



Webinar Series

Washington Parenting Student Success Learning Series

May 5, 2026



Washington Parenting Student Success Learning Series

PRE-WEBINAR: Advancing Parenting Student Success

- February 6, 2026 – see link in chat

SESSION 1: How can data collection about parenting students improve experiences and success?

- March 10, 2026 – see link in chat

SESSION 2: What can campuses do to advance parenting student success?

- March 31 – see link in chat

SESSION 3: How can communities work together to advance parents' access and success?

- TODAY, May 5, 2026 10:00-11:30 PDT
- Explore how communities – cross-sector organizations, campuses, and other partners – can support parents' access and success.

Introducing our core collaborators

Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)

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Ann Slaughter
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Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)

Jennifer Dellinger



Theresa Anderson

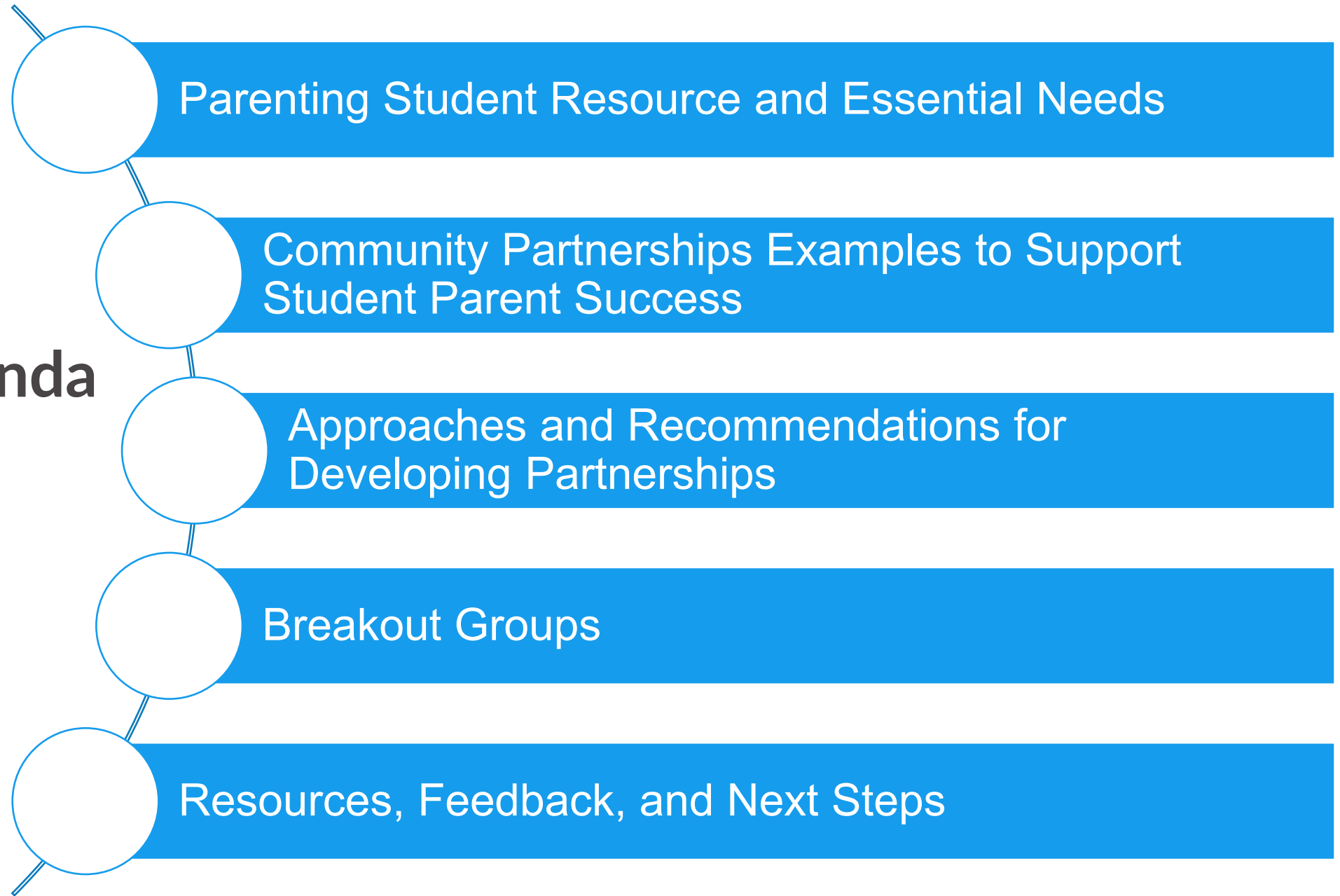


Kimberly Salazar



Kate Westaby

Today's Agenda



Parenting Student Resource and Essential Needs

Washington's parenting students

- **18%** of WA college students are parenting students – equal to national average
 - Disproportionately female (75% vs. 63% nonparenting students), low-income (62% vs. 40% of nonparents), and from historically underserved communities
- **68%** face basic needs insecurity (vs. 52% of all students)
 - Infant care costs \$20,677 in WA—more than double in-state tuition (\$8,144)
- **63%** of Washingtonians live in a child care desert (rate is 51% nationally)
 - Nearly **50%** of WA parenting students say child care hours conflict with their class schedules
- There are **688,000** parents of minor children in Washington who do not have a college degree—about 1/3 have some college experience



Why support parents in college?

- Despite earning **similar or better grades**, student parents are much less likely to complete college
 - Only **17%** earn a degree within six years, compared to 50% of nonparents
 - Even after accounting for demographics, student parents are **55% less likely** to complete
- Student parents face **overlapping challenges**: time constraints, limited child care, and lack of family-friendly college supports. Most critically, they face intense short-term financial pressure to meet their families' basic needs.
 - Solving these issues allows them to complete degrees, which leads to large **payoffs** for parents, children, colleges, and the economy

Parenting students' employment and basic needs

- **82%** of student caregivers combined 40+ hours/week of paid work & dependent care
- Large-scale analysis of time-use survey data found that student parents had roughly **60 fewer minutes per day**, of discretionary time to spend on their education
- **34%** of parenting students say they would drop or reduce classes without child care
- **27%** would be less likely to enroll in future semesters
- **24%** of parents reported missing at least one day of class due to lack of child care—among young parents, the rate was **32%**

Parenting students' employment and basic needs

Recent surveys from Trellis Strategies and The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs show:

