



THE MICHELSON 20MM
FOUNDATION

“Pregnant and Parenting Students in California: A Look at the CSU System”

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SPEAKERS

Tina Cheuk, Miguel Leon, Pamela Lewis, Larissa Mercado-Lopez, Alya Michelson, Jasmin Othman

Miguel Leon 00:02

My name is Miguel Leon, Senior Program Manager with Michelson 20MM Foundation. I use pronouns he/him/his and I'm coming to you from Tongva ancestral lands. I'm a Latinx male with black hair combed to the side, brown eyes, black rimmed glasses, and I'm wearing a white colored button up shirt and a gray coat. Before we get started with today's important discussion, I would like to share a little bit about the foundation. Founded by Dr. Gary K. Michelson and Alya Michelson, the Michelson 20MM Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that everyone, particularly our most vulnerable populations, has access to the equitable post secondary educational opportunities that lead to meaningful careers. We proudly operate at the cutting edge of higher education to help forward thinking innovators, nonprofits and startups close the opportunity gap. Today, we are proud to launch a new project under our Student Basic Needs initiative, focused on addressing the needs of pregnant and parenting students in California. We first started addressing the challenges faced by pregnant and parenting students when we partnered with California State University Long Beach to create a manual for colleges on how to make their campuses more family friendly, which also included an ally training that would better equip campus staff to help the student population succeed. Part of our goals in the partnership was to scale the results of that effort across the entire CSU system. We are proud of the impact this work will have on the lives of many student mothers, fathers and guardians across the state. We didn't want to stop there. As we learn more about the challenges faced by pregnant and parenting students, it became clear that a stronger approach was needed. Today's webinar is but one component of a more comprehensive effort focused on pregnant and parenting students success. As part of our new vertical, we convened an advisory committee, composed of experts who helped us establish programmatic and policy goals that we hope will improve the odds for this often forgotten group of students. You'll hear from those experts today. We're grateful to them for their wisdom. We've also partnered with leaders in the nonprofit and foundation world, with whom we co-hosted a kickoff event last year that set the table for today's conversation. They are co-hosts for our learning series and we are grateful to them for sharing their experience and expertise. Today's conversation will take a deep dive on efforts at the California State University geared toward helping pregnant and parenting students succeed. We'll learn about what the student population looks like at the CSU, what's being done to support them and what we can all do to help them thrive. We hope that you find the conversation engaging and helpful in your work. We invite you to join the discussion and share your stories on Twitter using the hashtag #studentparents. Our Twitter handle is @Michelson20MM. With that, it's my pleasure to introduce our opening speaker, Alya Michelson. Alya is co-chair of the Michelson 20MM Foundation and Michelson Philanthropies. She is also the creator of FirstGen, a storytelling platform that celebrates global citizenship by highlighting how the immigrant experience strengthens the American story. Through FirstGen, Alya creates communal spaces for women to gather in celebration of their diverse experiences and shines a light on all the ways immigrant women positively impact our world today. A former journalist, an artist, a storyteller, and a philanthropist, Alya pushes our foundation to be innovative, to not be afraid to disrupt things and to be creative. Welcome Alya.

Alya Michelson 04:17

Good morning. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Alya Michelson, co-chair of the Michelson 20 Million Minds Foundation and Michelson Philanthropies. I'm thrilled to welcome you to the launch of our newest learning series, the state

of pregnant and parenting students in California as part of our Student Basic Needs portfolio. Nearly 4 million college students across the country are parents. In California 20% of all undergraduates are parents, one in five. They're more likely to be people of color, older, women, low income and first generation college students. They often report they don't feel welcome on campus. Despite having a higher GPA than their peers, 52% of student parents leave college without completing their degree. These are persistence statistics and that is why we're all here focusing on the student population. Thankfully, there is a groundswell in our state to lift up the students who are pregnant and parenting. Via this series we hope to add to this momentum and surface solutions the student population needs to succeed. We at the Michelson 20MM Foundation commit to working with all of you so that every student parent feel seen, heard, respected, embraced and supported. They deserve to thrive and succeed. I want to thank our co-hosts and partners, the Aspen Institute, Blue Shield of California Foundation, California Competes, Tipping Point Community and the Education Trust West. Many of you have been in this space and making a difference for a long time. Thank you for guiding us in our journey to become an ally for student parents. I want to thank all of you in attendance for all that you do everyday in support of the student population. This is the first of three sessions about pregnant and parenting students and we hope you'll join us for all of them. And I want to send a very special thank you to our panelists who have helped us craft our strategy on this work. These incredible women have made student parents their life's work and we're lucky to call them our partners. Lastly, I want to speak to the pregnant and parenting students who might be in our audience. To you, I want to say you are our inspiration, believe in your strength and resilience to carry you forward as it has for so many years. Know that these are allies who stand with you. You and your families are the north star of all of our efforts. Thank you again for joining us today. We hope you enjoy today's conversation.

