WASHINGTON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT COUNCIL
Adult Affordability Meeting

April 20, 2018

Part 1: 9am—12pm
Part 2: 12:30pm—3:30pm
Renton Technical College—Conference Rooms H102 & H103

Purpose

As WSAC prepares to move to the next phase of the statewide adult reengagement initiative, we would like to convene a meeting to discuss affordability barriers and possible solutions for returning adult learners.

Meeting objectives

PART 1

1. Identify advantages and disadvantages state academic progress policies and whether they have flexibility for returning students.
2. Determine scope of student eligibility, institution participation, and program design elements for a statewide Microgrant.
3. Explore approaches to statewide and campus-level messages related to affordability.

4. Inform and improve content in the portal.
5. Understand and share practices regarding coordination of benefits.
6. Develop recommendations to align or improve state policies and/or program.

Agenda

PART 1		
TIME	**TOPIC**	**WHO**
9:00-9:15am (15 min)	Introductions and Project Overview	Rachelle Sharpe, WSAC
9:15-10:00am (45 mins)	Satisfactory Academic Policies • Current state policy • Alternative approaches • SAP amnesty discussion	Becky Thompson, WSAC
10:00-11:00am (60 mins)	Pre-enrollment Microgrant • Summary of approaches • Student Eligibility • Program Design	
11:00-11:15am (15 mins)	Break	All
11:15am-12pm (45 mins)	Financial Commitment • 2018 Legislative Update • Explore messaging a financial commitment to certain students—statewide and campus-level	Becky and Rachelle, WSAC
PART 2		
TIME	**TOPIC**	**WHO**
12:30-1:45pm (75 mins)	Coordination of benefits overview	Amy Ellen Duke, CLASP
1:45-3pm (75 mins)	Examples of campus practices	
3:00-3:15pm (15 mins)	Break	All
3:15-3:30pm (15 mins)	Child care availability and affordability	

- Former transcripts are used for Timeframe, not SAP – although that's a best practice, not consistent
- Not all schools require appeals
  - *Perhaps we should breeze through SAP policies and processes for the purpose of:*
    - *Former transcript and how evaluated*
    - *Appeal policy*
    - *Appeal process*
    - *Communication of appeals*
  - Advantage of appeal is talking to someone – part-time, resolution of issues
  - Share best practices – automated appeals
    - Does the message come across as "you've done something wrong" – "you're a great candidate for an appeal"
    - Avoid duplication of efforts
    - For federal aid need to petition
    - Can we give those who come through the portal a different chance
      - *Is that okay? Becky will think about this*
      - *May just have improved messaging*
- How are we engaging students and helping clarify objectives and then understand the obstacles
  - They may have awareness
- Institutional fund does not have SAP requirement
  - *In practice is that applied?*
- Do campuses share a rubric of what is looked for in an appeal – share w advisors
- Rare situation that FAAs can decide (appeals)
- Look at data – number of letters "SAP" and number of appeals submitted and number approved
- Opportunity Grant has a lot of flexibility
  - *Could that be looked at for ideas*
- Training of staff advisors
- Bridge funding – lack of interest to have no FAFSA
- Capture BFET, worker retraining
- The student may not even realize they left under unsatisfactory circumstances
- Need navigators
- Start Next Quarter

MICROGRANT

- Finite group of students
- Money owed but not to your institution
- Not defaults and repayments

- o And institutional debt
- o Books
- o Parking fee
- o Regular payments
- Application fee?
- Transcript fee?
  - o Could be a one time release
- What about outstanding tuition?
- What if they are in collections
- Perkins loans being paid
- What's the impact on aid if it goes to receiving institution

<u>Principles</u>
- Matching fund for institution
- Shared responsibility approach
- Putting money for students who sometimes come
- Middle of the road – not everyone needs to match
- Integrate campus-based initiatives and systems
- Used equity lens
- Easy to access
- Evaluation process

Staying out of collections – meaning cut out the 3rd party vendor

What would be the process – are they getting advising that are needed

How old debt

Whose sharing responsibility

Timing of payment

FAFSA/WASFA required – consider lenses

What is covered should be eligible?

- Since there is a financial cap that is low dollar – doesn't make sense to put a lot of restrictions around why they owe the debt – any institutional debt should be considered (tuition, parking, repayment)
- Could be a non-resident – what if it's not a WA school
- Reapplication and transcript fees – understandable and WSAC can do it
- Small dollar could be problematic – library fine example – so many people that can put holds on and a lot of policy

- Keep it uncomplicated – if engaged through portal – engage in that moment – not take 3-4 weeks
    - Waiving under an agreement for certain students might be easier – can an online 24 system help them through admissions application
    - Remember they can enroll overnight in the private career sector
    - We may have lost them because the process was way too overwhelming in the first place
    - If they can't get the transcript they'll never know if they are going to make process
    - How can this keep momentum for the student
    - Paying the fee could be a huge achievement
    - Focus on welcoming, hit the reset button, clear the pathway – some responsibilities
        - Don't build another bureaucracy in advance of this that filters students out – the student and college needs to pay
        - Help them get in the situation so they can take next step without barriers and angst – a support system that will help
    - Campuses write off receivables, off the books anyway – won't cost anything
    - Multilayered value proposition for everyone – students and all institutions
    - Learn from other institutions – expectations, requirements, data sharing, how to communicate, best practices
    - The timing of admissions might not align with other applications so is there an alternative way to do this
    - The importance of using navigators (at the state level) guiding and making sure they are serious and moving through the process
    - How much debt and type of debt – stay out of the collection process
    - You can recall the debt – don't pay the collector
    - Need to understand the type of debt
    - Not a lot of transparency – if there is a payment plan what does it look like and what's reasonable – retroactive withdrawal
    - Does it matter if it's internal or external
    - Change the reporting to give success to all former institutions
    - What is the timing of if in front of me and we need to wait for CWU
    - Could have a decentralized approach with campuses paying campuses
    - Student needs optimism and the details are on the backend
    - WSU looked at a committee reviewing reasons there are holds – a best practice