Expanding Community Colleges as SNAP E&T Providers

Braiding Funding

Planning Guide #5



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This planning guide is one of a series of documents produced by ACCT with the following project partners:

APHSA American Public Human Services Association

SJI SEATTLE JOBS INITIATIVE Opening Doors to Living-Wage Careers

skills strategy CONSULTING

USDA Food & Nutrition Service

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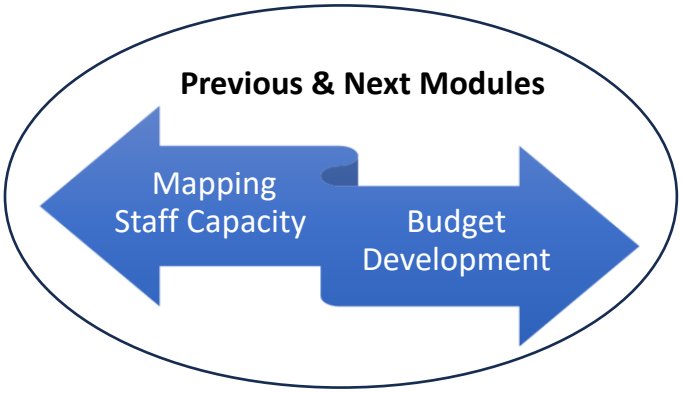
#10 Leveraging SNAP E&T Workforce Partnerships

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SNAP E&T Planning Guide #5

Braiding Funding

Summary



Braiding funding is the most strategic way to develop and scale SNAP E&T programs. This involves leveraging and maximizing different funding streams to provide new or enhanced programs and services for students receiving SNAP. Colleges can then be reimbursed 50% of their personnel expenses for staff involved in developing, supporting or implementing their SNAP E&T program that are paid out of non-federal funding streams not being matched in other grants. Existing staff can engage in the SNAP E&T program to generally enhance or expand what they are already doing. This can improve program impact and generate new revenue. This staff time and effort generates the 50% reimbursement that can be put back into the program to expand their offerings and offer additional supportive services and coaching to SNAP E&T students.

In the first few years, the ideal focus is to identify the non-federal funding streams that can be leveraged to generate 50% reimbursement. Then determine the most strategic way to allocate the reimbursement to support students and scale the program. As SNAP E&T budgeting and reimbursement become more routine, staffing positions can be explored at a more strategic level to maximize the reimbursement and continue to expand the program. The next phase is to apply these strategies to other funding streams to provide similar and aligned services to students who become ineligible or who are not eligible for SNAP E&T in the first place (i.e. students receiving TANF benefits).

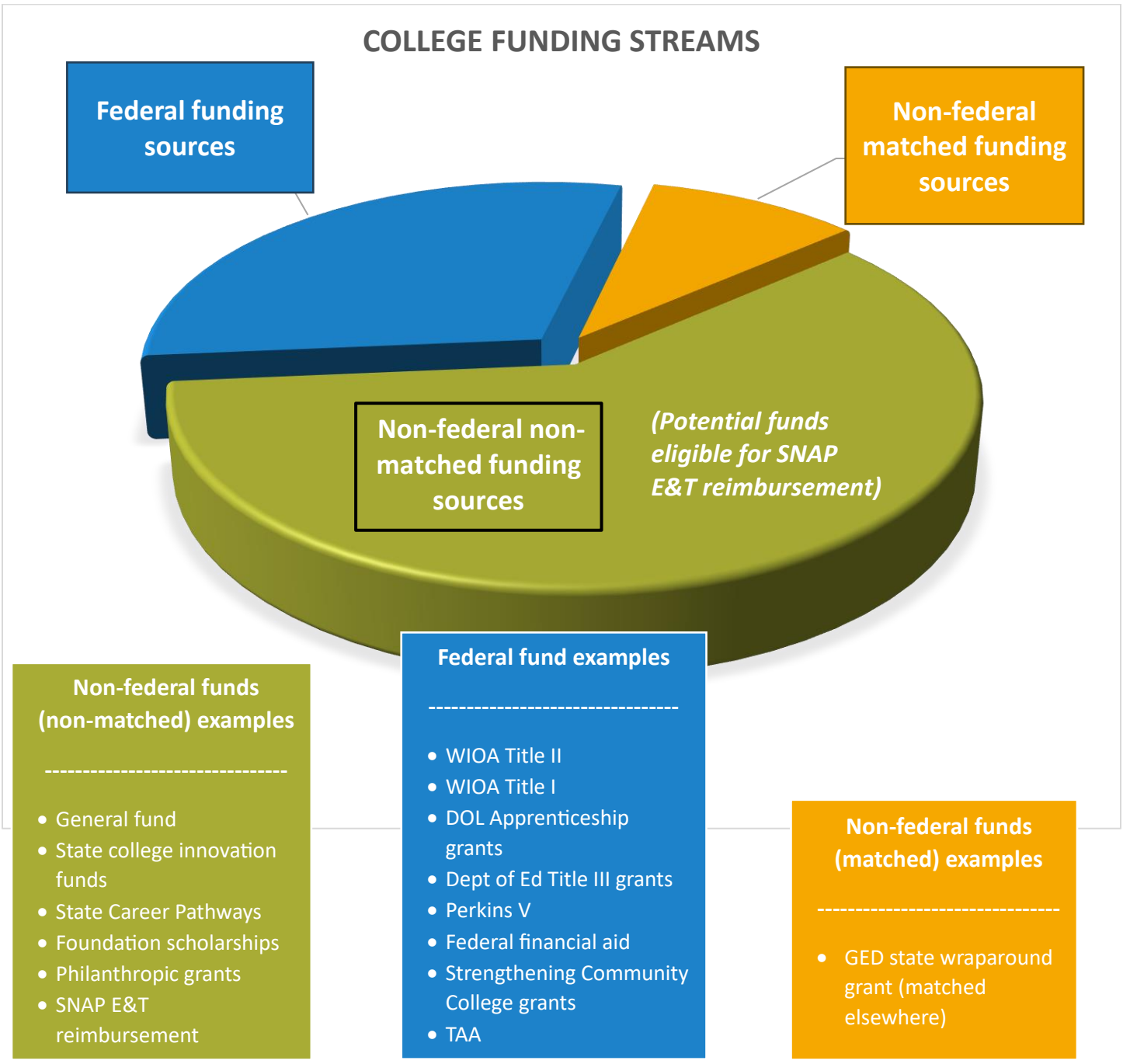
SNAP E&T is a unique program that aligns directly with state and institutional goals focused on equitable access to, and completion of, college credentials for students that lead to economic mobility. The SNAP E&T framework is extremely flexible and can easily leverage current faculty and staff work in student success. Colleges do not need to hire new staff or pull existing staff away from their ongoing responsibilities.