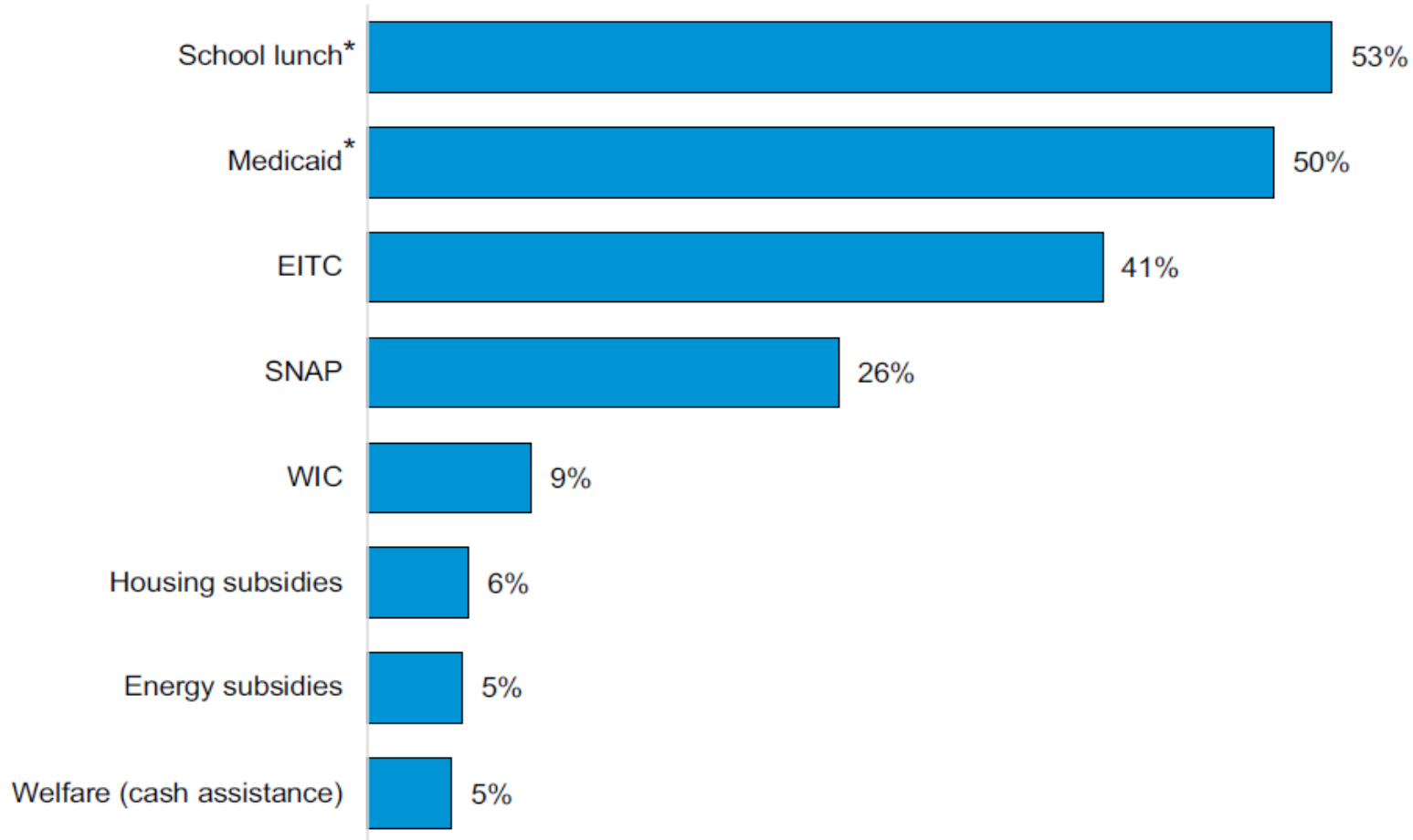
- **Over half** of student parents were food insecure
- **Nearly two thirds** were housing insecure
- **Over 10 percent** were homeless
- **Nearly 1 in 5** missed three or more days of class due to child care gaps

Parenting students' employment and basic needs

- **73%** of caregiving students didn't know they could request additional housing assistance from their institution
 - Only **3%** asked for and received institutional aid.
- Many moves are driven by necessity, not choice
 - Among those who moved 3x in the past year: **32%** couldn't afford rent; **23%** said housing was unsafe for their family
- Housing discrimination is real and racialized
 - **9%** of Black caregiving students faced discrimination while searching – nearly **2x** the rate of their white peers (5%)

Many student parents use public programs

Percent of undergraduate student parents living in households estimated to utilize public programs, by program