Miguel Leon 07:16

Thank you so much Alya. Appreciate your presence and your leadership here at our foundation. It's my pleasure to introduce you to our panel today. A great group of leaders in this space. First with us we have Dr. Tina Cheuk who is assistant professor at Cal Poly State San Luis Obispo. She is a mother, scholar, educator and advocate focused on empowering and imagining futures that sustain and cultivate the learning growth and success of minoritized groups in post secondary education. For much of her career she has focused most intently on issues that include the development of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in STEM settings, the struggles, assets and possibilities of teachers of color across the pipeline, and student activism work that transforms institutions toward more equitable and just learning spaces. She earned her BS in chemistry and biochemistry from the University of Chicago and holds an MA and PhD in education policy from Stanford University. Welcome Tina. With this we also have Pamela Lewis, M.S., who is a Senior Director of Multicultural Affairs and Inclusion at California State University Long Beach. Her higher education experience has been extensive at the Beach. She has served in leadership roles with Associated Students Inc, Housing and Residential Life and University Access and Retention. Her professional compass includes outreach and recruitment, Student Life, Student Government, Residential Life, Student Conduct, Title Nine, Multicultural Affairs, access retention, diversity, equity, inclusion and student success initiatives. She received her BA in communication studies and a Master of Science in Counseling student development in higher education from CSU LB. Pamela is currently pursuing her Doctorate in Educational Leadership. Throughout her career, she has been an advocate for underrepresented voices and a change agent for the betterment of all. Pamela, great to see you today. Thanks for joining us. We also have Dr. Larissa Mercado-Lopez, who is Professor of Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies at CSU Fresno. A former student parent, she teaches courses on women of color feminism, Chicana feminism, and Latinx Health. Dr. Mercado-Lopez has published public scholarship and authored and edited books on Latinx literature, Chicana literature, Chicana children's literature and higher education. Additionally, she serves as a book review editor for Chicana Latina Studies Journal, and at Fresno State she actively engages in student and faculty success work, particularly for student parents and women of color faculty. At the system level, Dr. Mercado-Lopez is director of the statewide CSU Students Success Network Conference. And lastly moderating our panel today we have Jasmin Othman, who is a master's candidate and California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo. Jasmin is a parent and the mother of a funny and empathetic autistic eight year old boy. Beyond the joy he has brought to her life, he has also increased her awareness of neurodiversity, which has tremendously expanded. As a student parent at Cal Poly SLO, Jasmin has obtained a bachelor's degree in sociology under the supervision of Dr. Cheuk, she collected and analyzed data to understand ways institutions of higher education can create more equitable practices for student parents. Currently she is, as I mentioned, a master's candidate studying educational leadership and administration and she is also an academic coach at the Student Success Center there at Cal Poly SLO and mentors student athletes and is a career advisor as well. She is passionate about increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all domains. Thank you so much to all of you for being here today. I'll pass it over to Dr. Cheuk and Pamela who'll get us started with a brief presentation.

Tina Cheuk 11:36

Great. Well, thank you so much, everyone. Miguel did such a wonderful job introducing us. But Pam and I are going to really talk about the landscape analysis of pregnant and parenting students in the CSU system. So those are our titles and affiliations. And Pamela if you want to add anything to the introduction, feel free.

Pamela Lewis 11:58

I just want to thank Miguel for the warm introduction. Thank you so much. And I look forward to presenting with Tina on this landscape analysis.

Tina Cheuk 12:04

Great. Scroll to slide two. So I always want to start our work with students. So here is one of our Student Parent Voices. So she said, "Experiences in my undergraduate career oftentimes forced me to choose between being a good parent and a good student, two identities that do not necessarily complement each other in institutions, where student parents are made feel invisible." So here, this is one example of how many of our students have to navigate higher ed spaces and we're going to talk a little bit about institutional supports in terms of how do we help student parents feel belonged in our places and also thrive? So we can scroll to slide three. And here, just to give you some statistics and these are just estimated projections, based on Cal State University, so in the middle column are the fall demographics, the student population in Cal State, and we know that about 22% of our student population who are undergraduates going to four year universities are student parents. So in our system right now, we have over 100,000 student parents in our system, so they are there. It's a matter of how are we doing the work to support their thriving and belonging. So if we can scroll to the next slide.

Pamela Lewis 13:33

Crises compel the invisible to visible and the pandemic has exposed equity gaps, including the national dependence on care work. Student parents have become their child's teacher overnight, balancing their learning and the responsibility of their child or children. And as Tina mentioned, we always love to include our student voices. And one of our student parents stated, "My fear was not just getting exposed to COVID and the symptoms that we would have to go through. It is the aftermath that our children, that my children and I have to go through, the stress of being out of school for a month, and figuring out to help how to help them. Schools do not have after school tutoring, and if they needed tutoring, could I afford it? If I was out of work, how could I pay rent? My children were being bullied for being sick, and their friends did not want to play with them. My academics, if I was out sick or dealing with my kids illness, who would I be excused from assignments? How are my kids coping with the stress of all this? How's our mental health? All these things are layers that I had to deal with. People need to see the intersections that student parents go through and understand that is not just the pandemic. There's so much more. And the campus community and family support is critical to retaining our student parents."

Tina Cheuk 15:01

Great. Thank you, Pam, that is such an illustrative quote, in terms of what many of our student parents are experiencing. And if you can scroll to the next slide number five. So I think alluding to what was said, Audrey Lorde, she mentioned there's no such thing as a single issue struggle because we do not live single issue lies. I think the work that we do is intersectional it's layered and multiple identities that students bring onto our campus. If we can scroll to the next slide number six. So we want to share this sort of draft framework in how both of our campuses... so we'll talk a little bit about how we went about our investigation studying the 23 campuses. But in our work together, we really wanted the center belonging and thriving. And this is again, a draft framework and we're open to changes and additions, but we really wanted to center pregnant and parenting students at the center. And in the wheel part includes key issues or pillars such as community healing, self determination, mutual power, and shared access to opportunities. And I would say these are terms that cross cut multiple areas, I think traditionally in higher ed spaces we have academic affairs, and then we have student affairs, right? But Student Affairs in even just the term itself is limited to just student and I think here we really want to embrace what the Aspen Institute also talks about in this two generation model, thinking about the student and the family and the people that they care for. So in the bulleted, outside the circle, are sort of concrete policies and practices. What does being in community look like? What does healing? What does that look like in terms of in our higher ed spaces? Self Determination? What does self determination policies and practices that allow students to make their decisions and to go their own way, same with mutual power and also shared access to opportunities. So as we were doing our investigation, thinking about these themes, looking for policies that fit these themes, then allowed us to sort of better think about the complex lives of our students because they're not only in our classrooms, they have family lives and they have community lives. And we'll come back to this in terms of our recommendation, so we can scroll to the next slide.

