

Priority Recommendations at a Glance



Enhance Access to Existing Resources

Create Basic Needs Hubs and Provide Navigators for Campus and Community Resources |

Fund and require all public postsecondary institutions to designate and provide training for one or more full-time basic needs navigators and create a centralized basic needs resource hub to facilitate student access to campus and community resources.

Connect Students to Public Benefits Using Existing Student Data | Require postsecondary institutions to utilize existing student data (e.g., FAFSA and campus support utilization data) to identify students likely eligible for public and tax benefits programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF), Medicaid, federal or state housing supports, health insurance subsidy under the Affordable Care Act, the American Opportunity Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, and more, and to partner with state departments to develop data-sharing agreements, coordinated outreach strategies, and ‘opt-out’ screening processes to increase participation among students who are eligible.

Strengthen Student Access to SNAP | Expand and streamline student eligibility for SNAP benefits in accordance with recent [federal guidance](#) by incorporating one or more of the following into the state’s SNAP plan:

- Classifying any program at a public institution of higher education that serves low-income students and increases employability as “equivalent” to a SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program, allowing income-eligible students to more easily qualify under stringent SNAP rules. For example, most students enrolled in community colleges, career and technical education (CTE) programs, and other CTE programs that meet definitions under the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*, could qualify.
- Flexibly interpreting work-study participation to include time prior to—or in between—employment. For example, include periods where students are approved for work-study, but an assignment has not begun or a position has not yet opened, as satisfying the work-study participation exemption.
- Averaging work hours across academic terms like semesters or quarters (and excluding academic breaks and holidays) for students still subject to the 20-hour-per-week work rule, to minimize variations that occur month-to-month.

Streamline Student Medicaid Enrollment and Renewal | Adopt Express Lane Eligibility for Medicaid enrollment—including the exemption to allow for use with adults as well as children—to streamline application and renewal processes by allowing state departments to utilize existing data from other designated programs, such as SNAP, TANF, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Head Start, and others.



Bolster Existing Resources

Expand Financial Aid Programs to Cover Student Basic Needs | Expand funding from State of Michigan financial aid programs to cover expenses beyond tuition and fees that are included within the total cost of attendance (e.g., books, course materials, supplies and equipment; transportation, food and housing, dependent care costs, study abroad costs, disability-related expenses, and miscellaneous expenses) for all Michigan high school graduates. For instance, consider using the \$1,000 bonus award for non-tuition costs included for Pell Grant recipients in the Michigan Achievement Scholarship Community College Guarantee as a model for the Michigan Reconnect program that supports older and returning students.

Fund Additional Student Mental Health Services | Provide permanent funding and technical assistance to institutions so that all Michigan postsecondary students have access to ongoing, comprehensive mental health services through their college or community partners.

Increase the Accessibility of MI's Child Care Scholarship | Adjust the state's Child Development and Care Scholarship to allow parenting students to qualify for full-time care while enrolled at least part-time and partner with colleges and universities to conduct intentional outreach to parenting students about the program.

Address Mental Health Workforce Shortages through Student Coverage Parity | Strengthen mental and behavioral health care parity for students by defining evidence-based mental and behavioral health clinical standards and coverage decision criteria, establishing strict limits to mental and behavioral health care utilization reviews, requiring insurers to report the level of access to mental and behavioral health care they provide, requiring insurers to provide higher rates and more prompt reimbursement for mental and behavioral health services, and increasing the state's Medicaid mental and behavioral health care reimbursement rates.



Establish New Resources

Establish Additional Emergency Housing Resources | Establish, fund, and evaluate a program for institutions to provide—either directly or in partnership with community organizations—short-term or emergency housing resources, and related living and hygiene facilities and services such as laundry, storage, and showers, while ensuring such facilities are gender inclusive. Consider prioritizing services for former foster youth and students experiencing homelessness and provide related case management.

Enhance Student Broadband Access | Utilize funding from the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) and the Digital Equity Act (DEA) programs and similar state and/or federal programs to create free (or low-cost) Wi-Fi infrastructure in communities throughout the state, including areas with a high density of college students living on and off campus.



Strengthen Impact through Improved Data

Collect Data to Identify and Support Michigan's Parenting Students | Require all Michigan colleges and universities to collect data on students' parenting status and provide guidance on an implementation approach that balances robust data collection with individual student privacy.

Improve Availability of Student Basic Needs Data | Enhance the state's longitudinal data system for higher education by incorporating data on the prevalence of student basic needs insecurity, and participation among students who are eligible of public benefits, alongside existing student data.