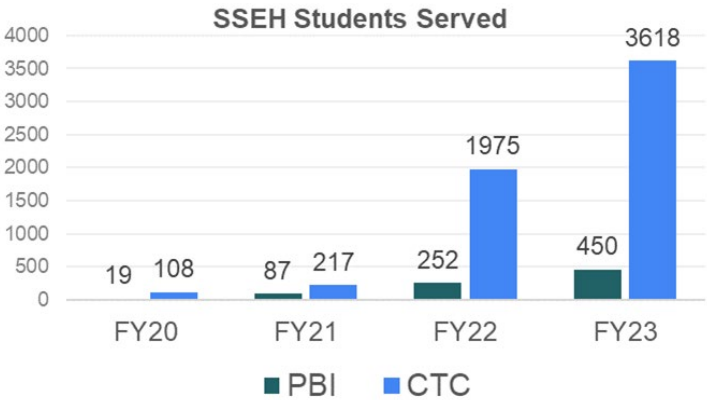
[1] Path to 70 Update: Why Washingtonians Value Credentials but Aren't Completing Them. December 2022. Washington Roundtable, Partnership for Learning, & Kinetic West
[2] The Hope Center Survey 2021: Basic Needs Insecurity During the Ongoing Pandemic. (2021) https://hope.temple.edu/sites/hope/files/media/document/HopeSurveyReport2021.pdf
[3] Basic Needs Security Among Washington College Students (2023) https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023.BasicNeedsReport.pdf

Who did the SSEH pilot program serve?

- **Students of color represented half of the students served.** Fifty-one percent of the students served in the SSEH pilot program were students of color. This data point echoes national and state data showing that Black/African American, Native American/Alaska Native, and Hispanic/Latinx students are disproportionately experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.

- **Food insecurity was common.** Eighty percent of the students served were experiencing food insecurity, yet only 47% were known to be receiving Basic Food (SNAP) benefits.

- **A majority of students served were female.** Of the students served by the SSEH pilot, 68% of community and technical college students and 60% of university students identified as female.

- **The average age differed depending on the institution.** Community and technical college students tended to be older, with 69% 25 or older, while most university students were under 25 years old (65%).

- **The SSEH program served 304 foster youth.** Students who were in the foster care system when they graduated from high school were automatically eligible for the pilot program.

Did supporting students' basic needs help them stay enrolled?

Weighted average all pilot years (FY20-FY23)	PBI	CTC
Percent of students who completed academic term in which they received SSEH support	93%	87%
Percent who stayed in college or completed a credential the following term*	90%	77%

*Includes only students who completed the term in which they were served.

"This support was a saving grace. I was on the verge of homelessness, these funds helped me to keep a roof over my head, provide food and basic needs that I had as a student." — Student, The Evergreen State College

What kinds of support did institutions provide?

Number of Accommodations provided by SSEH Pilots Pilot Years FY20-FY23

Housing: Emergency, Short-term, Longer-term, Homelessness Prevention, Rental Assistance

Food Assistance

Case management and referral to campus and community resources

Additional accommodations: technology, shower/hygiene, laundry, transportation, books/class supplies, health-related, mailstop, child-related, clothing, storage, utilities, and other necessities

> "The people who were there to help me did so with compassion and allowed me to be relieved for that month." — Student, WSU

Relationships and partnerships between college programs and community organizations were vital to the success of the pilot program. Over the course of the pilot, SSEH case managers made 29,173 referrals to external agencies and programs. Students were referred to food pantries, 211 Washington, WA Connection, community action councils, housing authorities, Worksource, United Way, and an array of other housing, domestic violence, youth, health, and service providers.

SSEH case managers also made 28,348 referrals to other college-based programs and resources, such as campus food pantries, financial aid, college workforce grant programs, career services, health services, and student support services.

> "The assistance — and consistent and considerate follow-up and communication, expertise and resources — literally saved my life." — Student, South Puget Sound Community College

How can Washington increase support for students experiencing homelessness?

SSEH institutions developed a variety of recommendations for policy and practice, including:

- Explore opportunities for colleges and universities to develop affordable and subsidized housing for students experiencing homelessness.

- Increase SSEH funding to respond to cost-of-living increases and ensure ongoing case management support.

- Eliminate or raise age limits for Passport to Careers program eligibility. Through Passport to Careers, former foster youth can get scholarships and support services from college staff. Funds can be used for tuition, fees, books, housing, transportation, and personal needs.

- Fully fund benefit navigators associated with Postsecondary Basic Needs Act (2SHB 1559).

- Fund a study of interventions to support students experiencing homelessness.

Recognitions

All Washington public institutions participating in the SSEH pilot program contributed to this report.

Community and technical colleges	Public baccalaureates
Bellevue College Bellingham Technical College Big Bend Community College Cascadia College Centralia College Clark College Columbia Basin College Edmonds College Everett College Grays Harbor College Green River College Highline College Lake Washington Institute of Technology Lower Columbia College North Seattle College Olympic College Pierce College District Renton Technical College Seattle Central College Shoreline Community College South Puget Sound Community College Spokane Community College Spokane Falls Community College Tacoma Community College Walla Walla Community College Wenatchee Valley College Yakima Valley College	Central Washington University Eastern Washington University The Evergreen State College University of Washington - Tacoma Washington State University Western Washington University

"Words are really not enough to express my gratitude. I am not yet in a position where I can pay it forward. But I just wanted to voice it out that I plan to use this opportunity I've been given to help the people I will encounter once I become a certified occupational therapy assistant. This is how I plan to pay it back. — Student, Lake Washington Institute of Technology

"Without the support to secure housing, I would still be homeless. I am now able to focus on classes." — Student, Walla Walla Community College

A word of thanks to sponsors and partners

Thank you to the prime sponsors of Washington legislation for championing students and the SSEH pilot program:

- Senator Emily Randall (2SSB 5800 2019)
- Representative Mari Leavitt (SHB 1166 2021)
- Senator Yasmin Trudeau (ESSB 5702 2023)

Thank you, also, to the many state and community collaborators who supported the development of this pilot program. A partial list includes Council of Presidents, Postsecondary Basic Needs Coalition, United Way of King County, and Washington Student Association. Special thanks to advocate Charles Adkins.

For more information about SSEH program and this report:

- Laura Coghlan, Program Administrator, SSEH, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, lcoghan@sbctc.edu

- Ami Magisos, Associate Director, Policy and Planning, Washington Student Achievement Council, amim@wsac.wa.gov

Introduction

Basic needs insecurity — including housing and food insecurity, as well as lack of access to healthcare, childcare, transportation, and other basic needs — is a critical barrier that can undermine persistence and completion rates for postsecondary students. While the urgent impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crises beginning in 2020 spotlighted students' basic needs insecurity, the challenge has been both long term and persistent. Recent research makes clear that basic needs insecurity is not just a challenge for a relatively low number of students. The gaps in covering critical costs such as housing and food are pervasive among students in both two-year and four-year institutions, and they disproportionately impact certain groups of students.

The Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness (SSEH) pilot program was launched in fiscal year 2019-20 to address basic needs insecurity among postsecondary students experiencing homelessness and those who were former foster youth. The enabling legislation and the grant process provided flexibility for each institution to determine its approach to case management and to decide which accommodations to provide eligible students. Reducing barriers to program access, reflecting on and addressing equity considerations, and developing and sustaining positive relationships with college and community partners were common values across the programs.

From the beginning, the SSEH pilot program was built with full cross-sector collaboration between two-year and four-year institutions, SBCTC and WSAC. We've aligned data collection, developed a statewide learning community to share promising strategies, and codeveloped progress reports and recommendations. Our common goal has been to create a clear statewide view of the scope of students' housing and food insecurity, effective strategies and practices to support those students, and student outcomes experienced across all participating institutions. SBCTC and WSAC also recognize and support unique sector and institutional approaches to the pilot.

Similarly, this first legislative report for the program was developed collaboratively. It provides state-level, cross-sector information about the students supported by SSEH, strategies employed by the institutions to serve them, institutional infrastructure changes made to strengthen access to the program, and participating institutions' collective reflections and recommendations. The aim is to provide important state-level insights across all institutions while highlighting some distinctions that may be unique between community and technical colleges and public baccalaureate institutions.

Understanding the Prevalence of Postsecondary Basic Needs Insecurity in Washington

Washington Students Experience Survey

Prior to 2023, Washington lacked institutional and state-level data on the prevalence of postsecondary basic needs insecurity to understand the scope of the challenge and the disproportionate impacts on some student subgroups. With the impetus of SSEH legislation, institutions and agencies worked together in 2021 to create a common basic needs insecurity prevalence survey with coordinated, voluntary implementation.[4]

In fall 2022, students at 39 colleges and universities participated in the Washington Students Experience Survey (WSES), designed to assess the prevalence of students' housing insecurity, homelessness, food insecurity, and other areas of basic needs. With nearly 10,000 students responding, the findings of the survey showed a high prevalence of insecurity experienced by respondents in these areas:

- **One in every two students experienced basic needs insecurity.** 49.4% of respondents experienced *either* food insecurity or housing insecurity or homelessness.

- **One in every three students experienced food insecurity.** 38.3% of respondents experienced food insecurity in the last 30 days.

- **One in every three students experienced housing insecurity.** 34.2% of respondents experienced housing insecurity in the last 12 months.

- **One in every four students experienced both food insecurity and housing insecurity.** Overall, 23.5% of respondents experienced *both* food insecurity and housing insecurity.

- **One in every ten students experienced homelessness.** 11.3% of respondents experienced homelessness in the last 12 months.

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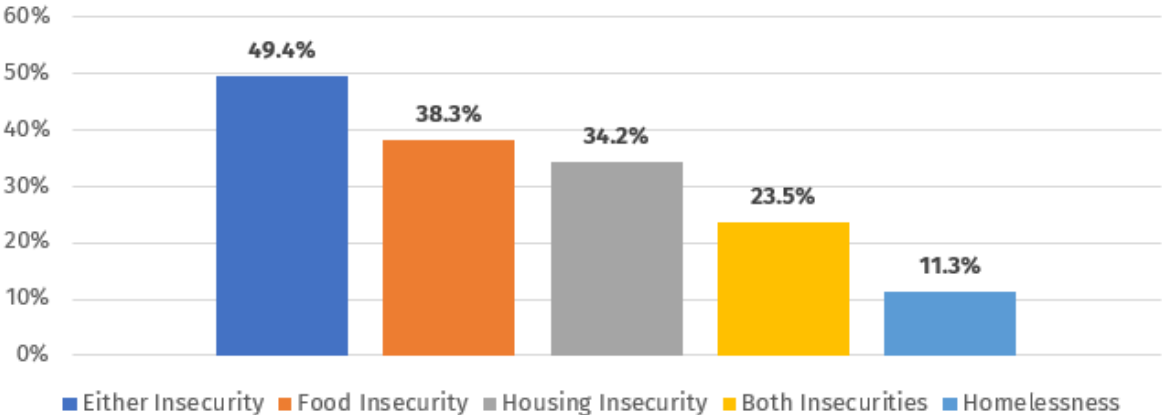
[4] Each participating institution received their institutional data set for college-level insights. For more on the development of the survey: Postsecondary Basic Needs Data Work Group.docx - Google Drive

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Students across higher education sectors

Students at community and technical colleges and at baccalaureates reported similar insecurity rates for food insecurity, housing insecurity and homelessness, with 1 in 2 students experiencing food and/or housing insecurity or homelessness.

2-year colleges
Secure 49.9% Insecure 50.1%

4-year colleges
Secure 51.2% Insecure 48.8%
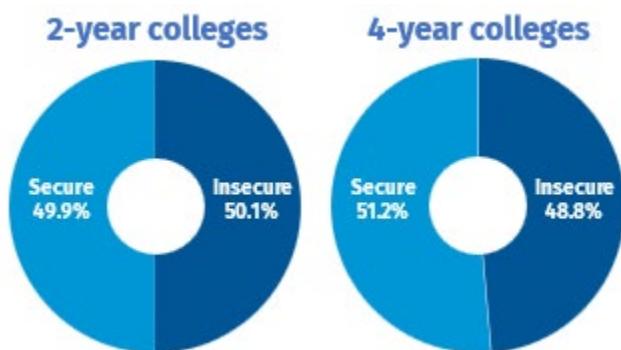
Food insecurity: Rates of food insecurity were comparable for students at two-year and four-year colleges. Overall, 39.1% of respondents at two-year colleges and 37.6% of respondents at four-year colleges experienced food insecurity.

Housing insecurity and homelessness: Students at two-year colleges experienced housing insecurity and homelessness at greater rates than students at four-year colleges. Overall, 37.6% of respondents at two-year colleges experienced housing insecurity compared to 31% of respondents at four-year colleges; and 13.1% of respondents at two-year colleges experienced homelessness compared to 9.6% of respondents at four-year colleges.