Pamela Lewis 17:43

Our method analysis were very... the way that we did our process was different but our outcomes were similar, I would say. And I first have to say I'm very fortunate to work with distinguished colleagues across campus on our pregnant and parenting

student initiative. I'm just one piece of the puzzle that fits so into the framework that we've discussed before. So the way that we started out, special thank you to Michelson 20MM Foundation for selecting us and providing the grant. We were able to hire five student assistants, two student parents that became our research fellows. It was really important for us to have that perspective from student parents in doing this research and the way that we started out was I wanted them to, because we're in COVID, we were only able to see from the websites of all of our campuses in regards to that, but I have them start with one question. If you were looking to a tenancy issue right now, how would you do your research to find which campus that is suited for you and your needs? And that's how we started it and I was very excited with them in the way that they were able to do that. All of them did it different but they did provide a very insight to what our 23 campuses are doing.

Tina Cheuk 19:15

I think adding to Pamela's team, I also want to recognize our three amazing Beacon research scholars, one of whom is our facilitator, Jasmin Othman, who is a student parent herself. I also worked with now alumni Ashley Hernandez. And also another Beacon scholar, Kaley Benting. So it is through their work and their analysis that we're able to come up with these findings. And similar to Pamela's work, we went in really doing a deep dive into the literature, understanding what were existing practices and resources that student parents need and then we looked up keywords and I think similarly, we did a systematic review of each of the 23 websites and we actually also included in some of our other studies, the University of California's and also all the over 100 Community Colleges California because I think for us really thinking about the state. What is the state doing in terms of the higher educational institutes in supporting student parents? Thinking about community colleges and the CSUs and also into the UC systems. But we really thought about the visibility because these websites become resources and signaling mechanisms for students to see whether campuses have resources and practices and policies pertaining to them. And we argue that student parent and pregnant students lives have very distinct strengths and needs. And so when they don't see themselves reflected it's a signal that we are not invested in you. So point number four, some of the search terms we use for each campus are pregnant students, parenting students, students with dependents, accommodations, childcare, Title Nine and so forth. And we did this during the timeframe of 2020 to 2021. And if you can scroll to the next slide. See, these are our general findings. Pam, do you want to start?

Pamela Lewis 21:15

Yeah, our general findings, what we all were able to find that it was difficult searching. We realized that a lot of our resources for students and parents are not centralized, they're decentralized on campuses. Some would may be within Academic Affairs or Student Affairs. And it was not clear if the resources were available for pregnant and parenting students. And then would you like to talk about point two Tina?

Tina Cheuk 21:43

Sure. I think it what we found was aligned with what much of the existing research for pregnant and parenting students. One, I think the number one was limited data. So we dug really deep to see where that data would be sitting across the different systems and it was really challenging to find who are the student parents on each of these 23 campuses. Second point, very fragmented. We had to search over here for lactation spaces, here, baby changing rooms, where would the attendance policy sit, or advisors sit? Where would housing and health care? So it was really thinking about what, if I were a student parent, I talked to my student assistants and they were like, these resources are all over the place. There are there were some campuses that were doing better jobs in that they were pulling the resources in more centralized ways, but that was not consistent across the 23 campuses. And then the last point, intersectional lives, that many of our students hold multiple identities. So I know for Cal Poly here we hold a very traditional student population campus and a lot of our student parents overlap with the Transfer Center, which is unique. Other campuses that are in more urban settings, their population of student parents are different. Thinking about the intersectional lives is very important because then we can think about the resources that we can invest in.

Pamela Lewis 23:12

Exactly. And then we talked about the lack of visibility, mind you, it also a lot of our student parents were saying that are we welcomed and the beautiful work of doing with Michelson 20MM is looking at those benchmarks, like the best practice to become a family friendly campus. And so this information will help us produce that to be used throughout the 23 campuses, but it made them think of othering, right, and we talked about do they belong, do they have the resources to be successful here? And then the investment, where we put our money as far as an institution in regards to our website, but also our departments, right, and looking at can they easily find their sense of community on the campus that they are going to attend?

Tina Cheuk 24:00

And if we can scroll to the next slide, Pamela will share what's happening at Long Beach.

Pamela Lewis 24:06

Yeah, so we wanted to just spotlight both of our campuses of course, right. And so as I mentioned earlier with our pregnant and parenting initiative, it is definitely a campus wide initiative. We work very closely with different colleagues in different aspects to make sure we're meeting the needs that we are aware of, of our student population, for pregnant and parenting students. And so we work very closely with our associate students. We have our Isabel Patterson Child Development Center, we have a commissioner for pregnant and parenting students. In our caps department we have a beach parent support group. We work very closely with our development office who helps us get external funding to support our student needs, our Dean of Students, we do have a family friendly study area in our library, lactation rooms, changing stations. The website we do have a centralized website in regards to we're trying to we put all of the information for pregnant and parenting students to go there, hopefully to help them navigate the campus more in regards to resources that they're needing. Our Office of Equity and Diversity works very closely with them in regards to parents rights. Bob Murphy Access Center regarding our accommodations, we do have a recognized student organization as well, which is the pregnant and parenting Student Association. Very strong scholars that helped bring attention to the needs of our student parents and as practitioners are able to then go forth and see how we can remedy that barrier. Our Klaus family has a scholarship for single parents. And then our two faculty scholars have started a resource cart that they will use once we're back, we are hiring in person now but once we go back we'll repopulate more, they will start having those parks around campus as well. So those are just some items, best practices that we are doing here. And we won't stop. This is just the beginning but it definitely is creating the momentum for us to become a family friendly campus.