There are obvious solutions

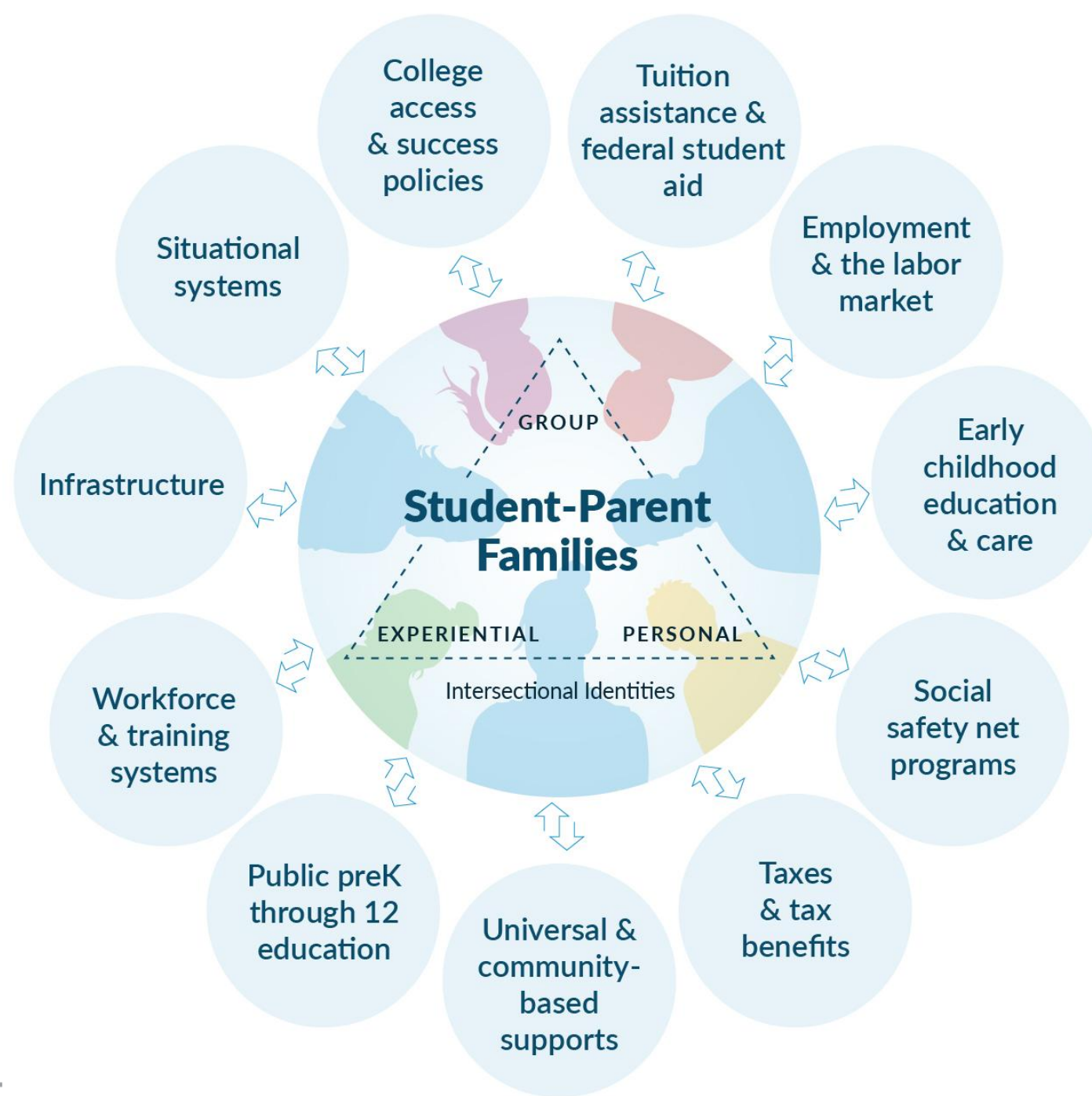
A big one:

Collaboration is an efficient way to make connections between higher education and community partners or public agencies

Discussion

- What do you see is standing in the way of current parenting students succeeding—or that are preventing parents from pursuing higher education goals?
- What are some preliminary ideas about how partnerships between college and nonprofits or local/state government agencies could help offset these challenges?