Students experienced high rates of basic needs insecurity in every region of the state. Though respondents from the southcentral region had the highest insecurity rate at 57.9%, even respondents from the region with the lowest rate, north Puget Sound, still had an insecurity rate of 45%.

Student demographics

Significant disparities in basic needs security were present for survey respondents based on gender, race/ethnicity, parental education, income, and other demographic characteristics.

- **Disparities by gender:** Male respondents experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 45.7%, female respondents experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 51.3%, and respondents who indicated other genders experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 56.4%.

- **Disparities by race/ethnicity:** American Indian/Alaskan Native and Black/African American respondents experienced the highest rates of basic needs insecurity based on respondent race/ethnicity.

- **Disparities by parental education:** Respondents who reported being first-generation students (none of their parents/guardians earned a bachelor's degree) experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 58.7%, which is 9.3 percentage points higher than the overall population.

- **Disparities by income:** Respondents who reported being eligible for need-based financial aid (an indicator of low-income status) experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 66.2%, which is 16.8 percentage points higher than the overall population.

- **Students who reported belonging to the LGBTQI+ community** experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 55.4%, which is 6 percentage points higher than the overall population.

- **Students who reported being the parent or guardian of a dependent** experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 61.1%, which is 11.7 percentage points higher than the overall population.

- **Students who reported living with a disability** experienced basic needs insecurity at a rate of 62.8%, which is 13.4 percentage points higher than the overall population.

- **Students who reported being former foster youth experienced the highest rates of basic needs insecurity among all demographic groups** at a rate of 75.9%, which is 26.5 percentage points higher than the overall population.
  - 67.5% experienced food insecurity.
  - 58.9% experienced housing insecurity.
  - 52.7% experienced both food and housing insecurity.
  - 23.7% experienced homelessness.

For additional insights on Washington basic needs prevalence, see the executive summary and link to the full report in Appendix B.

With the passage of the Postsecondary Basic Needs Act (2SHB 1559) in 2023, Washington has prioritized the continued assessment of the prevalence of students' basic needs insecurity. This legislation — coupled with a requirement for SSEH annual reports to include prevalence of basic needs insecurity among enrolled students — suggests the need for a shared survey administration, likely on a biennial basis, to inform both purposes. WSAC will continue to work with institutions and partners to administer the survey statewide and report students' rates of basic needs insecurity at state, regional, and institutional levels.

Environmental Factors Affecting Basic Needs Insecurity

COVID-19 pandemic-related factors

Basic needs insecurity and housing instability already challenged students before the pandemic struck in winter term of the pilot's first year. The pandemic presented new challenges in terms of reliance on technology access, disruption of employment, limited public transportation, adjustment to different college learning environments, and reduced access to other essential needs such as childcare, healthcare, and food. For students who continued to enroll in college during the pandemic, federal COVID relief programs provided low-barrier financial assistance to students and colleges to maintain student support services concurrent with the first two years of the pilot. Also during the COVID-19 public health emergency, federal law made more postsecondary students temporarily eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, called Basic Food in Washington state), including students who did not meet the previous concurrent weekly employment hours requirement.

> "Honestly, the support helped me out a lot. Right after I got the help my daughter got sick and I got in a car accident and got COVID. So it was really, really nice to not have to worry about rent." — Student, Yakima Valley College

Nearly all institutions had fully expended their COVID relief funding by the start of fiscal year 2023. The state's pandemic-associated eviction moratorium also ended in October 2021. As of July 1, 2023, the temporary student exemptions are no longer available to students applying or recertifying for SNAP/Basic Food assistance. These changes have placed more pressure on SSEH pilot funding and referrals to community providers to fill gaps in basic needs assistance.

Housing factors

SSEH college staff regularly identify the lack of available, affordable housing as a cause of homelessness and housing insecurity. Even students who connect with subsidized housing programs can struggle to find housing options where they can apply subsidies within the specified timeframe. As noted in the MEF Associates analysis of postsecondary student homelessness in Washington, "The housing and homelessness crises are driven by limited housing supply, housing cost burden, and housing support systems that are often stretched thin."[5]

> "If it wasn't for this grant and your staff, I would be trying to complete my last quarter, living in my car with my children. YOU HAVE MADE ME BETTER AND SAVED MY LIFE!" — Student, Wenatchee Valley College

The MEF study also explains that students may be at a disadvantage when seeking housing support from public sources due to program eligibility exclusions; specific housing criteria related to location, transportation access, or internet access that may affect their studies; and prioritization rubrics for how providers allocate limited resources.

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[5] Expanding Access to Housing Support Resources for Postsecondary Students Experiencing Homelessness in Washington. July 2022. MEF Associates

SSEH college staff often emphasize that finding appropriate housing options can be especially difficult for students with families or dependents. Staff also identify other barriers to securing housing, such as credit challenges (no credit rating or poor credit rating), history or current involvement with the justice system, exclusion of financial aid from income assessment, or even having a pet.

Additionally, staff report that rent increases contribute significantly to housing instability as students find their current housing situations increasingly unaffordable. Students with resources stretched thin must make choices about which bills to pay. They can find themselves owing back rent and can accrue penalty fees or face eviction, leading to homelessness.

> "Thank you, having a new baby and living with unemployment benefits I bearly [sic] can make up for me living with the increased inflation cost and no extra income or raise. I was about to quit and go look for a job to support me but without a degree I'm back to the same low labor hourly rate." — Student, Edmonds College

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 12-month inflation rate (August 2021 to August 2022) in the overall consumer price index (CPI) for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metro area was 9% followed by another large increase of 5.4% (August 2022 to August 2023).[6] In terms of housing expenses specifically, year-over-year from August 2022 to August 2023, rental costs for primary residences increased by 9.1% and household energy costs increased by 10.5%, both of which exceeded the already high overall CPI inflation rate. Sharp increases in fundamental living costs negatively impact students, especially those with low income, as the cost of housing takes up an increasing proportion of their total income and resources. The Department of Commerce identified rent increases as the primary driver of homelessness in its Homeless Housing Crisis Strategic Plan.[7]

Journey from Pilot to Permanent Program

The SSEH pilot program was first established by the Legislature in 2019 and has grown significantly since then.

2019 — The Legislature approved 2SSB 5800 to establish the SSEH pilot program at six higher education institutions (two public baccalaureate institutions and four community and technical colleges). The 2019-21 biennial budget funded the pilot program, which launched in February 2020.

2021 — Through the passage of SHB 1166, the Legislature added two more public baccalaureate institutions and four more community and technical colleges to the pilot project, doubling the program from the original six higher institutions to 12 institutions. The 2021-23 biennial budget included funding for the expansion.

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[6] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Consumer Price Index, Seattle area - August 2023. Accessed October 24, 2023.

[7] WA Department of Commerce. State of Washington Homeless Housing Crisis Response System Strategic Plan 2019-2024. November 2019. Accessed Oct. 2023.

2022 — The 2022 supplemental budget included funding to invite all community and technical colleges and public baccalaureates to participate in the pilot program.

2023 – The Legislature approved [ESSB 5702](#) changing the pilot program into a permanent program. The 2023-25 operating budget included funding for this legislative action.

Participating public colleges and universities

The following chart shows the growth of colleges and universities participating in the SSEH pilot program over time.

FY20 & FY21 6 sites	FY22 12 sites	FY23 & FY24 33 sites	
Eastern WA University* Western WA University* Edmonds South Puget Sound Walla Walla Yakima Valley	The Evergreen State College* WA State University* Clark Highline Lower Columbia Wenatchee Valley	Central WA University* University of Washington - Tacoma* Bellevue Bellingham Tech Big Bend Cascadia Centralia Columbia Basin Everett Grays Harbor Green River	Lake WA Inst Tech North Seattle Olympic Pierce College Dist. Renton Tech Seattle Central Shoreline Spokane Spokane Falls Tacoma

*Public baccalaureate institutions; the rest of the sites are community and technical colleges.

The six CTCs that did not participate in the SSEH pilot could have applied for a planning grant in fiscal year 2024 to work on institutional infrastructure development, partner networking, and other aspects of program planning to prepare to serve students in fiscal year 2025. Four colleges applied and were awarded funding for fiscal year 2024: Clover Park Technical College, Peninsula College, Skagit Valley College, and Whatcom Community College.

Services provided by public colleges and universities

As codified in RCW 28B.50.916 and RCW 28B.77.850, participating colleges and universities may implement programs to assist students experiencing homelessness and those who were in foster care at the time of high school completion. Participating colleges are responsible for providing accommodations and services to eligible students that may include, but are not limited to, the following: housing and food assistance; access to laundry, shower facilities, secure storage, technology, and mailstop; and case management services. Colleges may also establish plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing to accommodate eligible students. Participating colleges must also inform students about existing community resources for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Students Served Through SSEH

Number of students served

The SSEH pilot served 6,726 students in four pilot years. The public baccalaureate sector served 808 students and the community and technical college sector served 5,918. In fiscal year 2023, 4,068 students were served by SSEH as the pilot reached its peak number of 33 program sites.

SSEH Students Served

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
PBI	19	87	252	450
CTC	108	217	1975	3618

■ PBI ■ CTC
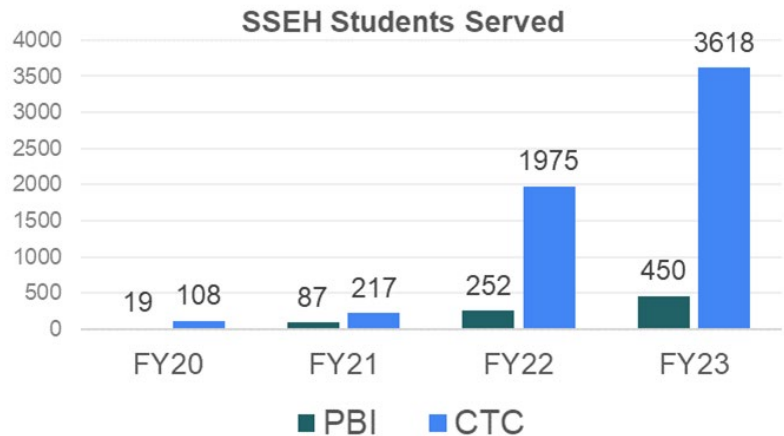
Student eligibility status

SSEH programs serve enrolled students experiencing homelessness, students who are imminently at risk of homelessness, and those who aged out of the foster care system. Over the four years of the pilot program, 304 former foster youth have been served by SSEH, representing approximately 5% of all students served. Among students served by SSEH due to housing insecurity:

- 24% were experiencing homelessness.
  - 17% were homeless, sheltered.
  - 7% were homeless, unsheltered.
- 76% were imminently at risk of homelessness during the pilot years.
- 5% were former foster youth aged out of foster care.

In fiscal year 2023, 220 former foster youth were served by SSEH; 21% of students served were homeless and 79% were imminently at risk of homelessness.

Food security levels

Co-occurrence of other basic needs challenges with housing insecurity is common, especially related to food. Students requesting support from SSEH were asked about their level of food security. Across all four pilot years and all programs, 80% of the students reported being food insecure at intake. Food insecurity includes those with marginal, low, and very low food security. Of those who were food insecure, 47% were known to be recipients of SNAP/Basic Food assistance.

While students' receipt of Basic Food (SNAP) assistance is not always disclosed, it is notable that the percentage of food insecure students who were known to be participating in SNAP climbed in fiscal year 2021 when, due to the pandemic, federal eligibility criteria were temporarily expanded for students to access the program.

SSEH Pilot Years: Student Food Insecurity

Legend: ■ % food insecure ■ % of food insecure known to be SNAP recipients
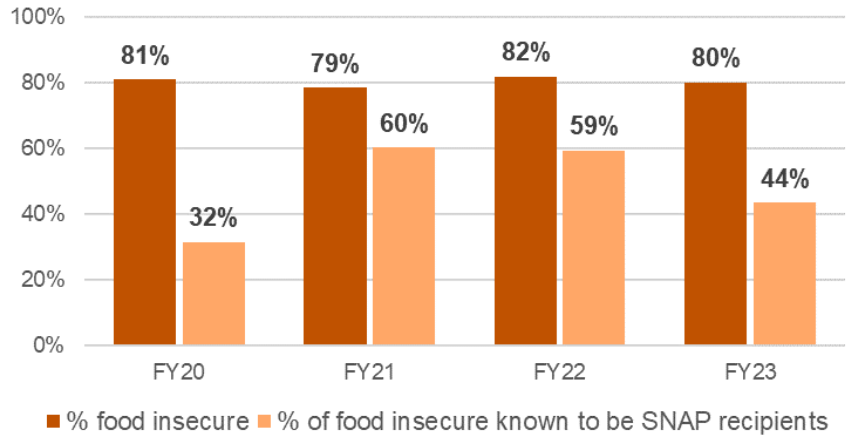
Demographics

A high proportion of students supported by the SSEH pilot are students of color. In nearly every year of the pilot, the proportion of students of color served exceeded the proportion of total students of color enrolled in public baccalaureates and community and technical colleges.[8] These data include only students for whom the race/ethnicity category was indicated by students in their college record.