Tina Cheuk 26:08

Thank you, Pamela. And then the next slide is just again spotlighting Cal Poly and this is not everything we do. I just wanted to highlight some of the key resources. So here having a clear point of contact. Our work is housed under the Office of the Dean of Students. We have policies supporting students for priority registration and why that is important is because student parents, they have childcare responsibilities for many of them, meaning they have drop off in the morning, pickup for childcare, pickup for after school care. So it's really important that they have choices of classes so they can graduate in a timely way. Priority parking, this is a similar issue. We have a very large campus and there is a lottery for parking. And so if you don't get a parking spot, you may be parking somewhere where it's a 30 minute walk, and you may have to think about the classes you take and you may end up not taking a class simply because you don't have a parking spot or that's a constraint. Another key policy that was passed by students via the ASI, and also passed by our academic senate was an equitable attendance policy. So what was happening was that we had an existing policy where it penalized student parents if their child was sick. So if your child is sick, you as a caretaker need to take care of them because they're not allowed in school especially during COVID times and they were penalized as an unexcused absence. And what happened was that instructors and professors was doing it in sort of an ad hoc way. Some student parents that would be excused, other student parents that would be unexcused and as a result, that created high stress for student parents, where can they be a student parent and a parent, because they were penalized for caring for their child. So that was recently passed. We also have Cal Poly Care, so financial support for some of our student parents. We have a children's center on campus, and I think we were fostering greater collaboration with the different centers on campus around basic needs and also the Transfer Center. And also, I think it's been challenging with COVID. But I think the student led effort, really supporting, here we call them students with dependents and here, how do we have students lead the effort with faculty, staff supporting their movement, so and then on the screenshot, it just shows some of the resources and services that we connect students to and then slide 11. So we want to move quickly into this.

Pamela Lewis 28:47

So our policy recommendation, our recommendation for our policymakers and institutions is to gather timely and accurate data, we'll be talking about that later, have a holistic approach that centers the lives of pregnant parents and students, that enables a cultural shift toward a more inclusive family friendly campus and we can't stress that enough, and make visible the vibrant and resilient lives of pregnant parents of students and invest in a two generation model approach for the future. We want to be able to have for us future 49ers so we want to look at the family. So thank you so much. And then Tina.

Tina Cheuk 29:21

If you can scroll to slide 12. And this is really a recommendation to staff and faculty, really thinking about policies and accommodations that provide shared access to opportunities. So what might this look like? Attendance policy, priority registration, access to lactation spaces, are they close enough? And also is there refrigeration or is there storage for the needs for student parents who are lactating? Baby changing stations, high chairs, priority parking. Number two, recognizing and uplifting narratives, so many student parents that I've talked to feel like they have to hide the fact that they are a caretaker and a parent. So how do we counter that negative societal bias and also campus bias against pregnant and

parenting students and care workers at large. And lastly, support community and healing efforts, especially during COVID times where student parents are taking care of young people, their children, their children who may not have access to vaccinations, especially if they're under five. There's a lot of mental health issues happening across our student population. How do we support that community building and healing effort? And then our last slide in our last slide in closing is our recommendation to our pregnant and parenting students. And for those who are joining us today, just know that you are not alone. We are in this with you to build community and build connections provide access to more leadership opportunities. Whatever your needs are, we're there for you. Yeah. And second is to know your rights, so advocate for yourself. And then also find staff and faculty advocates that help you remove those institutional barriers, provide accommodations for you, and make visible the resilience, persistence and assets that you bring into the space. And lastly, I think most important, and often overlooked is Title Nine. So actually, for mothers in particular, and pregnant parents, students, you have legal protections. So really, making sure you advocate for that and then we'll talk more about this, but I think Title Nine is something I as a former student parent relied on during my graduate study as a student parent, and it's not the first step. It's definitely one of those last resorts but know that that's there to protect your rights so that you can thrive and be successful in education. And so with that, thank you so much for your attention and time.

Pamela Lewis 31:54

Thank you so much.