Community Partnerships to Support Student Parent Success



College access & success policies

- Recruitment & outreach
- Orientation & registration
- Class scheduling
- Academic, basic needs, & legal supports
- Health & mental health services offered by colleges
- On-campus dining & college-provided food supports
- Student-parent data collection
- Title IX
- The Civil Rights Act
- ADA protections
- Family-friendly campuses
 - On-campus family housing
 - Inclusive classroom learning experiences
 - Student-parent-specific services, spaces, & policies
- Federal policies on minors on campus
- Higher education funding
- College accountability policies & practices
 - Accreditation bodies
 - Regulations on for-profit colleges

Situational systems

- Child welfare & foster care system
- Child support system
- Fatherhood programs
- Veterans' services/military (and spousal) benefits
- Immigration system & services
- Justice system
- Additional support for people with disabilities & neurodiversity
- Teen & young parent programs
- Tribal policies

Infrastructure

- Technology infrastructure & supports
- Transportation
- Housing & rental market
- Health infrastructure
- Mental health infrastructure
- Data systems (state or federal)

Workforce & training systems

- Individual Training Accounts
- American Job Centers/workforce development system
- SNAP E&T
- Non-credit-bearing job training

Public preK through 12 education

- Local & state preK & 3K policies
- Elementary & secondary education quality
- School logistics, including hours, location, & transportation
- School choice/out-of-district attendance policies
- School expectations of parent engagement/involvement
- Health & mental health services through schools/districts
- IEP & special needs policies
- After-school program offered through schools/districts
- Postsecondary education counseling/ navigation services
- Services for pregnant/parenting high school students

Universal & community-based basic need supports

- Stimulus payments
- CARES Act funding
- Private lending, credit, debt, & bankruptcy services
- Non-profit organization supports

Taxes & tax benefits

- Income taxes
- Tax credits for families with children
- Higher education tax benefits for students
- Affordable tax software & preparation

Tuition assistance & federal student aid

- Pell Grants
- Scholarships
- FAFSA & EFC, including child care allowances
- Federally subsidized loans
- Private loans
- Work-study
- Cost of higher education and return-on-investment
- Student debt & loan cancellation or forgiveness
- College income share or outcome agreements

Employment & the labor market

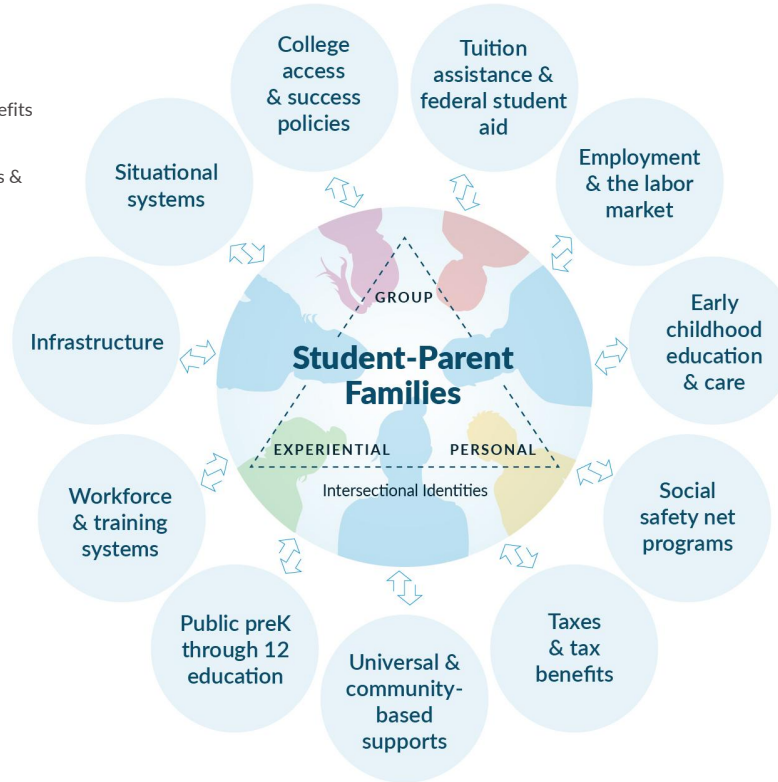
- Nondiscrimination policies
- Minimum wage & wage equity
- Family leave
- Unemployment Insurance
- Employer tuition support or training
- Work-based learning (paid & unpaid)
- Predictable & flexible hours
- Remote work opportunities & policies