SSEH Pilot Years: % Students of Color

Legend: ■ SSEH Students ■ PBI & CTC Total Enrollment
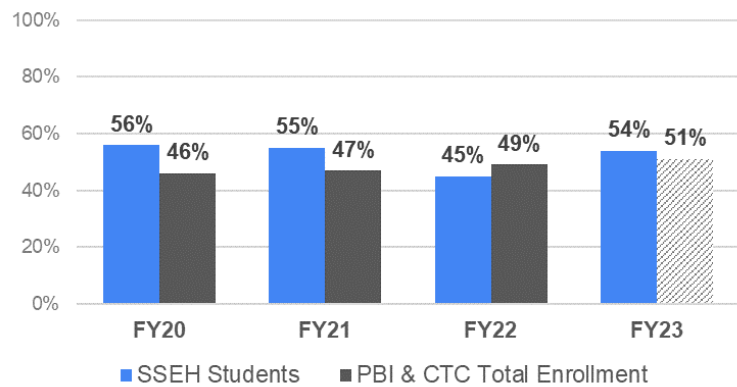
The following chart presents the distribution of SSEH students supported during fiscal year 2023 by race/ethnicity:

- 46% were White, non-Hispanic.
- 18% were multi-racial, non-Hispanic.
- 14% were Black, non-Hispanic.
- 11% were Hispanic/Latinx.
- 8% were Asian, non-Hispanic.
- 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, non-Hispanic.
- 1% Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, non-Hispanic.

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[8] *Sources: ERDC Enrollment Dashboard (PBIs); SBCTC Enrollment Dashboard (CTCs). FY23 total PBI enrollment not yet published, thus FY23 comparison enrollment includes only CTCs.*

In fiscal year 2023, the public baccalaureate and community and technical college (CTC) sectors served identical proportions of total students of color (54%), and the subgroups of Black (14%) and Pacific Islander (1%) students. However, the two sectors differed in other subcategories. A higher proportion of students served by public baccalaureate SSEH programs (PBI) in fiscal year 2023 identified as Hispanic

FY23 SSEH Students: Race/Ethnicity

Amer Indian/Alaska Native	2%
Asian	8%
Black/African Amer	14%
Hispanic/Latinx	11%
Pacific Islander	1%
2 or More Races	18%
White/Caucasian	46%
Other	1%

(17% of PBI; 11% of CTC), Asian (13% of PBI; 7% of CTC), and Native American (4% of PBI; 1% of CTC). Students served by CTC-sector SSEH programs were more likely to identify as multi-racial (19% of CTC; 5% of PBI).
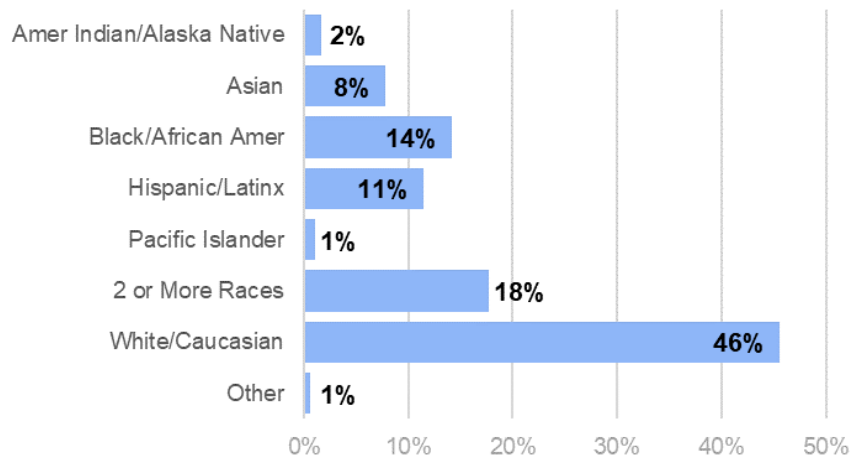
In fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023 combined, 65% of the SSEH students supported by the program were 25 years old or older. The students served by community and technical colleges tended to be older than those served by public baccalaureate institutions. In fiscal year 2023, 70% of community and technical college students were 25 or older, compared to 37% of those at public baccalaureate institutions.

SSEH Pilot: Sex of Students

Another Sex 1%
Male 32%
Female 67%
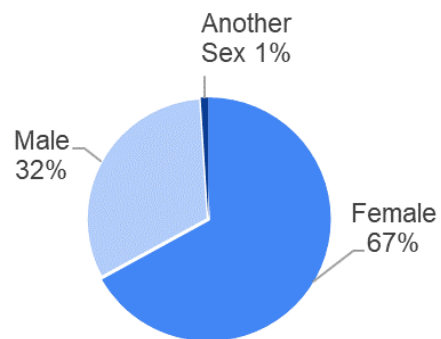
Looking across the four pilot years, 67% of the served students supported were female, 32% male, and 1% another sex/gender. Both community and technical colleges and public baccalaureate institutions served a higher proportion of female students compared to non-females. In fiscal year 2023, 68% of SSEH students in the community and technical college sector and 61% of those in the public baccalaureate sector were female.

Persistence and Completion

High student retention and completion rates

SSEH is intended to support students experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and former foster youth with case management, funding, and connection to resources that help address basic needs insecurities impacting their ability to remain enrolled in their college programs. The support students received from the SSEH pilot program helped them stay enrolled at high rates.

93% of students served in the public baccalaureate programs and 87% of those served by community and technical college programs completed the term (earned credit and/or completed a credential) in which they received services. Looking out to the next quarter, a high percentage of those who stayed enrolled during the SSEH term of service continued their enrollment to the subsequent quarter or reached completion of a credential.

Weighted average all pilot years (FY20-FY23)	PBI	CTC
Percent of students who completed academic term in which they received SSEH support	93%	87%
Percent who stayed in college or completed a credential the following term*	90%	77%

*Includes only students who completed the term in which they were served.

Students served by SSEH completed a range of credentials. Every type of credential represented a milestone of achievement for these students, whose persistence in the face of housing and basic needs insecurity opened new options and opportunities for them. Credentials included:

- Bachelor's degree
- Applied bachelor's degree
- Associate degree — direct transfer (DTA)
- Associate in major-related program (DTA/MRP)
- Associate in science degree — transfer (AS-T)
- Associate of applied science (AAS-T)
- Workforce degree (other than AAS-T)
- Certificates
- High school completion

"It was encouraging to me to know that people at the college cared about me and wanted to see me stay in the program, rather than disappearing and being forgotten about." — Student, The Evergreen State College

"Many of the students I work with are first generation college students with varying degrees of financial understanding and stability but know that receiving a higher education credential will likely lead to better earnings and a fulfilling career. (SSEH) has allowed students to continue their pursuit of higher education by addressing immediate food and housing instability. By addressing the immediate/crisis needs, I can work with students to understand financial obligations of higher education and ways to address them with limited resources."— CWU faculty, Financial Wellness Center
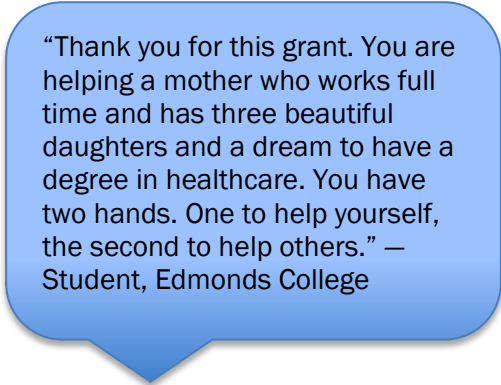
Assessing longer-term outcomes

With the evolution of SSEH from a pilot to a permanent program and the growth of program sites and students served, it is desirable to understand longer-term outcomes for students supported by the program — beyond the term served and subsequent term checkpoints. SBCTC identified an approach that will help the sector assess cumulative retention and credential completion outcomes for students served by SSEH.

The SBCTC data warehouse will be used to follow an unduplicated cohort of students served by SSEH at any point during the fiscal year and will use a fall-term checkpoint to assess how many of those students were continuing enrollment within the CTC sector and/or had completed a credential by that fall-term checkpoint. Final and complete data through fall quarter for both fall enrollment outcome and credential completion are not available until January after each fall checkpoint. Earlier cohorts from the first two years of the pilot were not captured in the data warehouse. Thus, the first look at longer term outcome data is available only for the SSEH students served in fiscal year 2022 for this annual report.

- 63% of the SSEH students served in the community and technical college sector in fiscal year 2022 (academic year 2021-22) were enrolled in the next fall quarter 2022 and/or had completed a credential.

"Thank you for this grant. You are helping a mother who works full time and has three beautiful daughters and a dream to have a degree in healthcare. You have two hands. One to help yourself, the second to help others." — Student, Edmonds College

At the next fall-term checkpoint (available January 2024), it will be possible to see if additional fiscal year 2022 SSEH students have re-enrolled and/or completed a credential after another year has passed.

Institutional Infrastructure and Systems

Historically, postsecondary institutions have not had a strong awareness of students struggling with homelessness or basic needs insecurity and may not have considered addressing these issues as core to supporting academic persistence and credential attainment. Considering this landscape, participating institutions made changes to meet the intent of the SSEH program. All pilot institutions worked to develop and improve infrastructure and systems to effectively identify and support students experiencing homelessness and who aged out of foster care. Based on local needs and assets, shared insights in the SSEH learning community convenings, and national best practices, institutions have increased campus awareness and outreach, staffing, integrated student support, community partnerships, and strategic planning.

Campus awareness and outreach

Pilot institutions worked to increase general awareness of the challenges students face in meeting their basic needs and to develop strategies for reaching those students.
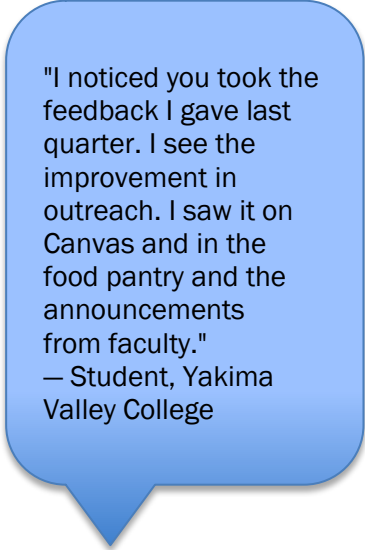
Many pilot teams held awareness-building events on their campuses, such as Western Washington University's Homelessness Awareness Week student panel discussion. Institutions including Spokane Community College, Everett Community College and The Evergreen State College updated campus newsletters to keep their entire campus communities informed of the SSEH program and other basic needs resources.

Many pilot teams also developed outreach partnerships with key campus stakeholders, including faculty, staff in student success programs such as TRiO, members of student government, financial aid staff, and facilities staff. Helping these essential partners better understand the prevalence of basic needs insecurity, and collaborate to identify and support students, has widened the student support web by connecting the many touch points students have across the broader campus community.

To reach students eligible for SSEH support, institutions set up a variety of outreach strategies including the following:

- Website pages to help students connect with staff and find resources.

- Partnerships with faculty to include basic needs support information on syllabi and online course platforms such as Canvas.

- Social media messaging and student-to-student information campaigns.

- The inclusion of survey questions and resource information in admissions surveys, entry advising, "College 101," and first year courses.

- Physical signage directing students to centralized support locations such as pantries, as well as rack cards and flyers.

- Campus resource fairs where students can connect directly with community resource providers and SSEH staff.

Institutions noted a challenge in reaching out to students without overpromising resources. With the limited supply of SSEH funds and waitlists for community resources, pilot institutions have had to perform a balancing act to increase student awareness while carefully managing expectations.

"I noticed you took the feedback I gave last quarter. I see the improvement in outreach. I saw it on Canvas and in the food pantry and the announcements from faculty."
— Student, Yakima Valley College

Eastern Washington University hosted annual resource fairs with community partners for two years post-pandemic and connected with SSEH-eligible students while increasing campus-wide awareness of the support available.

Bellingham Technical College SSEH staff maintained regular communication with programs that interact most with students in crisis or students with intersectional barriers. These programs included financial aid, workforce, counselors, TRiO, Passport to Careers, and accessibility resources staff. Regularly sharing news about the availability of SSEH funds and the low-barrier application process resulted in a large flow of student applications from these areas.