Who to Invite to the Table (college internal planning)

- SNAP E&T college lead
- Executive leader sponsor
- Finance/Budget office
- Grant office staff including budget
- Development staff (i.e. college foundation)
- Leaders from following areas with oversight of budget (as needed):
  - Student services (i.e. advising, financial aid, student basic needs)
  - Career & Technical Ed
  - Workforce development
  - Adult education
  - Other grants or funding streams

Planning Goals

1) Inventory college funding streams that support student success efforts across the institution that could be braided or leveraged for SNAP E&T.
2) Identify existing non-federal funding sources that could potentially be leveraged for SNAP E&T with new or enhanced programs and services generating 50% reimbursement.
3) Determine which college staff could support SNAP E&T students and programs to generate reimbursement.
4) Determine which funding streams could offer similar coaching and support services for students who become ineligible or who are not eligible for SNAP in the first place.



The pie chart is a visual illustration of a college's total budget towards student success. The green section can be used for SNAP E&T programs and generates the 50% reimbursement. The blue and yellow funding streams can still support overall program goals, critical staffing and resources and student success efforts but are not part of the SNAP E&T budget or generate 50% reimbursement.

Braiding Funding = Putting puzzle pieces together strategically to improve equitable student success



Guiding Questions

1) What existing college programs and services have positively impacted equitable student success by increasing college access and credential completion leading to careers with economic mobility for new majority learners?
2) What student support services have been provided that could be enhanced or expanded? What new student support services are needed?
    a. What are the different funding sources that have covered the costs of these impactful student success programs and services?
    b. Using the Sample Braided Funding Chart Tool, insert the names of these funding streams identified into the spreadsheet.

3) What non-federal funding sources not matched in other grants could be leveraged to generate SNAP E&T reimbursement?
    a. Using the Sample Braided Funding Chart tool, identify these funding streams and make them "green" in color.
    b. Shade the cells under this funding stream in green to indicate the services and supports it can cover (i.e. coaching, books, transportation, etc…)
4) What are the related expenses to expand, enhance or develop new programs and services for students receiving SNAP (i.e. personnel, support services, scholarships, operating expenses, etc…)?
5) What federal funding streams could support the SNAP E&T work but are not allowable for SNAP 50/50 reimbursement (i.e. WIOA Title I, Perkins, Title III funds, etc…) ?
    a. Using the Sample Braided Funding Chart tool, identify these funding streams and make them "blue" in color
    b. Shade the cells under this funding stream in blue to indicate the services and supports it can cover (i.e. coaching, books, transportation, etc…)
6) What other non-federal funding streams does the college have that support student success but are matched in other grants?
    a. Using the Sample Braided Funding Chart tool, identify these funding streams and make them "orange" in color
    b. Shade the cells under this funding stream in orange to indicate the services and supports it can cover (i.e. coaching, books, transportation, etc…