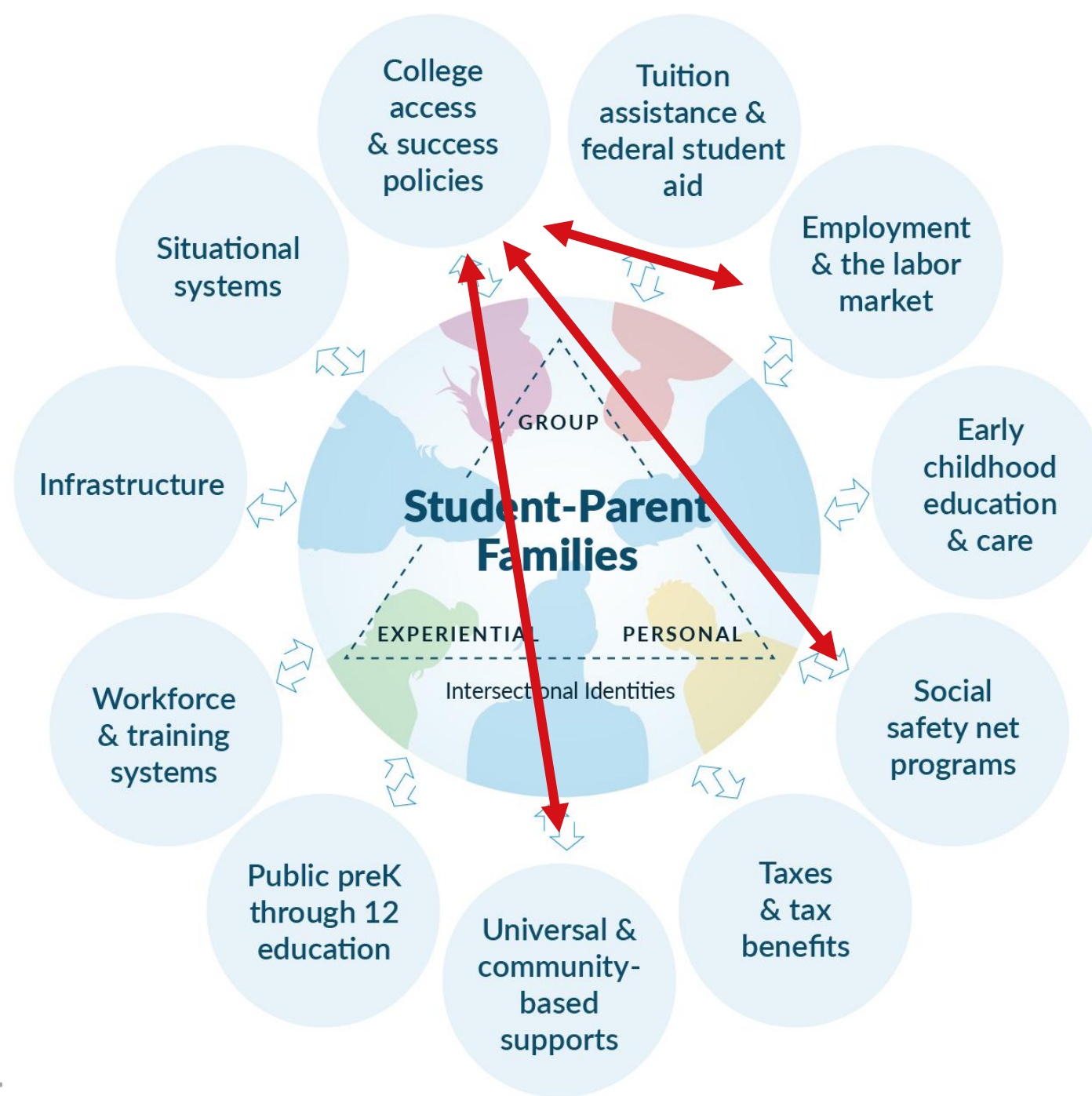
Early childhood education & care

- CCDF subsidies
- Head Start/Early Head Start
- PreK & 3K education & care
- College/university child care (CCAMPIS)
- College/university child care (self-funded, private, & partnerships)
- After-school care
- Child care supply/availability
- Child care quality issues
- Child care on demand, drop-in, & back-up care
- Resource & referral centers

Social safety net programs

- TANF
- SNAP, WIC, & FRPL
- Public/Subsidized housing
- Medicaid & CHIP
- Heat & energy assistance
- SSI/SSDI (adult & child)





Where would you locate yourself in here?