Jasmin Othman 32:02

Thank you, Miguel for the lovely introduction. And thank you, Tina and Pamela for a thought provoking overview on pregnant and parenting students in the higher education system. So I'll be facilitating Q&A today. I'd love to turn to our audience first. Where is everybody from? What campus are you at? And just type it in the chat and then I'll go ahead and read out loud. Morro Bay, Sac State, Berkeley, SLO, Long Beach, SLO, San Jose, San Diego State. We've really got a diverse representation of California campuses here. Los Angeles Community College. We've got a lot going on here. Happy to see everybody everywhere. Monterey, Pasadena. Thank you so much. Okay, so next I would love to ask you all what student parent work looks like on your campus and if you don't know that is okay. Minimal. Okay, so I've got some connecting questions. So I'm going to kind of keep going. I work individually with my student parents. There's none at CSU LA. But co-advising a student parent club, some merging, there's none. Okay, we've got a Parent Resource Center. Where is this work housed on your campus? What department Center? Is there a space for it? I'm hiring a professional staff position to advance our student parents with depends program at Cal Poly. Exciting stuff. And parent families programs is in student affairs. There's no physical space however. There's none at CSU CI, there's two physical locations at UCB. Resources are decentralized. The space we had just closed and things are being moved. Advocating for parents. We can kind of see there that there isn't really a designated space on many campuses. Okay, so who leads your work on your campuses? Do you have like one designated person, do you have a director? Are there multiple players? Individual offices, no actual center. Okay, so we've got Marty here leading the work as the founder. Just started an admin group. The Transfer Center. There's a director and an administrative assistant in the office. That's great to hear. Director of Student Parent Center, one full time academic advisor plus five to 10 students staff at UCB. That's amazing. Interested students and faculty, that's what we commonly see, a group of people getting together. No one, we don't have data for student parents attending RCC. No one but I'm ready to do it. That's what I want to hear. Director, parents and families program. I took this on myself and got funding myself from a grant. I just wanted to do the work. I was hired to serve parents of enrolled students. So I do both, no staff. That's a lot of weight on one individual. Okay, so what services are offered to your student parents on your campus? Lactation spaces can be reserved. What other resources do we have for student parents on your campuses? Childcare, lactation pods, priority parking, all amazing resources, much needed. Lactation spaces that we need to contact facilities for codes. So that could potentially be a barrier. Diapers always in stock at Cal Poly SLO Food Pantry, lactation space for reservation, no refrigeration though. So that means that milk cannot be stored. Childcare, housing, priority registration, family space to study in the library. None specifically for student parents. There are two lactation rooms but no one knows where they are. We used to have a lactation space but I'm not sure if we still have it. Information about childcare scholarships, family friendly events, a weekly food pantry with multiple locations and student housing. Cal Works is the only resource that mentioned student parents and child care. I know we have lactation stations, childcare. So we are seeing some amazing resources here but we really are seeing that they often are in various places or we don't know where they are. Okay, so thank you so much for an amazing audience. You all are very active to the point that I couldn't keep up so I appreciate that. So I'm now going to turn to our wonderful panel, ask a few questions that speaks to our policy agenda, specifically around the topics of access retention and data collection. First question being what is the state of pregnant and parenting students on your campus right now?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 38:56

Alright, I'll go ahead and kick this one off. So again, my name is Dr. Larissa Mercado-Lopez. I'm a Professor of Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies at Fresno State. And I first want to thank my colleagues for their brilliant presentation on student parents in our system. It's been really inspiring to collaborate with them these past few months. We're learning a lot from each other. And importantly, I think we feel mutually strengthened and encouraged to continue in this work. I also want to thank Michelson 20MM for not only bringing us here today, but for having what I believe is a truly progressive vision for student success that center students that have been historically data invisible on our campuses. And importantly, not only for just having the vision but for putting dollars behind it. Something that has been largely missing from student parent work especially in the CSU. So my campus is Fresno State. We're located in the Central Valley, it's the destination for several large community colleges. So considering the higher representation of student parents in two year institutions, we have a healthy number of student parents that are transferring to us. I think that generally speaking, there's a strengthening awareness among our faculty and student services practitioners and our leaders at Fresno State that student parents are here, that they're a sizable part of our student body, I usually compare their size to the number of students in our College of Business, and that there are people to connect students with when they need support, but we have a lot of work to do still to move faculty and staff and leaders from student parent awareness to student parent competency and I think even further to student parents servingness. But considering what more we have to do, Fresno State has made some really strategic and meaningful investments in its student parent population. So when student parents get to Fresno State they have opportunities for fully subsidized or almost fully subsidized childcare. They can access like patient rooms, we have a lactation map on our website so students can see where those rooms are. We have high chairs and dining spaces. We have free diapers through our diaper bank. And I'm actually going to quiz you, see if you know, I'm going to ask you to guess how many diapers we distribute each month and I'll tell you the answer in just a bit. But just put in the chat your guess: how many diapers do you think we distribute each month? Students also have access to gently used and new clothing through our children's clothing closet, emergency cash aid and they can be connected to off campus resources through Project Hope. And I also offer student parenting drop in advising sessions that we built into a C campus grant and this has been especially helpful during COVID when a number of students had not ever stepped foot on campus and were not aware of our resources. We also see some movement among students. ASI senators recognize the need to institutionalize our commitment to student parents, and they passed a resolution in support of pregnant and parenting students. And so it's really important to point out that much of this had been possible because of crucial support at the top, leaders at the top that seriously consider the data that was coming out from my surveys and that decided to prioritize their investments in this work by connecting the work to our strategic plan. So that's something that we can think about, where in our strategic plan is there space to make those connections? And by the way, the answer to the diapers question is 30,000 diapers a month. But despite these efforts, and I think especially now during COVID I feel like I'm right back to 2016 when my surveys revealed that students were largely unaware of resources, they were largely unaware of Title Nine and we're feeling underrepresented and isolated. And when GI 2025 Focus on official equity groups, campuses don't feel as compelled or impelled to treat student parents as an equity group, despite the fact that they sit at the intersections of so many inequity categories, those intersectional identities that Dr. Cheuk and Pamela were referring to. So we have a lot of work to do not only in basic needs, but in really interrogating our policies and partnering with feeder schools to strengthen supportive pipelines between community colleges and our campuses and creating rigorous data mechanisms to set equity goals and measure our progress. And we'll talk about that in just a bit. And so I'll end my response to this question here. I think it's really crucial to recognize that student parents themselves are experts and one of our greatest resources and even as they seek support and resources they do it with an eye on how am I going to pay this forward? Or even as they're graduating and they're on their way out, they ask what can I do to make it better for everyone else still here? And they have such deep insights into how our classroom and institutional policies create barriers and impede degree completion. And I've been reading a lot of Sarah Ockman lately and they bring what they're often calls a feminist listening ear, the ability to be tuned into what normally gets tuned out. And so I think, through those marginalized intersectional experiences are really attentive to the challenges of other students marginalized experiences. And this insight is crucial for turning the mirror back onto ourselves and understanding the work that we need to do to ensure that we that everything that we're doing is truly inclusive and equitable.