Meeting Agenda Template

- Check-in regarding prior meeting action items
- Review and discuss responses to guiding questions
- Review and discuss the potential challenges
- Develop written responses for each guiding question
- Identify areas that need further research/understanding – develop specific descriptions of information still needed
- Create a detailed list of questions for technical assistance
- Clarify next steps, who is responsible, and a timeframe for reporting back to team

Additional questions with regard to braiding funding:

7) Who plays a role in the work to improve systems and policies and how could they be engaged?
8) Who at your institution has experience braiding different funding streams effectively to improve student outcomes?
9) What are anticipated concerns from staff and faculty about participating in SNAP E&T?
    a. What are some strategies to bring them along? Develop a plan to work with these stakeholders to improve institutional processes to effectively braid funding which will maximize SNAP E&T programs and services and 50% reimbursement.
10) What are potential next steps in the SNAP E&T planning?

Potential Challenges

1) The most common misconception amongst colleges is that new funding streams are required. Instead, colleges can identify and strategically leverage non-federal funding towards the SNAP E&T program through careful allocation and braiding of resources to support students that can generate the 50% reimbursement.

2) Colleges may not maximize the opportunity to scale the program and grow revenue over time unless they reinvest their reimbursement funding - which is not considered federal funds - back into their SNAP E&T program.

3) Braiding funding streams requires a flexible, creative and student-centered approach to effectively maximize resources and supports for students. However, the various funding streams have unique and at times stringent requirements and processes that must be followed. It is critical to be mindful of and follow these grant requirements without letting the program design default to the most stringent grant policies.

Planning Checklist

- ❒ 1) Determine what college programs and services that have positively impacted equitable student success will be a part of SNAP E&T
- ❒ 2) Determine what new student support services could be developed and/or existing services enhanced or expanded for SNAP E&T
- ❒ 3) Complete the Sample Braided Funding Chart tool to identify what non-federal funding sources could be leveraged to support SNAP E&T
- ❒ 4) Establish what the related expenses are to expand, enhance or develop new programs and services for students receiving SNAP (i.e. personnel, support services, scholarships, operating expenses, etc…)
- ❒ 5) Indicate in the Sample Braided Funding Chart tool other existing funding sources that can support SNAP E&T work but not allowable for 50/50 reimbursement (i.e. WIOA Title I, Perkins, WIOA Title II, etc…)
- ❒ 6) Determine what other funding streams could offer similar coaching and support services for students who become ineligible or who are not eligible for SNAP in the first place
- ❒ 7) Meet with stakeholders to improve institutional processes to effectively braid funding which will maximize SNAP E&T programs and services and 50% reimbursement

Tools/Organizational Aids for this Module

- Sample Braided Funding Chart
- Sample Community College Workforce SNAP E&T Budget Development Tool

Resources

- Braiding Funding to Support Equitable Career Pathways
- FNS SNAP E&T Program Toolkit funding section - pages 63-100

FAQ's

1) Should SNAP E & T budget be zeroed out annually?
    a. It is most strategic NOT to zero out the SNAP E&T budget annually as it limits the ability to reinvest the 50% reimbursement in the budget for the following budget year. The 50% reimbursement is not considered federal funding so can be put back into the program and reinvested by the college the next year, generating additional reimbursement and revenue for the program.

2) What budget tools should colleges use to build their SNAP E&T budget?
    a. The state or county's SNAP E&T handbook and/or application tools should provide guidance on the proper budget templates. When in doubt, check with the human service agency partners.

3) How can a college confirm the source of different funding streams?
    a. College leaders should check with the college business office to confirm that funds received that may come from the state do not originate from federal sources.

4) If SNAP E&T third party providers can't include federal funds or non-federal funds already matched on another grant as part of the SNAP E&T plan or program and services, why should colleges be mapping out these other resources in their planning work?
    a. These other funding streams can complement and support SNAP E&T students in achieving their educational and career goals. For example, a faculty member within a career pathways/CTE program wouldn't be included in the SNAP E&T plan as that would be considered supplanting but absolutely contributes to the success of SNAP E&T students in their program.

Case Study

College XYZ is working on their application and budget for their third year of being a SNAP E&T third-party provider. They are continuing to use state funds that cover the costs for a career navigator supporting career pathways stackable credential students in addition to some general fund supported personnel. They have seen an increase in GED students accessing SNAP E&T resources and have recently received a state innovation grant that includes an Adult Education support specialist and funding for student GED testing fees, technology costs and transportation. They plan to include a percentage of that position and the student supports in their SNAP E&T plan and budget. The Adult Education department also has an Outreach Specialist position funded on their federal WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) grant. Since it is funded with federal dollars, it cannot be included in the SNAP E&T plan with a 50% reimbursement. However, this outreach position spends time in the community promoting the ESOL and GED programs. If the staff learns that a prospective student is receiving SNAP benefits, they refer immediately to the SNAP E&T college career navigator to help them enroll in the program and receive the additional supports.