



March 12, 2020

TO: Passport Viable Plan Institutions

FROM: Dawn Cypriano-McAferly  
Passport to College Program

**SUBJECT: PASSPORT INCENTIVE GRANT GUIDANCE – USE OF FUNDS**

Institutions have asked for additional guidance or documentation on how Passport incentive grant funds can be used. The program’s budget language is broad and reads:

*Funds are provided for student scholarships, and for incentive payments to the colleges they attend for individualized student support services which may include, but are not limited to, college and career advising, counseling, tutoring, costs incurred for students while school is not in session, personal expenses, health insurance, and emergency services.*

Passport designated support staff on campuses report the incentive funding has been invaluable to improve the coordination of services and involvement with community based programs. Building a rapport with Passport students early is essential and is especially helpful during a time of crisis.

Institutions report that incentive funding has allowed designated support staff to offer food with activities, and provide resources that are unique to students from foster care. Some common uses of incentive funds include targeted services, such as financial planning seminars, private study areas and access to computer labs, special orientations and welcome functions and access to additional pre-enrollment, academic, personal and career services.

Incentive grants may also be used for general purposes. These purposes include emergency loans, wages, textbooks for a lending library, a resource loan library that included computers and other electronic equipment, gift cards to grocery stores, gasoline or transit passes to help with transportation costs, college survival backpacks and school supplies, healthy snacks, warm clothes including socks, hats, boots, gloves and coats, medical bills, housing expenses, and testing fees.

Please note that if the institution uses incentive grant funds to award a student a gift card, gas card, or another source of cash assistance, it must be considered a “resource” for financial aid purposes. For more information, contact the financial aid staff on your campus.

WSAC encourages institutions to use institutional incentive grant funds in the academic year it is received, however, if not all funds are used, the institution must provide a plan for future incentive grant use. Incentive funds received must be expended within two years of receipt.

If you have any questions about the use of incentive grant funds, you may contact me at 360-753-7846 or email [dawnc@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:dawnc@wsac.wa.gov).