Staffing

Many institutions invested in staffing to provide students with SSEH case management and navigation, to coordinate with campus services, and to build community partnerships with other organizations capable of providing resources. SSEH staff operate in different divisions across the institutions and are sometimes shared between programs, such as workforce and student success divisions at community and technical colleges. Some public baccalaureates, including Central Washington University and Eastern Washington University, used grant funds to hire graduate student assistants to serve as student outreach and program coordinators, while other programs hired professional staff.

Low SSEH funding levels, high student demand, limited staffing hours, and the temporary nature of the pilot program created staffing challenges and staff turnover. However, institutions reported that the 2023 legislation making the SSEH grant permanent (ESSB 5702) increased their ability to attract and retain staffing for SSEH programming.

Centralized support locations and physical design
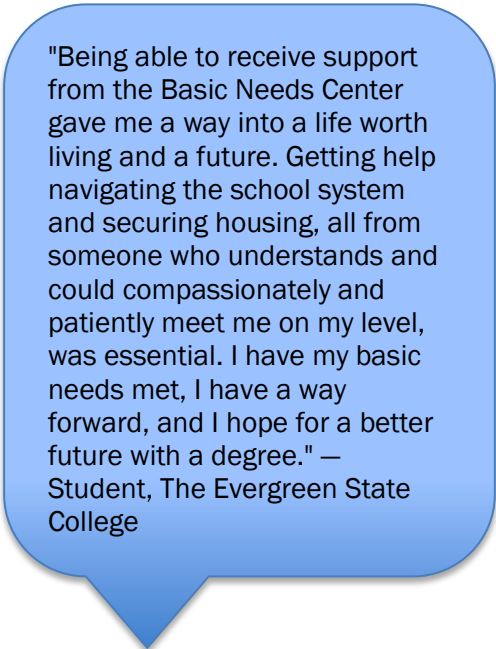
Pilot institutions emphasized the importance of the physical infrastructure of support for students eligible for SSEH and other basic needs assistance. As pilot teams noted in an SSEH learning community convening, "Design of a campus beyond the classroom really impacts how students can access resource support: tiny spaces, converted closets, etc. reduce comfort for students accessing support. Having to leave the office/building to get people connected is also a challenge."

Several institutions developed resource hubs to centralize SSEH resources and other basic needs assistance. These hubs increase awareness of, and access to, services and enable community providers to easily co-locate on campus.

The centralized student benefit hub model is well developed in community and technical colleges in King County in partnership with the United Way of King County's Bridge to Finish program, which showed promising student persistence and completion outcomes in a recent program evaluation.

Systems to coordinate and integrate support

As they joined the SSEH program, many pilot institutions needed to create systems to coordinate SSEH resources with existing student support programs. Colleges leveraged campus and community resources as much as possible given limited SSEH grant funding. Coordination systems include the following:

"Being able to receive support from the Basic Needs Center gave me a way into a life worth living and a future. Getting help navigating the school system and securing housing, all from someone who understands and could compassionately and patiently meet me on my level, was essential. I have my basic needs met, I have a way forward, and I hope for a better future with a degree." — Student, The Evergreen State College

Edmonds College, South Puget Sound Community College, The Evergreen State College, and Western Washington University developed dedicated support centers on campus where students can connect with SSEH staff and a variety of other basic needs supports in one location.

- **Intake systems:** Many institutions created a single request or intake form for multiple sources of support administered by the institution. This approach streamlines the process and avoids requiring students to repeatedly describe traumatic experiences or needs. A universal intake process also allows institutions to use a joint process to consider the resources that best fit a student's eligibility.

Columbia Basin College has a single assistance request form that is brief and has auto-translation capability. Applications for any student emergency assistance are reviewed weekly by a funding committee, with representatives from all workforce programs, WorkSource, and the Foundation Emergency Fund Program. Any application for SSEH support is also screened for 10 or more funding sources, which are leveraged to the students' best interest. The committee also refers the student to other resources needed.

- **Coordination of services:** Colleges and universities worked closely with institutional partners to develop systems to coordinate care for students served by the SSEH pilot, including faculty partners, academic advising staff, workforce programs, facilities staff for housing and dining services, etc. Institutions with Passport to Careers programs collaborated closely with SSEH staff to ensure complementary support of eligible students.

Spokane Falls Community College built relationships and raised awareness of SSEH program resources with campus programs, such as athletics, Guided Pathways specialists, and Associated Student Government. Student support opportunities are shared via Canvas courses and the college webpage. The website search engine was updated so that "emergency" or "emergency grant" appears as a first link on certain web pages. With this approach, faculty, staff, and students do not have to remember acronyms or organizational structure to find emergency support resources.

Financial aid staff are vital partners for SSEH teams. SSEH staff work closely with financial aid administrators to determine if students experiencing homelessness can receive emergency aid through the SSEH grant above their previously determined financial aid levels. Some institutions developed streamlined documentation processes for a required financial aid reevaluation.

- **Campus and community referral systems:** Pilot institutions have developed extensive referral systems both within the college and with community resources and public benefit programs. Within the college, institutions have developed articulated services and "warm handoffs" where students are personally connected to caring staff from other programs. Within the community, campuses have set up referral systems to help students tap the expertise of nonprofit or agency professionals who may offer flexible and immediate solutions.

Highline College worked with their First Year Experience office to add a housing security question to the "Getting to Know You" admissions survey for new students. The student housing and retention program manager receives referrals from the survey every 2-3 months and directly contacts students who indicate a need for housing assistance.
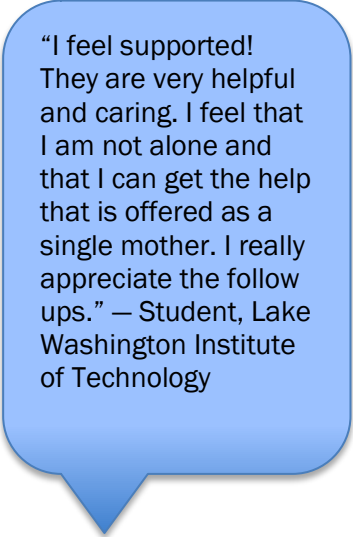
One challenge noted by SSEH colleges is knowing whether a referred student received community services after they were referred. To address this, SSEH case managers build strong connections with the community providers to know if a resource is available and to advocate for the student, who may face barriers such as poor credit, high debt, and resource restrictions for postsecondary students. These connections also enable SSEH staff to track whether students received services.

Lake Washington Institute of Technology uses the Starfish system for internal college referrals so that any staff, faculty, or student can refer to the resource coordinator for housing support. Lake Washington is part of a coordinated care referral network, Unite Us Washington. This internet-based platform helps referral staff connect students in need with organizations within the Unite Us network. When an organization connects with the student, the platform shows the staff person who made the referral an indication that the student has been served, ensuring a "closed loop" process.

"I feel supported! They are very helpful and caring. I feel that I am not alone and that I can get the help that is offered as a single mother. I really appreciate the follow ups." — Student, Lake Washington Institute of Technology

Shoreline Community College coordinates support for SSEH students through a common implementation spreadsheet shared with workforce specialists, navigators, and centralized support hub staff.

Community partnerships

SSEH institutions build and sustain strong relationships with community organizations, leading to powerful partnerships to support SSEH-eligible students.

Seattle Central College has been working with Seattle Housing Authority's Foster Youth to Independence Program (FYI) and YMCA Greater Seattle to understand how to most effectively connect eligible students to special purpose housing vouchers and YMCA-provided application and housing search support.

UW-Tacoma has a long-standing relationship with Koz Properties through the College Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) together with Tacoma Housing Authority. With the sunsetting of the CHAP program, UWT and Koz Properties have worked to develop a direct relationship and supportive partnership for UWT students that has long-term sustainability.

Institutional strategic planning

Many SSEH institutions have deepened their understanding and capacity to strategically address students' basic needs. Key elements of their strategic planning include:

- Gathering and analyzing data on basic needs insecurity and looking for trends and gaps to inform action. SSEH teams have noted the challenges of ethical data collection, including finding out food security levels and former foster care status.

- Building a campus basic needs strategy team with diverse stakeholders (including students) to identify barriers and opportunities.

- Using equity and inclusion analyses to gauge the effectiveness of current efforts and set goals for future development.

- Seeking opportunities to increase or improve SSEH support and other strategies that help students meet their basic needs.

Lower Columbia College engaged multiple divisions across campus to plan for SSEH and basic needs support, including facilities, finance, food services, security, financial aid, faculty, student government, and others. Discussions on how to address systemic barriers have elevated the topic of student homelessness and housing insecurity, informed training for frontline staff, and engaged the full campus on how to expand and sustain basic needs support.

Western Washington University first assessed the prevalence of basic needs in 2019 and has remained a leader in collaborative development of Washington's basic needs survey. WWU developed a campus basic needs strategy team and engaged institutional leaders in understanding the challenge of student retention for those experiencing basic needs insecurity by using data analysis.

Moving forward with the 2023 Postsecondary Basic Needs Act (SSHB 1559), colleges and universities will create and report on basic needs strategic plans, and SSEH pilot's strategic efforts have built a strong foundation through stakeholder engagement, data collection, equity and inclusion analysis, and strategies for the future.

Student Accommodations, Case Management, and Referrals

The SSEH pilots have provided thousands of accommodations to support SSEH-eligible students with housing, food, and other interrelated basic needs. Case management is a major component of SSEH programs. Since students' needs exceed available grant funding and resources, SSEH program staff work to increase broad awareness of students' needs and make referrals to other college and community programs. All SSEH programs provide case management, housing accommodations, and food access; yet they approach these in different ways. The programs also vary in the other basic needs accommodations they provide directly through grant funds or in-kind relationships with other college programs and facilities. Appendix A provides a high-level program overview to summarize which accommodations each program provides.

Number of Accommodations provided by SSEH Pilots
Pilot Years FY20-FY23

- **Housing:** Emergency, Short-term, Longer-term, Homelessness Prevention, Rental Assistance — 3845
- **Food Assistance** — 2890
- **Case management and referral to campus and community resources** — 9346
- **Additional accommodations:** technology, shower/hygiene, laundry, transportation, books/class supplies, health-related, mailstop, child-related, clothing, storage, utilities, and other necessities — 2970

Housing accommodations

Eviction prevention is the most common category of housing accommodation offered directly by SSEH programs. Colleges offer direct funding to students or pay landlords on behalf of students to prevent eviction and homelessness. This type of support may be used to close a short-term gap in the student's ability to cover rent or housing payment, help cover back rent, or cover mediation costs with landlords.

Housing Accommodations
Pilot Years FY20-FY23

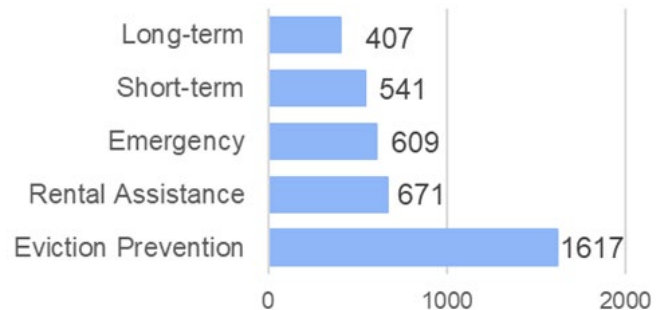| Category	Value
Long-term	407
Short-term	541
Emergency	609
Rental Assistance	671
Eviction Prevention	1617

Student requests for eviction prevention are prevalent and widespread across the programs and regions of the state. For example, students may have fallen behind on rent, be struggling to adjust to a rent increase, encountered an unexpected expense, or had a change in income or household composition that contributed to the situation.

"This program was a literal lifesaver for my little family. I still get emotional thinking about how close we were to being on the streets." — Student, Olympic College

One reason why eviction prevention is the most common type of accommodation is that it is truly preventative. Solving students' immediate emergencies early, before they are evicted, helps students stay housed and helps the SSEH program avoid long-term, higher-cost support in the future. The early action is also simpler and more direct, lessening the likelihood that other community resources and providers will need to be involved. By preventing evictions, SSEH programs save funding and ultimately serve more students.

Rental assistance helps students secure rental housing. This type of support helps students cover application fees, first/last/deposit expenses, and/or moving expenses. Even for students who may be able to cover monthly payments once they are sheltered, the up-front expense of two months of rent and a deposit at one time can be an insurmountable obstacle.