Pamela Lewis 45:16

Thank you Dr. Larissa Mercado-Lopez, that was amazing information. And as she mentioned, we're at Cal State Long Beach. Our pregnant and parenting initiative started in 2016. And in 2017, two of our faculty scholars Dr. Nancy Dane and Dr. Rudi Roy did a survey there from our Department of Child Development and Family Studies. And in that study, it showed that parents at that time were still struggling with time to study and then the balance between family and school obligations. They did another study due to the pandemic and it showed the same struggles--affording tuition, housing, family necessities and obtaining or holding a job. And I work directly with our Cal Work students. So I have a population of about 50 students right now and they do an intake assessment with us in regards to what how were they successful if they transferred, what sort of resources they had at the community college and how we can make sure we are continuing that here. But they were saying their worries, and the one thing that they're worried about is transportation resources, their financial hardship, time

management, again, not being successful, that imposter syndrome from either transferring from the two year or just are they going to be successful at the four year? Job security after graduation, that has a lot of them worried due to COVID. The fear of failing, not just being successful, but just that fear of and then being discriminated against for having a child. But the one thing about it on a positive note, our students are thriving, with all of their obstacles are still thriving, but that is the state right now and we're definitely coming together to look at that and see how we could, again, decrease the barriers to their success.

Tina Cheuk 47:15

To step out on, I think my colleagues spoke so well in terms of the strengths, the assets and also the needs, and I think similar to what Dr. Larissa Mercado-Lopez mentioned, these student parents are data invisible, meaning I think, for me, it's the data is in different places. It's decentralized, and it's sort of this one way shifting variable you may be not a student parent when you enter the system, but then you may get pregnant during the time you're here and then you become a student parent. And that data might not be captured in the Cal State apply where you might check dependents at the entry point. Part of it is if you we don't know how many students we have, it gives institutions excuses to not invest resources in this population. For me, being a social scientist, being a researcher, knowing who our students are and being able to know, these are the student parents in our colleges, how are they doing tracking admissions, tracking our retention efforts, timeline to graduation, really thinking about, we need to understand who the student parents are, or else we can't really present a full picture. So for us, we need to have that data, but at the same time, we know that they are on our campuses from earlier slides across our CSU campuses. They're in our classrooms, they are in our campuses, and how do we make sure they feel like they're seen and that they belong? So that's top of mind for us at Cal Poly.

Jasmin Othman 49:02

Thank you all very much. So the next question I'd love to ask is, at the end of 2021 campuses were charged with developing equity plans with an emphasis on re-enrolling students that have stopped out. How do we ensure that each of our campuses includes the needs of pregnant and parenting students in these plans?

Pamela Lewis 49:26

To understand the equity gaps, first, we have all said it, we need to have that campus wide data collection. We need to know how many students that have stopped out that are pregnant and parenting students. Those on campuses developing the equity plans, are student parents at the table such as, for Long Beach State, our commissioner or our leaders of student recognized organizations. So we can do that. I know there's conversations, but I'm not sure who's at the table and making those decisions as we go, developing these equity plans.

Tina Cheuk 50:01

I think building on what Pamela has said, I think it's it's about the data, who are our student parents, what is the explicit outreach we are doing across all the different intersections, all the departments that serve our student parents, whether it's healthcare, Student Affairs, academic advising, across all of our colleges, they're present. And I think for me, it's really thinking about what are the stories we're telling so that we de-stigmatize what care work looks like. I still encounter many student parents who don't share that they are a parent and have caretaking needs because they're afraid that they're going to be judged in a negative way. So how do we create stories that we know the student parents are thriving, that they're doing this work and they're showing up for not only themselves but for their children and for the next generation? So how do we have more of those stories that's covered in our news, photos of families that signal, even if they are symbolic representation, that signals a long way in in terms of making sure our student parents are seen on our campuses.

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 51:12

Yeah, I want to echo what my colleagues have stated about the need for data. But I'll also say that, and I'm saying this in some of my other work around women of color retention and other kind of equity issues I'm involved with on campus, is that as much as we need campus data on student parents, we can still move forward with including parents in our re-enrollment plans without the data. We can still do that work. But having said that, I'm with my colleagues, I have more more questions, I think, than answers. There needs to be more transparency. What I found in my conversations with folks across the system is that equity plan work is very siloed. There's a lot of opacity around who is doing the work, who's in charge of the plan. So, I think it's really important that advocates find out who's doing this work. And it's also important that leaders who are leading the charge are tapping into the expertise of those who are working directly with students. And I like to refer to those who are working really directly with students, there's a term that Adela de la Thorrem, our SDSU president and in her work on Latina health she refers to the people who hear health stories as privileged listeners. They are listening to the stories of health that their family members are not sharing with maybe their doctors so that puts them in a privileged position of hearing. I think the same can be applied to advisors, to EOP counselors. And this is as Tina was saying, this is crucial student data, this is where the stories live about why our students are leaving or leaving, what their challenges are. If I could come up with some

concrete kind of answers for this, how can we be inclusive of student parents in our enrollment plans? I think we need to look at policies around registration, what are those bureaucratic barriers to enrollment and registration? What is class availability and course modality look like, is there enough flexibility and variety that it increases access and improves or fits the realities of our students lives? And we also want to make sure, going back to Dr. Cheuk's point, is that our resources are visible. That student parents are represented in our recruitment materials and something that I asked folks that always just kind of makes them think is, have you ever seen a pregnant student on campus outreach materials? Student parents need to be recognized for the narrative, they need to see themselves reflected in the literature, because these students are some of our most intentional students. They want to be here. They have done the cost benefit analysis and have decided that this is worth their time. And so we talk about the role that the CSU can play in the recovery of California, but we can't do that if we're not inclusive of student parents. This is an opportunity to really effect transformational change. And the data has shown us, that supporting student parents leads to some of the highest return on investment in higher education. It's transformational for them, for their families, for their children's futures. And I think that all of this needs to be at the forefront of our messaging. And then we need to backup that messaging with a real commitment to providing responsive resources when they return. I'll just end by saying that we need to uplift the work that's being done in the community colleges. We have a lot to learn from them. And they've been able to offer support that has enabled persistence for students that face high challenges, and not that all of our student parents are transfers, but community colleges have been working so diligently in this area, more so than four year institutions. And they also have a lot more experience creating equity plans. So there's a lot that we can learn from our community college partners.