Child-care partnership examples

- Kids on Campus – ACCT + National Head Start Association
 - 5-year national initiative co-locating Head Start/Early Head Start programs on community college campuses. Colleges provide space; Head Start brings federally funded, full-day early learning for children of student parents at no cost.
kidsoncampus.org
 - 9 community and technical colleges in Washington, such as Spokane Community College
- YMCA Campus Partnerships
 - Jamestown Community College, in partnership with the YMCA of the Twin Tiers, offers high-quality, affordable, and dependable childcare for students, employees, and community members on the Cattaraugus County Campus.

Housing partnership examples

- Highline College + King County Housing Authority (WISH Program)
 - Students experiencing homelessness receive Housing Choice Vouchers (up to 54 months) through a partnership with KCHA, supported by United Way of King County. Vouchers remain active for 6 months post-graduation to support the transition.
- Jeremiah Program
 - Jeremiah Program (JP) is a wraparound housing supportive program for single mothers and their families while moms pursue education.
 - On some partner campuses, housing is secured through community partnerships rather than provided in a JP-owned apartment building.

Other student parent-specific basic needs partnership possibilities

- **Financial**—parenting students’ costs are higher
 - Scholarships specifically for student parents
 - Help applying for federal or state financial benefits (e.g., TANF)
- **Transportation**—families’ timing and routes are complex
 - Bus/transit passes for student parents and their children
 - Partnerships with SNAP E&T provides transportation to work or approved training program
 - Providing rides through rideshares or taxis
- **Technology**—parents do homework while children are asleep (need wifi); laptops may break easier or be unreliable (need updated tech)
 - Partnerships with libraries or local businesses

Other partnership strategies

- **Cross-referral** of students/parents
- **Cross-promotion** of grants, supports, resources, and opportunities
- **Co-location** of staff or services
- **Purposeful alignment** of service hours and eligibility standards
- Shared **intake** procedures and “no wrong door” approaches
- Shared **data** systems or routine data-sharing loops (more on this later)

WA partnership examples:

Peninsula College

Green River College

Approaches and Recommendations for Developing Partnerships

Promising characteristics of community partnerships

1. Develop shared language

- Include an information exchange where partners learn about each other and ask questions over time

2. Identify shared goals and expectations, and even a shared vision

- Identify how you can develop a mutually beneficial partnership
- Clarify expected duties and roles

3. Formalize and systematize the partnership

- Develop formal agreements such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that detail expectations

Additional considerations

- Relationships take time to develop
 - Going through the steps on the previous slide could take a few years depending on partner
- Plan for sustainability from the beginning
 - Collaborate on a grant application
 - Identify foundations, state source, private donors, or other funders who may be interested in supporting partnerships
 - Identify appropriate FTE and staff

Check out the briefs on the SPARK website

<https://studentparentaction.org/resources/student-parents-basic-needs>



Meeting Student Parents' Basic Needs

Partnerships between colleges and public agencies can help student parents meet their basic needs and achieve their education goals

- A collaborative project between the Urban Institute, Child Trends, Amy Ellen Duke-Benfield, and two STAR Fellows identifies:
- ▶ the motivation for supporting student parents' basic needs,
 - ▶ practical strategies to develop partnerships between colleges and public agencies, and
 - ▶ how student parents currently use public programs to help support their families while they pursue postsecondary degrees and credentials.