"Thanks to this funding I was able to find a decent place to live — my family and I were in desperate need. I didn't want my education to impact my family in a negative way and WWCC did not let that happen." — Student, Walla Walla Community College

Emergency housing support refers to temporary housing lasting less than 90 days. SSEH programs that provide this type of support often use motel stays or other short-term shelter options within their communities. SSEH programs may give funding directly to students, use motel vouchers, or pay the emergency housing provider directly. Colleges may also use SSEH funds to place students in college-owned housing or in off-campus leased units, provided space is available. Emergency housing is typically used while a student is in transition to a more stable housing situation.

Short-term housing accommodations provide support for three to six months; **Long-term housing** accommodations provide support for more than six months.

Some programs use SSEH funding to support housing accommodations for longer periods of time, whereas others prioritize SSEH funds for shorter periods and rely on community resources for longer-term housing.

For example, Shoreline Community College has a partnership with Neighborhood House to provide longer-term housing with no direct cost to the SSEH grant program. Shoreline has also recently joined North Seattle College and Seattle Central College in a partnership with Catholic Community Services, which provides 66 apartment units (Martina Apartments) for college students experiencing homelessness. SSEH program funds may support move-in costs, essential furnishings, or other needs, but the ongoing housing support is provided at no expense to the program.

Other programs dedicate some of their SSEH budgets to subsidize short-term and long-term housing in partnership with community resources. For example, Lower Columbia College uses SSEH funds to subsidize short-term housing in partnership with HOPE House. The Pierce College district uses SSEH funds to subsidize long-term housing placements that are provided by Metropolitan Development Council.

Some institutions that have on-campus housing facilities use SSEH grant funding to reserve units specifically for SSEH-eligible students. The college may use these units to support a student for a whole quarter or academic year, but sometimes shorter periods, if there is turnover in residents. Edmonds College, Everett Community College, Green River College, Highline College, the Pierce College District, University of Washington – Tacoma, and Western Washington University use this approach.

Everett Community College rents three units annually in an on-campus residence hall, which includes access to other basic needs support (utilities, internet, laundry, live-in staff, shuttle service for grocery stores). This aspect of their program focuses on former foster youth, and it supports a minimum of three students per year or up to 12, depending on the duration of housing need.

"I live in a converted van, so there were many times when SSEH money was utilized to put me in a campground with power or a hotel when it was too cold which allowed me to keep my classes moving." — Student, Wenatchee Valley College

"As a result of this support, I am passing my classes and on track to finishing my goals without fear of homelessness. It helped me pay my mortgage when I had zero options and needed to keep a home for my 4 children. Extremely thankful!"— Student, Lower Columbia College

"Being able to stay in the dorms over break has greatly helped. I wouldn't have had anywhere to go and moving from place to place makes me feel anxious and unbalanced, so being able to stay and eat and sleep in my own dorm has been awesome for my mental health but my motivation for school next quarter!" — Student, EWU

South Puget Sound Community College does not have on-campus student residence facilities, but its SSEH program uses a unique master lease contract with a local apartment vendor.

Case management and referrals
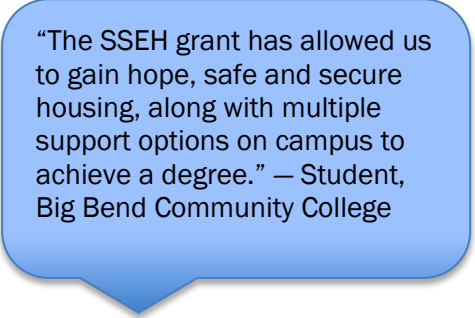
Case management is a fundamental feature of SSEH programs. SSEH case managers provide direct outreach, conduct intake assessment, and respond to students' needs. Among other things, case managers provide funding and accommodations, refer students to other programs and providers, and connect students to other appropriate resources.

According to data reported by the pilot sites, an estimated 51% of the students who were provided case management and referrals through SSEH received more than two case management contacts. Case managers are often tasked with reaching out to potential collaborators, raising awareness of SSEH resources, and establishing and responding to student referrals and requests for support.

South Puget Sound Community College administers a quarterly Student Needs Survey that encourages students to self-identify their needs. Personal Support Center staff respond to these with direct student outreach and connect students to appropriate programs. Students accepting support opt-in for case management support which continues through their time at the college.

"The SSEH grant has allowed us to gain hope, safe and secure housing, along with multiple support options on campus to achieve a degree." — Student, Big Bend Community College

Colleges use a range of approaches to staff case management services for the SSEH program. Some use their SSEH funding to create positions dedicated to case management. However, many colleges combine multiple funding streams to fulfill this role, with SSEH contributing a percentage of salary and benefits for a staff member who serves SSEH along with other programs. Several programs use no SSEH funding for case management, relying instead on existing resources and positions. Another approach is to contract case management services, as the Pierce College District does with the Metropolitan Development Council. Other sites collaborate with on-site United Way of King County Benefits Hub navigators to provide SSEH case management at no direct expense to their SSEH grants.

SSEH programs describe challenges related to staffing their programs fully and sustainably. Especially during the pilot years, the uncertainty of future funding was a challenge for recruitment and staff retention. While the case management function is critical to the program, colleges often seek to combine funding streams, create shared positions or less than full-time positions, or employ other approaches to case management to maximize SSEH funding for direct student accommodations. For example, Renton Technical College funded their student resource case manager 50% from SSEH funding and 50% from a short-term grant for substance recovery in fiscal year 2023 when they launched their SSEH program. In fiscal year 2024, they shifted the grant-funded 50% onto a new grant for financial coaching. While the shared roles carried by case managers intersect and lead to innovative collaborations, it is often difficult for case managers to manage changing workload portfolios. Colleges also find it difficult to meet the ongoing and pressing need for additional funding sources to support case manager positions.

Green River College approaches case management collaboratively through existing staff at its Center for Transformational Wellness and Benefits Hub with support from Master of Social Work students placed at the college.

Relationships between college programs and resources and community organizations are vital to the success of the SSEH program. SSEH case managers made 28,348 referrals to other college programs and resources, such as campus food pantries, financial aid, career/employment support, health/wellness services, Passport to Careers (program for former foster youth and unaccompanied minors), and TRiO (federal student support grant).

The community and technical college sector also referred SSEH students to other workforce funding programs, such as Basic Food Education & Training (BFET), Opportunity Grant, WorkFirst, Worker Retraining, and the Early Achievers grant. CTCs used the sector's state-funded Student Emergency Assistance Grant as another source of support for students. Additionally, SSEH programs referred students to a range of other college resources depending on students' unique needs, such as on-campus benefits hubs, student support centers, disability services, academic advising, life skills or financial planning workshops, veteran services, or victim's advocacy.

"It has helped greatly and I was able to give my mom rent money to help with the bills and I got clothes for winter and made a appointment for my car... and I'm just saving the rest for emergency stuff that I need. I really do greatly appreciate what you all have done and I am very grateful that you guys have helped me cause I don't know what I would have done, especially if I didn't have a place to stay with this weather. I can't even stand outside with my bones feeling like they hurt. I also am gonna enroll in counseling cause I've been struggling a little bit with mental health and all these ones are booked outside the college. I also was able to get down to the EBT office and finish my review for food stamps and was able to update BFET and they are gonna help me as well." — Student, Bellingham Technical College

CTC: Student Referrals to College Resources

Resource	Referrals
Food Pantry	5637
Financial Aid	3162
BFET	2660
Career/Employmt Svcs	2620
SEAG	2498
Opportunity Grant	2034
Wellness Services	1805
Worker Retraining	1745
WorkFirst	1281
TRiO	883
Passport	228
Early Achievers	148
Other	2512
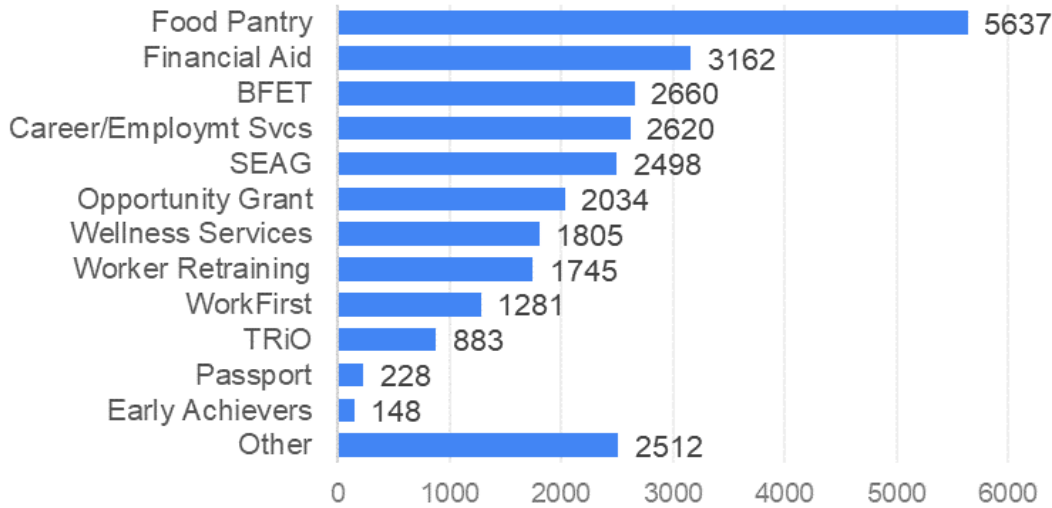
PBI: Student Referrals to other University Resources
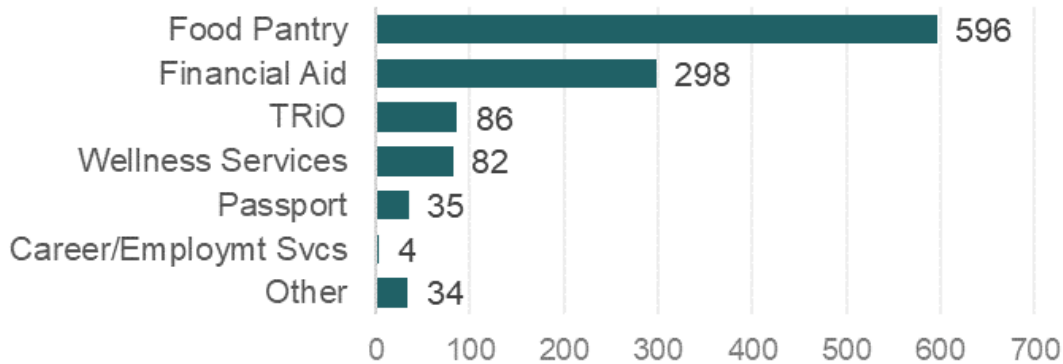
Resource	Referrals
Food Pantry	596
Financial Aid	298
TRiO	86
Wellness Services	82
Passport	35
Career/Employmt Svcs	4
Other	34

Over the course of the pilot, SSEH case managers made 29,173 referrals to external agencies and programs, such as community food pantries, 211 Washington, WA Connection, Community Action Councils, Housing Authorities, WorkSource, United Way, Coordinated Entry, and an array of local housing, domestic violence, youth, health, immigrant services, elder care and childcare resources, utilities assistance, and other providers.

SSEH case managers know about local resources and providers as well as federal and state programs to support students. They build and sustain relationships with a growing network of community partners to support students.

"The community agency you referred me to helped me start a small business after graduating. As an undocumented student, I didn't know that was possible." — Student, CWU

SSEH grant funds are small relative to the level of need students experience, so the community network is critical for case managers, and those partners have played a vital role in the success of SSEH students. Appendix C provides a list of community providers and partners.