Jasmin Othman 55:49

So I know we keep talking about data collection on student parents. What does the data collection look like on your campus? How do you know who your pregnant and parenting students are?

Tina Cheuk 56:00

So I'll start first here at Cal Poly. For the last couple of years it's probably been student driven, led by the students with dependents initiative, Ashley Hernandez, who's now a graduate and also Jasmin yourself really thinking about more grassroots effort housed under departmental and institutional support. But I think, in the work that I was supporting with students, they were scattered. I think I was reaching out to Fresno, what do you do in terms of data, what's happening here? And so we found different pockets at Cal State apply there's a checkbox if they want to do that. There's some information from the registrar's office. There's also some information from financial aid. That's only for students who had apply for financial aid. There's some information just because from the transfer center, they have information because they're working closely with the community college system and getting students set here. Then we do more of an organic count. Students who are student parents self elect to put their name in our system, and then they get access to these resources versus us deliberately outreaching to them so that we know exactly from from day one, whether they're transferred or they're coming as a freshman or any point in the four plus career, who they are. And we track that, so I think it's still a work in progress. If you ask me right now, what is that number? I I don't know. I don't even know who I would ask for that count because that is a shifting number. And it's challenging, because I think there's also a definition of, here we call them students with dependents. So there's also parenting students, and it's under this bigger notion of care work. So what if you have to care for an elder and you're responsible for that? Do you fall under this category? Because it's still care work, especially for students who come with different cultural backgrounds. Care work includes both children and elders that are part of their multi generational family. So how do we think about that more broadly without diluting the resources, so how do we have an expansive and inclusive notion of our students who care for others, their children and perhaps extending that definition further?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 58:30

The rest of the CSU, intentional campus specific data collection on my campus, had been non existent for a really long time. There were pockets as Dr. Cheuk referred to, pockets of informal and a data collection. It was mostly qualitative data that was happening in advising writing, so I would hear stories about students and their experiences. It was also happening in programs like EOP and Renaissance Scholars where you tend to see higher numbers of student parents. There was some data collection happening in our childcare center, though it was mostly almost exclusively related to childcare and it was almost exclusively just demographic data. And we do have some family data on incoming students around household size and characteristics, as Dr. Cheuk spoke to, but it misses those students who become parents while in college, and who are caretakers in the broader sense. So in 2018, I proposed to my campus leaders that we create a mechanism to formally collect this data. And as you can imagine, there was a mix of support and concern, mostly around privacy issues and the perceptions that students would have about our intentions for wanting to have and document this information that seemed sensitive, that seemed intimate. So I met with the director of financial aid, the VP of Enrollment Management and the University Registrar. And we talked about possibilities of where data might currently live, what kind of information we would ask for and where we would house the data mechanism if we created it, and also how we would educate students about our

intentions. In a lot of these conversations really involve me arguing for how this data would give us better insight into our students how would support our campus equity goals and its real potential to improve calibration of our Student Success efforts. So eventually, they got on board and I worked with the registrar and IT to create what we call the data dependent page. And on that page at the top we first simply and very broadly defined dependent as a child or adult who you provide care for and or financially support. And we also indicate that the dependent doesn't have to be a biological relative because we wanted students to see themselves as caregivers, despite maybe rigid social definitions of caregiving that privilege biology or that privilege even primary caregivers. So we wanted, for example, step parents to see themselves this definition and maybe parents have limited access to their children. So on that dependent page, we asked for the percentage of care provided, the percentage of financial support and the relationship to the dependent and we also asked if the student was currently expecting. In this work, so we do have a mechanism, it sounds great. But it does work, we encountered a few obstacles. First, it's very difficult to get permission to send emails to every student on campus. There's email fatigue. Educating students about the page and why it exists and what we intend to do with the data is really hard and without that education, we don't have as many students filling it out. And filling out the dependent page is optional. So we may never get a complete count or picture of the students. Also the data is not totally accurate, some of the fields I think were misinterpreted by students. So students, for example, said that their dependent is their parent, but the birthdate shows that the dependent's like five years old, so they interpreted the question as 'Who am I in relation to the dependent.' And then another big challenge is working with a very understaffed institutional research office. They're spread extremely thin these days. So we haven't been able to do very much with the data and incorporate, you know, make a dashboard and incorporate it into other dashboards so we could really start to track progress. So just having said that, I think we're all in agreement in our group that we need to call for our system to implement system wide data collection that's consistent across campuses, that's rigorous, and that's adequately communicated to our students and there's precedent for this. So we really want to tap into state and federal funding and move forward in the work. We really do need the data to show the need.

Pamela Lewis 1:03:45

I will just end it because my colleagues answered the question very thorough, is that on our campus, the way that we identify is definitely through the touch points of the different departments that they are seeking services for, and of course, with our financial aid enrollment service, but there's not an official mechanism in regards to actually finding our pregnant and parenting students. So there's a lot of work to be done, but every point that Dr. Cheuk and Dr. Mercado-Lopez stated is 100% accurate.