Strategies to connect student parents to public programs

College-level steps:

- Identify potentially eligible students using existing data
- Integrate outreach into student services
- Simplify consent and build trust
- Hone communications
- Dedicate staff capacity
- Understand the administrative landscape
- Partner with public agencies

Strategies to connect student parents to public programs

State higher education office and system-level support:

- Understand the landscape
- Build relationships with public human service and workforce agency leaders
- Provide tools and templates
- Resource and scale the work

Breakout Groups

Prompts and links

Identify:

- A parent-focused partnership you **HAVE** developed
- A parent-focused partnership you **WOULD LIKE TO** develop

Discuss:

- How does/would this partnership help parents in college?
- What did/would it take to make the partnership successful?
- How is/could data-sharing be a partnership tool to smooth processes for students and partners?
- What partnership barriers are hard to overcome?

ROOM 1
Seattle Metro Area

<https://tinyurl.com/WSAC-Urban-2026-Session3-Room1>

ROOM 2
Other Western WA

<https://tinyurl.com/WSAC-Urban-2026-Session3-Room2>

ROOM 3
Eastern WA

<https://tinyurl.com/WSAC-Urban-2026-Session3-Room3>

Large group reflections

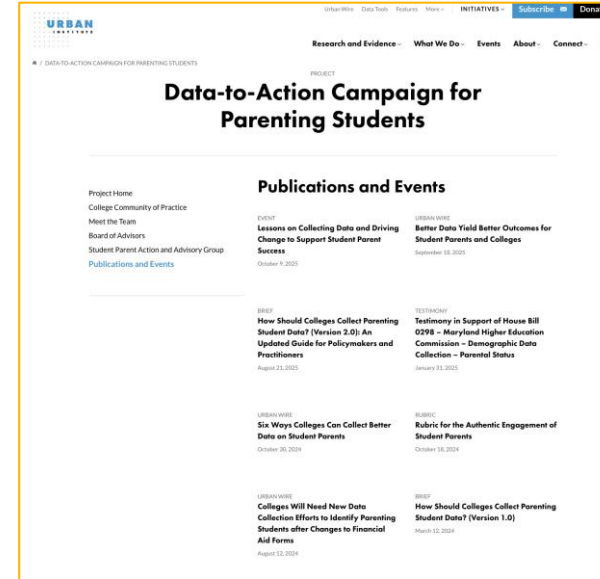
- Which partnerships exist, and which do you hope to see?
- What are the keys to success?
- What are the barriers?
- Did you have any big “a-ha” moments?
- What do you want to do next?

Resources, Feedback, and Next Steps

Resources



SPARK Collaborative
studentparentaction.org



Data-to-Action Campaign
urban.org/projects/data-action-campaign-parenting-students

Share your feedback and request support

As we end,
please complete this
survey and share how
we can support you.



tinyurl.com/WAwebinar3

Next steps

- Urban Institute is producing recommendations
- Work groups
 - Data
 - Campus practices
- Revisions to legislation

Thank you for attending!

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Can colleges share data on students to help them access external programs and supports?

Many colleges and states treat FERPA as a prohibition, rather than as a framework with potential pathways for secure data sharing

Under FERPA, data can be shared:

- With government agencies to support program access **with written student consent** (the clearest route)
- Without consent to other employees or contractors within the college who serve as “school officials” with **“legitimate educational interests.”**
- Without consent to other institutions, the state, or organizations administering student financial aid programs if “the disclosure is in **connection with financial aid the student has applied for or previously received** and it is necessary to determine eligibility for, amount of, or conditions of the aid, or to enforce terms and conditions
- Without consent to any individual or organization if it is **“directory information”**

Can colleges share data on students to help them access external programs and supports?

- **The easiest way to assuage concerns is for colleges to ask students for consent through routine forms and processes**
 - The U.S. Department of Education has encouraged colleges to develop consent processes and published guidance on consent with sample language.
- The [Privacy Technical Assistance Center](#) at the U.S. Department of Education can help
- The NASFAA decision tree is a great resource: https://www.nasfaa.org/uploads/documents/NASFAA_Data_Sharing_Decision_Tree.pdf