Student Referrals to Community Resources

Resource	Referrals
Community Food Pantry	5478
211 WA	4475
WA Connection	3038
Community Action	2949
Housing Authority	2154
WorkSource	2099
United Way	1973
Coordinated Entry	1761
DSHS	1754
Community Youth Provider	719
Domestic Violence Services	692
Other	2081
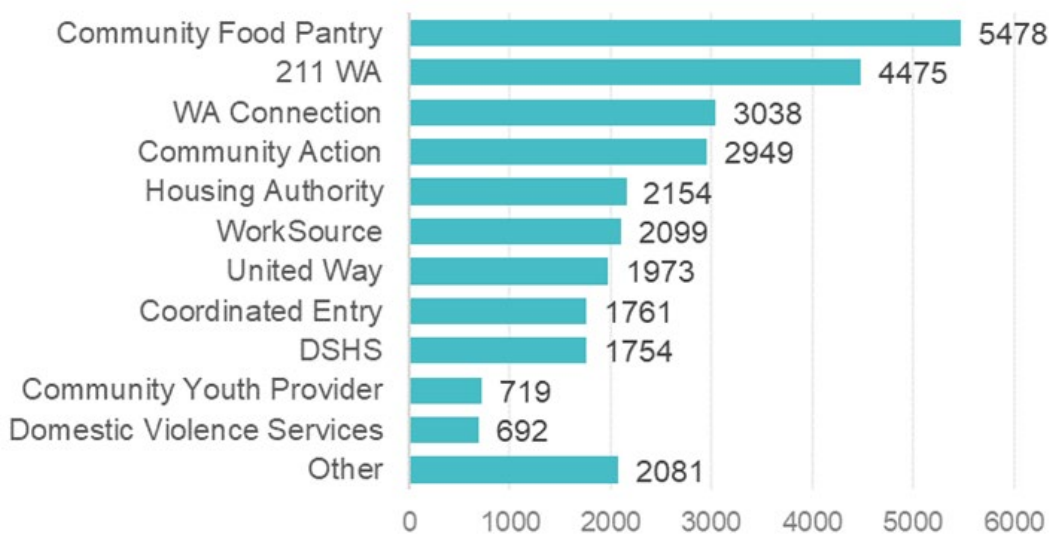
Food access

Students experiencing housing insecurity very often have food insecurity. The rate of food insecurity revealed during the SSEH intake process hovered around 80% during all years of the pilot. All SSEH programs help students access food, either through campus resources or community partner relationships. The programs use a wide range of tools to help students access food, including grocery store gift cards, direct disbursement to students, meal vouchers for on-campus food outlets, and subsidizing campus pantry options. SSEH programs make a special effort to provide access to perishable fresh food, culturally-appropriate options, or heat-and-eat meal options for those with limited access to kitchens and food preparation equipment.

Lower Columbia College SSEH students access the campus food pantry for weekly groceries, perishable items, and daily grab-n-go sandwiches/snacks. Weekly hot meals are available on campus through collaboration with Salvation Army (SSEH funds supplement food and supplies for meals). They leverage other emergency grant and workforce funding programs to provide grocery gift cards.

Eastern Washington University has long had a food pantry and food cabinets throughout campus, but during the pilot it also partnered locally to develop food cards that can be used by SSEH students either on-campus or in the community, either for restaurants or for groceries.

Walla Walla Community College works to connect eligible food-insecure students to Basic Food Assistance. While applications are pending, they provide grocery cards through SSEH, since they currently have no food service on campus due to service reductions during the pandemic.

Clark College uses SSEH funding to add "heat and eat" meal options to the Penguin Pantry and to provide subsidized meal vouchers to campus food carts and culinary management program cafeteria meals.

Other basic needs accommodations

In addition to providing housing and food access accommodations, the SSEH pilots provided 2,970 "other basic needs" accommodations. SSEH programs at community and technical colleges and public baccalaureates differ in the other basic needs accommodations they frequently provide. Transportation was the most common "other" basic need in the community and technical college sector, whereas laundry was the most common at public baccalaureate institutions. Technology and shower access/hygiene supplies were frequently supported across both sectors.

PBI: Other Accommodations

Category	Value
Laundry	223
Shower/Hygiene	185
Technology	174
Mailstop	88
Clothing	19
Transportation	18
Health-Related	15
Non-tuition Fees	7
Child-Related	6
Other	6
Books/Class Supplies	2
Storage	

CTC: Other Accommodations

Category	Value
Transportation	428
Technology	344
Shower/Hygiene	320
Books/Class Supplies	278
Laundry	240
Health-Related	198
Other	120
Child-Related	106
Mailstop	75
Clothing	46
Storage	36
Non-tuition Fees	36

- **Transportation** accommodations include assistance with car repairs, gas cards, bus passes, or parking passes. Some programs prioritize SSEH transportation support for students living in cars and rely on other emergency funds for other circumstances, such as when a car repair is needed for a student to commute to class.

- **Laundry** access includes access to laundry machines, and laundry supplies, such as detergent or laundry bags. Many programs provide access to on-campus laundry facilities. Some may pay additional facilities fees to increase access or cover machine operation costs for SSEH students. Other programs have in-kind agreements or provide vouchers to local off-site laundromats.

> "It helped me a lot...transportation is a thing that is highly needed and when we can't pay for gas, we often have to go without paying something else. It worries me when I have to choose between having to pay for food or gas."
> — Student, Yakima Valley College

Programs providing shower access typically provide access to facilities already on campus, such as in athletics/recreation facilities. Similar to laundry access, colleges with on-campus shower facilities arrange access through in-kind agreements with campus partners, and some use SSEH funding to expand hours of operation or cover facility or cleaning fees. Many colleges make hygiene products available through student support centers or distribute them through their food pantries. SSEH students who receive gift cards to grocery stores may include hygiene necessities when using their cards.

> "It allowed me to focus on my classes and have a moment of reprieve when I've been in survival mode for the last 8 months being homeless." — Student, Bellevue College

- **Technology** accommodations include provision of laptops or Chromebooks, wi-fi hotspots, and chargers either by purchasing equipment for students or establishing check-out programs.

- **Storage** is another form of SSEH support. Some programs provide storage lockers on-campus or provide locks for lockers. Again, the campus agreements for use differ depending on the institution. Some colleges provide storage access through in-kind agreements, set aside units for SSEH priority, or use SSEH funds to add storage units. Programs also support students by renting off-site storage units.

- **Mailstops** are provided for students living in campus housing facilities. Some programs also use a small portion of their funding to rent USPS post office boxes for students. A few programs have arranged for students to use a program office or other college address to receive important mail.

SSEH case managers also respond to additional basic needs emergencies such as health-related expenses, child-related resources, clothing (often warm coats, socks, or shoes), utility payments, basic household items, backpacks and other school supplies, and assistance paying non-tuition fees and fines.

Recommendations and Promising Practices

Since the pilot began in 2019, all SSEH institutions participate in a quarterly learning community to share promising practices and develop recommendations at the state and local levels.

State level policy and resource recommendations

Explore opportunities for colleges and universities to develop affordable and subsidized housing for students experiencing homelessness

A fundamental challenge identified by members of the SSEH learning community is a lack of affordable and safe housing for students experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness. This challenge was amplified for students with families or dependents.

While the SSEH enabling legislation allows colleges to use SSEH funds to create plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing, this option was not feasible for SSEH pilot programs. The very nature of being a pilot program means there are limited and uncertain timelines in which to accomplish goals. Housing development projects are often multiphase endeavors that require time to develop needs and feasibility assessments and to design and build the projects. Each phase involves multiple stakeholders and many legal requirements around contracting, financing, and construction.

Capital project eligibility and priority criteria can also post significant obstacles, especially for student residential facilities which are not dedicated instructional spaces. Additionally, projects need ongoing maintenance plans and sustainable financing to remain viable in the long run.

Some SSEH pilot programs imagined developing affordable housing by, for example, renovating existing buildings to create student apartments or building tiny homes. However, the challenges were insurmountable given the bounds of the pilot program.

To increase the supply of affordable housing options for students, especially on-campus options, participating SSEH colleges recommend exploring structural, policy, and funding barriers and how to overcome them. For example, if increasing affordable or subsidized housing supply is a priority but current policy limits are creating barriers, are there opportunities to create separate initiatives or funding streams within or outside of the existing SSEH program?

Increase SSEH funding to respond to cost-of-living increases and ensure ongoing case management support

Considering high inflation rates of living expenses, such as rent, utilities, food, healthcare, and other basic needs, an increase in per-college SSEH funding is recommended. As a longer-term approach, an inflationary factor could be applied biennially to adjust SSEH appropriations to help the program keep pace with increasing living expenses and help maintain funding assistance levels. Increased funding would also allow colleges to make case management services more available and sustainable without diminishing funding needed for student housing accommodations.

Eliminate or raise age limits for Passport to Careers program eligibility

A workgroup of SSEH staff met to reflect on successes, challenges, and opportunities related to serving former foster youth. In their roles with the SSEH program, workgroup participants either directly serve, or make referrals to, their colleges' Passport to Careers programs. Workgroup participants identified the Passport to Careers eligibility age limit as a barrier to serving students.[9] The maximum age to receive a Passport to Careers scholarship is 26.

An even more common barrier is a requirement that former foster youth first enroll in higher education or a registered apprenticeship program by the age of 21. Youth exiting foster care are less likely to enroll in postsecondary institutions right out of high school. Many former foster care students enroll in colleges later in their lives — after military service, work, or other lived experience — and find themselves ineligible for Passport to Careers.

While SSEH programs are an alternative for students who are too old to qualify for Passport to Careers assistance, the programs cannot match the more robust financial support available to Passport to Careers-eligible students. Eliminating or raising the age limits for Passport to Careers would enable more foster youth to attend college and ease financial pressure on SSEH programs, enabling them to serve more students. Addressing age-limit barriers would also help reduce disparities in educational outcomes for former foster youth and support state goals aimed at increasing the percent of Washington adults who have a college credential.

Fully fund benefit navigators associated with Postsecondary Basic Needs Act (2SHB 1559)

Approved by the Legislature in 2023, the Postsecondary Basic Needs Act (2SHB 1559) requires each higher education institution to have, at a minimum, a .75 FTE benefits navigator to help students access public benefits, emergency assistance programs, and other community resources.[10] According to members of the SSEH learning community, colleges often find it difficult to recruit, hire, and manage workloads for this important position at less than one FTE. Additionally, legislative funding for the .75 FTE positions does not fully cover the cost of employee benefits, especially for those living in areas with a high cost of living.

Learning community members also said it is difficult to meet the legislation's requirement that benefits navigators hired under 2SH1559 be "stationed at a single location on campus where students are directed to receive assistance," when many institutions have multiple campuses and other satellite teaching locations.

The learning community recommends the Legislature provide full funding to increase the benefit navigator position hired under 2SH1559 from .75 FTE to one FTE and to fully fund benefits associated with the position. The learning community also recommends amending the legislation to enable benefits navigators to support multiple campuses.

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[9] RCW 28B.1117.030. Program design and implementation—Passport to college promise and passport to apprenticeship opportunities—Student eligibility.

[10] 2SHB 1559 Student Basic Needs - Public Postsecondary Institutions. July 2023. Washington State Legislature Sec. 2(1).

Fund a study of interventions to support students experiencing homelessness

A recent brief published by MEF Associates identified opportunities to improve support for college students experiencing housing insecurity. One of the recommendations was to conduct a study of intervention approaches to determine what works to improve housing stability, which conditions contribute to successful implementation, and whether interventions have an equitable impact.[11] SSEH programs would benefit from, and have contributions to offer, such a study. Study results would also help policymakers and institutional leaders implement and prioritize effective approaches to serving students experiencing housing insecurity. Appendix E provides a list of topics for further research that emerged over the course of the SSEH pilot.

Promising practices

The SSEH pilot project revealed several promising practices that might not require policy changes but could nevertheless improve support for students experiencing homelessness and other basic needs insecurity. Examples include:

- **Increased communication between liaisons serving homeless high school students and college staff serving students who need assistance with housing and basic needs** — Under 2SHB 1559 (2023), all public colleges and universities must have basic needs navigators. Their counterparts at high schools could reach out to college navigators to create a "warm handoff" from high school to college for students already experiencing homelessness. This would enable colleges to proactively assist students when they first enroll and hopefully help prevent basic needs emergencies.

- **Community partnerships** — Building relationships between postsecondary institutions, community-based organizations, municipal leaders, philanthropic foundations, and other organizations can create increased awareness about housing insecurity among college students and lead to partnerships aimed at filling gaps in housing and support. For example, in June 2023, Whatcom County organizations and institutions convened for the first time to explore collaboration opportunities to address student homelessness. This created a foundation for future projects and grant proposals that could be pursued cross-sector at the county level.

- **Increased grant guidance** — The Washington Department of Commerce Office of Homeless Youth offers different state grant programs to address the needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Increased guidance and communication between the department, colleges and universities, postsecondary agencies, and community-based organizations could result in partnerships that attract grant funding.

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[11] Expanding Access to Housing Support Resources for Postsecondary Students Experiencing Homelessness in Washington. July 2022. MEF Associates

Conclusion

Homelessness and other basic needs insecurities stand in the way of students' success in college. Washington's drive to increase credential attainment among adults, coupled with the state's generous and equitable financial aid program, makes it imperative for our state to not lose students to the crisis of homelessness. For financially vulnerable students, a college credential leads to upward mobility, financial security, career satisfaction, and freedom from long-term poverty.

Washington's SSEH grant pilot program provided postsecondary institutions flexible, housing-focused funding, resulting in thousands of students served, higher persistence rates, and better support systems at colleges. Results include:

- Increased data about housing insecurity obtained from Washington's first state-level assessment of the prevalence of homelessness and other basic needs insecurity among college students.

- Innovative housing support to address the emergency and longer-term needs of students experiencing homelessness.

- Wrap-around support to address the interconnected needs of homeless students, including food, storage, showers, transportation, and more.

- Student access to community resource referrals and benefits made possible by strong community partner networks .

- Strategic planning at the institutional and state levels to identify challenges, increase equitable support, and leverage existing assets.

Cross-sector planning, learning, and data collection are hallmarks of the SSEH program. Community and technical colleges and public baccalaureate institutions solve problems and share strategies in regularly scheduled SSEH learning communities. As a result, Washington has a valuable state-level view of students experiencing homelessness. This foundational information will ultimately help policymakers gauge the impact of legislative investments in postsecondary student basic needs. Our insight will deepen over time as longitudinal persistence and completion data is developed. Informed by the on-the-ground practices and recommendations of SSEH institutions, Washington has a profound opportunity to continue improving the housing and basic needs security of vulnerable postsecondary students.

Appendix A: Program Inventory Grid

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Central Washington University	Part-time Resource Coordinator, housed within case management department	Eviction prevention; rental assistance (start-up costs for housing); assistance with college housing cost balances; 3 apartments for flexible emergency housing	Food / meal plan assistance	Technology/educational materials. Childcare assistance/stipend.
Eastern Washington University	Case management and resource navigation/ homelessness outreach (which will be a new position)	Between-term housing; emergency college housing (up to 5 days)	Food card for on/off campus grocery and restaurant options. Food pantry and food cabinets (24/7 and throughout campus)	Clothes, laundry, linens, school supplies for between-term housing
The Evergreen State College	Case management, in partnership with new basic needs navigation	Eviction prevention; rental assistance (start-up costs for entering rentals)	Food pantry, community referrals, SNAP application assistance	Technology assistance and educational materials. Basic Needs Center with hygiene items, clothing, school supplies, etc.

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
University of Washington - Tacoma	Case management	KOZ Student Housing Program with Housing Authority subsidizes low income and homeless students' rental cost. Shared housing through Associated Ministries partnership (program matches students with home owners). Emergency housing studios available for students experiencing immediate hardship or danger. Rental assistance (start-up costs for housing)	Food pantry, food cupboard, food truck on campus, food pre-paid cards	Lockers, showers available through YMCA partnership on campus. Household supplies for emergency apartments
Washington State University	Resource navigation and case management. .1 FTE for positions on two campuses	Eviction prevention; rental assistance (start-up costs for entering rentals); emergency shelter through motel partner.	Pantry, SNAP application assistance (and EBT access on campus)	Hygiene. Transportation. Grocery cards. Cold weather clothing. Kitchen supplies.
Western Washington University	Case management through resource navigator	Emergency/short term college housing	Food pantry	Laundry, showers, storage, and mailstop are packaged with the college housing.
Bellevue College	.05 FTE of resource hub coordinator	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing; short-term housing (if space avail. in campus housing)	Food pantry	Hygiene items/detergent stocked in pantry. Campus has laundry and shower facilities for free to students.

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Bellingham Technical College	50% of funding navigator	Eviction prevention (incl. landlord mediation costs); Rental assistance; short-term housing	Grocery cards or direct disbursement for grocery/hot meal access.	Transportation (typically car repair)
Big Bend Community College	SSEH coordinator. Starfish referral software (cost split between programs using it)	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel vouchers or short-term community placement); short-term housing (subsidy for on-campus dorm); long-term housing (subsidy in partnership with Grant Co. Housing Authority)	Viking Food Pantry, SNAP application, and grocery cards	Storage (community rental). Technology access through library, Workforce Ed Svcs, TRiO; transportation
Cascadia College	Case management through UWKC benefits hub	Eviction prevention; emergency housing (up to 3-night hotel stays)	Food pantry shopping visits	Showers/towels available in fitness center. Transportation (bus pass, parking permit, gas cards, car repair). Utility bills.
Centralia College	Partial funding for 1 FTE case manager supporting SSEH/SEAG	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (motel for <90 days)	Food pantry	In development fiscal year 24: add laundry, shower, storage options
Clark College	.25 FTE Workforce Educ Svcs Housing Prog Coordinator; .5 FTE Emergency Grant program Coordinator (leverage .5 FTE for BFET match)	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel vouchers while in transition to longer term housing via community partners).	Penguin food pantry heat and eat meal options. Subsidized meal vouchers to campus food vendors.	Voucher card for local laundry facility; laundry supplies

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Columbia Basin College	.2 of a program assistant to cover case management and data documentation	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing.	Subsidize food pantry with items lacking in regular stock (e.g., perishables); .5 FTE hourly staff to expand hours of operation.	Transportation (gas cards, passes, repair)
Edmonds College	1 FTE Student Needs Case Manager (split 50/50 SSEH & SEAG); 1 FT Community Resource Advocate (funded by separate grant)	Eviction prevention; emergency housing (motel vouchers); short-term housing (Triton Court Apt on campus). Rental assistance provided through SEAG & other partner grants.	Food cards for motel-staying students. Campus food pantry, SEAG, and other partner grants provide additional food access.	Laundry vouchers for local laundromat. Lockers and showers available in gym. Transportation and technology support provided through other grants and programs.
Everett Community College	.15 of Student Campus and Community Resource Manager	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (single student in on-campus housing up to 1 month; vouchers for families up to 1 month through agreement with local hotel); Long-term housing (3 units in on-campus residence hall reserved annually for SSEH)	Food pantry. Effective fiscal year 2024, EvCC is a Free and Reduced Food Pilot site, and students can now access those funds through the same request form.	Laundry vouchers for local laundromat, hygiene supplies, infant care, and pet supplies also available through food pantry. Showers available through Fitness Center with towels provided at no cost for homeless students.
Grays Harbor College	.25 FTE of a Case Manager	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (as stop gap between homelessness and housing secure; motel stays month to month)	Pre-paid Visa cards to purchase food	Cards issued to use local laundromat. Leased off-campus storage units. Pre-paid cards for hygiene supplies. Funding for utilities.

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Green River College	Provided through existing staff members and Master of Social Work students	Eviction prevention; emergency housing (hotel/motel); short-term housing (rental of 4-bedroom unit in on-campus housing).	Food pantry and grocery hub; SSEH funds supplemental food resources to expand student access.	Cover costs for use of laundry facility in student housing. USPS PO boxes for students who need access to mail services (those in campus housing have mailstop). Lockers available in Student Union. Showers available in Recreation Center. Transportation costs for moves between housing situations.
Highline College	1 FTE Student Housing and Retention Program Manager. Additional student ambassadors compensated by work study.	Rental assistance; short-term housing (2 rooms in campus housing)	Community pantry (on campus 2 days/week)	Shower access (on campus); Hygiene kits. Technology (laptops, Chromebooks). School supplies (USB-enabled backpacks with supplies).
Lake WA Institute of Technology	.7 FTE Resource Coordinator. Starfish referral system.	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel stays)	Direct funding for food; college food pantry	Shower & locker access (campus fitness center). Technology (funding for laptops, hotspots; referral to college laptop loaner program). Short-term counseling available by college counseling staff.

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Lower Columbia College	.45 of 1 FTE Workforce Navigator (split between Student Emergency Grant/SSEH and provides basic food navigation/BFET outreach as part of role). Effective fiscal year 2024, added a second navigator partially funded by Basic Needs Act funding; both navigators are splitting the SSEH caseload.	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel vouchers and other short-term stays); short-term housing (subsidy in partnership with community partners, such as HOPE house).	Campus food pantry (weekly groceries, perishable items, daily grab n go sandwiches/ snacks), weekly hot meals on campus (collaboration w/Salvation Army), grocery gift cards available through other funding sources are leveraged for SSEH students	Laundry supplies & access to campus laundry facility. Showers available in Athletic Center and in Health Science building. Hygiene/shower kits. Technology (laptops and hotspots available for checkout). Transportation (bus passes for all students, gas card through SEAG); Campus mailboxes for students (60 reserved for SSEH students). Employment Navigator support.
North Seattle College	.5 of 1 FTE Housing Resource Specialist (other 50% is Worker Retraining funded).	Eviction prevention; rental assistance. Weekly "Housing 101" resource workshop	Student food cards; gift cards for on-campus micro-mart.	Laundry costs/supplies. Shower access (SSEH funds summer term access to Wellness Center showers; free in other terms). Hygiene (gift cards). Technology (laptop, hotspots, chargers). Transportation (gas cards for students living in cars or travel to housing meetings; ORCA transit cards). Storage (off-site rental). Mail collection by Workforce Ed office.

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Olympic College	10% of Program Manager & 40% of Program Assistant	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel stays); short-term housing (subsidized support).	Resource Center has food and snacks available; direct disbursements for groceries.	Shower access (on campus). Transportation (gas and car repairs for students living in their vehicle). School supplies and personal hygiene items available in Resource Center. In development: renovating shower rooms to include laundry machines with our homeless students in mind.
Pierce College District	Partner with Metropolitan Development Council (MDC) to provide ongoing case management (contract)	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (community partners); short-term housing (on-campus housing for 10 students); long-term housing (provided by MDC case manager referrals & housing)	Food & Hygiene Pantry available through Student Life office at Puyallup and Ft. Steilacoom campuses	Laundry access (on site; SSEH covers facility fee). Shower access (on site; SSEH covers facility fee). Technology (wifi hotspots).
Renton Technical College	1.0 FTE case manager; funding split 50/50 SSEH/Financial Coaching grant	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel vouchers)	Additional food resources for campus food pantry	Hygiene resources for distribution through food pantry
Seattle Central College	PT coordinator at no cost to grant	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotels or short-term transitional housing)	Grocery gift cards for monthly food support	Hygiene products. Technology. Transportation (car repairs; ORCA cards). Storage (rent 5-10 lockers for student use). Class supplies/books/ID cards and non-tuition fees.

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Shoreline Community College	Provided by existing case managers, workforce specialists, and benefit hub navigators at no cost to grant	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; short-term & long-term housing arranged via partnership with Neighborhood House	SSEH provides some food for campus food bank in Benefits Hub & snack stations in other departments on campus	Laundry access/supplies in Athletics bldg. (incl. new washer/dryer purchased with FY23 grant). Hygiene kits. Shower access in Athletics bldg. Technology (Chromebook check-out). Transportation (ORCA cards; gas cards)
South Puget Sound Community College	SSEH pays .16 FTE of a FT Student Housing Support Case Manager; shared position with other student housing services	Emergency housing (short-term hotel or emergency shelter fees). Short-term housing (master lease for 3 off-campus apartments; furnished by college)	Food pantry access. Provide occasional light meal or snack from campus café.	Laundry and shower access on campus and in leased apts, supplies furnished by SSEH. Hygiene items available in food pantry. Technology (pay for high-speed wireless in leased apts). Storage (rent campus lockers or secure off-campus storage).
Spokane Community College	3 coordinators commit 10% of work time each to support eligibility and case management	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (hotel or shelter); Short-term housing (rent support)	Grocery vouchers. Meal/food vouchers for on-site bakery, restaurant, cafeteria, or bookstore.	Laundry vouchers for local laundry facility. Hygiene and hair cut support. Technology (purchase laptops, hotspots, internet monthly payments). Transportation (parking passes, car repairs). Storage unit deposit and/or monthly payment assistance (off-site),
Spokane Falls Community College	Case management distributed across 6 positions depending on nature of support (ranging from .05 -.2 of each position)	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing	Additional food support for pop-up food pantry	Laundry cards provided through local business partnership. Shower access and technology charging/internet access in Fitness Center; hygiene kits provided by SSEH. Technology access in the Library will be expanded into the evening using SSEH funding to support an evening Tech Specialist

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Tacoma Community College	.16 FTE of a FT Resource Navigator	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (motel/hotel stay up to 2 weeks)	Campus food pantry access. Nourish mobile food bank on campus 1 day/week.	Technology (purchase laptops). Transportation (gas cards).
Walla Walla Community College	Half-time Resource Navigator	Rental assistance; emergency housing (temporary shelter expenses); short-term & long-term housing (SSEH covers transition expenses into housing placements through Community Action agency)	Grocery cards to provide food access while Basic Food Assistance process is pending. Food pantry access.	Transportation (gas cards, bus passes for those outside fare-free zones). Mailstop (P.O.Box establishment).
Wenatchee Valley College	23.5% of Workforce Grants Coordinator; 9% of a Grant Navigator; and 20% of a 2nd Grant Navigator position	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing (e.g. pay hotel, tent, park, or air B&B rental fees while seeking more permanent housing solution); short-term housing (may provide access to dorms if available to rent for a quarter, or extended stay facilities; will provide needed items such as blanket, pillow, etc.)	Emergency food items. Meal ticket gift cards for campus cafeteria. Supplement supplies for food pantries in Wenatchee and Omak campuses. Award funds or purchase grocery store gift cards to purchase food outside of campus hours.	Laundry (provide funds for student use at dorms or voucher for local laundromat; supplies). Hygiene supplies. Shower/towel access in gym. Technology (purchase internet access, headphones, laptop, cell phone, or other need). Transportation (fuel cards, car/bike repair, Uber fees, car insurance, license/registration fees, bicycle, other). Storage (facility rental, totes/tubs, padlocks)

College	Case management	Housing accommodations	Food access	Other accommodations: laundry, shower/hygiene, transportation, technology, storage, mailstop, other
Yakima Valley College	Faculty Counselor Case Manager 40IU (200 hrs/quarter)	Eviction prevention; rental assistance; emergency housing; short-term housing; Long-term housing	Access to food pantries at Yakima and Grandview campuses. SSEH funds items not provided by this resource, including perishable items.	Laundry (access to campus facilities; funds for machine operation, laundry supplies). Showers access on campus; Hygiene kits and towels provided through SSEH. Technology (laptop checkout at both campuses). Transportation (SSEH funds gas, bus passes, vehicle repairs). Mailstop (rent P.O. Boxes). Additional support with Clothing needs, School supplies, and Fees/Fines.

Appendix B: Basic Needs Security Among Washington College Students

For full report: https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023.BasicNeedsReport.pdf

Basic Needs Security Among Washington College Students
Washington Student Experience Survey: Executive Summary

In Fall 2022, students at **39 colleges and universities** across Washington State participated in a survey administered by Western Washington University in partnership with the Washington Student Achievement Council.

Over **9,700 students** responded to the survey, with broad representation: **45.3% students of color, 39.5% low-income students, and 51.8% first-generation students**. Responding students shared their experience.

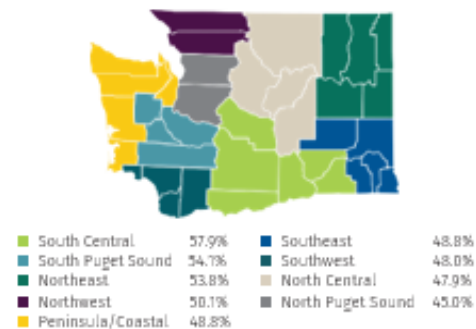## Nearly half of students (49.4%) experienced basic needs insecurity

Students at two-year and four-year colleges had **similar insecurity rates**, with 1 in 2 experiencing food and/or housing insecurity.

2-year colleges
Secure 49.9%
Insecure 50.1%

4-year colleges
Secure 51.2%
Insecure 48.8%
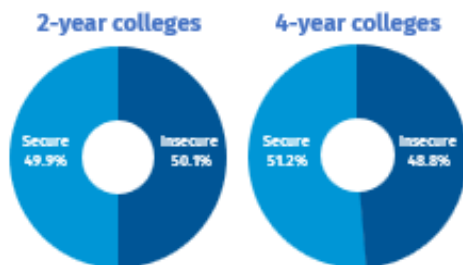
Washington students struggled with **food and housing insecurity** at high rates:

- **4 out of 10** students (38.3%) experienced food insecurity in the last 30 days
- **3 out of 10** students (34.2%) experienced housing insecurity in the last 12 months
- **1 out of 10** students (11.3%) experienced homelessness the last 12 months

Students experienced high rates of basic needs insecurity **in all regions** of the state.

South Central	57.9%	Southeast	48.8%
South Puget Sound	54.7%	Southwest	48.0%
Northeast	53.8%	North Central	47.9%
Northwest	50.1%	North Puget Sound	45.0%
Peninsula/Coastal	48.8%		

Some students experienced basic needs insecurity at higher rates than their peers:

- **American Indian/Alaska Native and Black/African American students** experienced significantly higher rates of insecurity than White students.

White: 47.1%
Black/African-American: 66.8%
American Indian/Alaskan Native: 67.8%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%
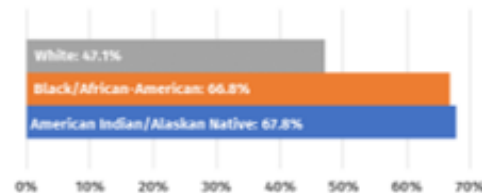
Less than half of students experiencing insecurity accessed basic needs support resources in the last 6 months:
- 48.9% accessed public resources
- 33.77% accessed campus resources

- **Former foster youth** had the highest rates of basic needs insecurity among all subpopulations:
  - 67.5% experienced food insecurity
  - 58.9% experienced housing insecurity
  - 23.7% experienced homelessness

Appendix C: Community Partner Organizations for SSEH Referrals

211 WA	Entrust Community Services	People for People
4 Tomorrow Today	Essentials First	Pet Food Bank
988 Suicide & Crisis Hotline	Eviction Hotline	Pierce Advocacy and Resource Center
Affordable Connectivity Program	Extended Foster Care	Pioneer Human Services
African Community Housing	Friends of Youth	Refugee Women's Alliance ReWA
All Seattle Kids Home	Goodwill Industries	Regional Access Points
Apodments	Grays Harbor Free Legal Services	Renew (Grant Co. Behavioral Health)
Asian Counseling & Referral Service	Healthpoint	Resource Tenant Line
ASPEN (victim advocacy)	Helpline	Safe Parking
Attain Housing	HopeSource	SafeLink Wireless
Auto Angels	Housing Authority	SAGE
Beautiful Soles	Housing Connector	Salvation Army
Bellevue LifeSpring	Housing Hope	Sea Mar
Bellweather Apts	Housing Legal Assistance	Seattle Urban League
Ben's Fund	IACS (Indian American Comm. Svcs)	Serve Moses Lake Justice Project
Cares of Washington	Internet Essentials	Shoreline Community Care
Caring Pregnancy Center	Jewish Family Services	Skill Source
Catholic Community Services	King County Public Health	Sofia Way
Central WA Disability Resources	Kinship Care	Solid Ground Tenant Services
CHAP (Community Health Access)	Legal Aid	Sound Mental Health
Childcare Aware	Lifewire	Supplemental Nutrition Prog. for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
CISC (immigrant services)	Love Inc. (Homeless)	
Clothing Bank	Love Overwhelming Linking Cowlitz Co.	Spokane County Resource Center
Cocoon House	Lynnwood Food Bank/Food Truck	St. Vincent de Paul
College Success Foundation	Mama's Hands	Together Center
Community Action	Mary's Place	TRAC Associates
Community Food Pantry	Merit Resource Services Yakima	Tri-Cities Community Health
Community Garden	Metropolitan Development Council	United Churches Emergency Fund (UCEF)
Community Health of Central Washington	Mill Creek Community Food Bank	United Way
Community Meal Program	More Wright Group (housing list)	Urban League Seattle
Community Youth Provider	Multi-Service Center	Verdant Health
Compass Housing Alliance	My Sister's Pantry	Veteran Integration Program
ConnectAll	NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)	Veteran's Crisis Line & Supportive Services
Coordinated Entry	Neighborhood House	Volunteers of America Western WA
Core Health	New Hope	Vyve Internet
Crisis Connection	North Helpline	WA Connection
DAWN (domestic violence support)	Northwest Education Access	WA State Working Families Tax Credit
Department of Child, Youth & Families	Northwest Furniture	WAVE
Department of Licensing	Northwest Immigrant Rights Project	Wellspring
Department of Social & Health Services	Northwest Justice Project	Whatcom Transit Authority
Downtown Emergency Service Center	Nourishing Networks	WorkSource
DSHS: Aging, Blind, Disabled Cash Assist.	Office of Insurance Commissioner	WWIN (Washington Women in Need)
DSHS: Housing and Essential Needs	ORCA Lift	Yakima Neighborhood Health Services
Eastside Legal Assistance Program	ORIA (Office of Refugee Immigrant Assist.)	YMCA
El Centro de la Raza	Pacific Mountain Workforce Devel. Council	Youth And Family Link
Emergency Feeding Program	Partner In Employment	YWCA

Appendix D: Key Research and Resources on Postsecondary Basic Needs

Basic Needs Security Among Washington College Students. Washington Student Experience Survey: Findings Report. January 2023. Washington Student Achievement Council Western Washington University

Expanding Access to Housing Support Resources for Postsecondary Students Experiencing Homelessness in Washington. July 2022. MEF Associates

United Way of King County: Bridge To Finish Outcome Study. 2023. Washington Student Achievement Council & MDRC

Exploring Food Security for Postsecondary Students in Washington October 2021. Education Research & Data Center

Preliminary Strategic Plan: Prevention of Youth Homelessness. January 2021. Washington State Department of Commerce: Office of Homeless Youth

The Hope Center Survey 2021: Basic Needs Insecurity During the Ongoing Pandemic. March 31, 2021

2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20): first look at the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Undergraduate student enrollment, housing, and finances. June 2021. National Center for Education Statistics at Institute of Education Sciences

Food Insecurity: Better Information Could Help Eligible College Students Access Federal Food Assistance Benefits. December 2018. United States Government Accountability Office

Path to 70 Update: Why Washingtonians Value Credentials but Aren't Completing Them. December 2022. Washington Roundtable, Partnership for Learning, & Kinetic West

Where are the Students? New Research into College Enrollment Declines. Sept. 28, 2022. Edge Research and HCM Strategists

Appendix E: Recommendations for Future Research

The Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness pilot has identified questions for future research to increase the state level understanding of how to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness and other forms of basic needs insecurities.

Research question	Rationale
What are the services and accommodations offered by Washington institutions to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness and other basic needs insecurities?	An inventory and analysis of the unique strategies by institution and region could serve as a resource for prospective students and navigators, for institutions looking to learn from other colleges' strategies, and to identify trends and gaps in support on a regional and state basis.
How are different resource networks currently being accessed by and for postsecondary students? How effectively are they connecting students to resources? How can these networks be optimized for postsecondary student referral and access to resources?	Resource and referral networks such as WA 211, UniteUs and FindHelp are accessed in different ways by and for students and present the potential for referral and access data collection and trends analysis. Analysis of current usage and effectiveness for students, as well as the benefits of common system usage, could guide institutional referral efforts.
At the level of practice, how are recent programs and investments intended to support students' basic needs integrated for holistic student support? Where are there gaps in critical support or in access for certain populations of students?	In addition to the SSEH funding, there have been multiple programs and pilots targeted at certain populations of students, such as the health insurance pilot, the State Emergency Assistance Grants, Basic Food Employment and Training, and increased access to state childcare subsidies for CTC students. There are also new statewide policies for public postsecondary students such as the Postsecondary Basic Needs Act. A comprehensive analysis of how well current programs intended to support students' financial and basic needs stability are integrated to provide holistic support for students could guide institutional and system efforts to integrate services, as well as point to gaps in support.

Research question	Rationale
How commonly are postsecondary students connected to public benefits to address basic needs?	There are some public benefits that certain postsecondary students can currently access. Understanding current levels of access for students can help inform better systems of outreach and support, as well as identifying and addressing policy barriers that may affect postsecondary student eligibility.
What is the credential attainment rate for SSEH participating students in the longer term? How does this compare to eligible students not receiving SSEH services?	Understanding the long-term credential attainment for students receiving SSEH — and ideally other basic needs supports — will help Washington better understand the academic and attainment impacts of the investment. This longitudinal information is available through ERDC for K12 students who have instances of homelessness or foster care through the Project Education Impact annual report and could serve as a model. Additionally, qualitative studies of students' experiences after receiving services and on their journey to attainment could help us better understand impacts.
For students identified in the K12 system as experiencing homelessness or foster care, where are there local or regional successes in bridging students to supportive postsecondary? What key elements contribute to successful transition in relation to basic needs security and support?	Proactive support of students' basic needs for those who have been identified as experiencing basic needs insecurity prior to enrollment is a critical area of future work. Examination of local or regional partnerships and practices that show evidence of successful persistence and attainment for these students could guide development of proactive policy and practice for greater attainment.

About the Washington Student Achievement Council

The Washington Student Achievement Council is committed to increasing educational opportunities and attainment in Washington. The Council has three main functions:

- Lead statewide strategic planning to increase educational attainment.
- Administer programs that help people access and pay for college.
- Advocate for the economic, social, and civic benefits of higher education.

The Council has ten members. Four members represent each of Washington's major education sectors: four-year public baccalaureates, four-year private colleges, public community and technical colleges, and K-12 public schools. Six are citizen members, including two current students (one graduate student and one undergraduate student).

About the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges is led by a nine-member governor-appointed board and provides leadership, advocacy, and coordination for Washington's system of 34 public community and technical colleges. Each year, about 273,000 students of all ages and backgrounds enroll in community and technical colleges to train for the workforce, prepare to transfer to a university, gain basic skills, or pursue continuing education.

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format, please contact the Washington Student Achievement Council or the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

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