Jasmin Othman 1:04:20

So what's really being highlighted here is that we do not have formalized and accurate data collection on student parents across the CSU system. So we don't really know who all our pregnant and parenting students are. So my question is, despite that lack of data collection on our campuses, what is our responsibility to be inclusive of student parents in our retention efforts?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:04:49

We have many responsibilities to our students to be inclusive, we need to publicly recognize them and the narrative of who we are as an institution, as a system. We need to provide appropriate resources and Title Nine protection and education around that. And we also need to involve them in shaping our resources and support systems and really ensuring that we're being responsive to their needs. And, again, just as much as I advocate for data, I also advocate for acting without it. We don't need to have exhaustive data on our student parents to act. There are incredible nonprofits and research centers that are leading research and innovative programming for student parents that are impactful that we can draw from. Think of your Generation Hope Ascend at the Aspen Institute, the Institute for Women's Policy Research. So the data exists and I think we have enough to do some impactful work. But in terms of our responsibility, I think that if we really want to live up to our mission as a public good, and if we want to democratize higher education, and really inspire or aspire for an educated and empowered citizenry, we have to believe that recruiting and supporting student parents is not only our responsibility, but our moral imperative. And I think that this is really an opportunity to not only better serve our student parents, but to directly improve the lives of children and directly improve whole communities where these students are already very intimately integrated. Importantly, I think this is an opportunity to create the narrative that graduating from a CSU is a family tradition. It can be a family tradition. So when we enroll and support our student parents through Degree completion, that is an impactful and direct investment that we're making in pipelines that bring their children back.

Pamela Lewis 1:07:10

I will just add that I agree, and it is all of our responsibility. There are students and every each and every student with all their intersecting identity. So that is a part of our responsibility of working at an institution.

Tina Cheuk 1:07:27

Yeah, I think echoing my colleagues. I really love a sense model of the two generation. We are a public university system. And we know that if we invest in parental outcomes, especially mothers, that is directly impacting students' well being health academic and life outcomes, so if we put in that investment now, that goes a long way into feeding into that next generation that will be the future scholars in any of our CSU campuses, community college campuses, and UC campuses. And I think it's a state investment. We're all public institutions, and I think it is a moral imperative for our work.

Jasmin Othman 1:08:15

I can't thank our panel enough. This is such a crucial and timely topic. I'm going to turn back to our audience. As I have mentioned, we have an amazing, active, engaged audience. So I want to ask some questions, I've been trying to catch up. I jotted a couple in my notes and I'm going to turn to our Q&A feature here and get through as many of these as we can. So I'm going to start in the Q&A: we're learning that Black fathers are experiencing the highest rate of stop out from public four year colleges. What are some ways campuses can support this specific population?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:08:57

That's a great question. There was a lot of energy around men of color and supporting men of color at our recent CSU Student Success Network Conference. And it's absolutely true that Black men have been the most impacted. I think that this is where partnerships can really make a difference. On our campus, we have a men of color support group, we have programming specifically for men of color. I think that we can bring together our efforts and be truly intersectional in the work that we do. I think we can make more efforts to make visible Black male identity and Black fatherhood. Do more programming to push back against these mythical ideas of the absentee Black father. There's so much that we can do to really legitimize and to validate their experiences, the assets that they bring, the intensive care work that they provide. It's amazing to me the mythical ideas we have about the intensity or the lack of intensity of Black paternal care. So I think really uplifting that and showing how we benefit from those strengths, we benefit from those experiences and from their presence as an institution. I always go back to this idea of democracy. How are we democratizing our institutions and how do our institutions reflect or not reflect the reality of our world and the reality of our world includes Black men.

Pamela Lewis 1:11:03

And I would just add, I think Dr. Mercado-Lopez is the partnership piece. I know Dr. Roy on our campus was working with the city of Long Beach on this specific research and bringing that information to the campus was beyond our walls. It is actually a society problem. But partnering with men success initiative that was mentioned. Again, it's our responsibility.

Jasmin Othman 1:11:35

Thank you so much to both of you. So what would it take to connect all this data? I think we spoke a little bit on this, but if you want to just briefly add to that.

Tina Cheuk 1:11:47

I've always had this thought where, it has to be simple and clear and purposeful and intentional. When I was in graduate school, we get these notices of updating our emergency contact. It could be as simple as, review your emergency contact, and it's literally a checkbox, that can be optional, because it's not applicable to everyone. Do you have dependents? Are you caring for dependents? If so, how many? And that could be just a timestamp once a year as you're updating your emergency contact. And that's one way, it's accessed for all students. And that when they update their emergency contact, then they can register for their classes. Something that's just part of what you do in terms of making sure your emergency contact information is up to date. So something that is built in part of the system that's not too much extra and that we leverage existing systems are in place.

Jasmin Othman 1:12:52

We have a lot of questions around data. As we know, that's a very crucial topic. So the next one is, how do you collect data on student parents? Do you do it when students enroll or on a semester basis or a couple every quarter? This is a student speaking: they're wanting to know, in first starting this process in data collection, can you share the questionnaires that are used in your institution? As you can see, this is another individual who's trying to figure out how to collect data on their student parents.

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:13:32

Do I have the ability to share my screen? Thanks. This is what our dependent data page looks like. So right under emergency contact names is dependent information. You can see how it's not super descriptive and students might not maybe feel that they need to click on that link. So the education is really important. So this is what the student center looks

like when students log into their portal. So then, when they click on that they are taken to this page here that very broadly defines dependents, and then they can enter as many dependents as they would like, they enter the birth date. This gives us a sense of what are their responsibilities like, do they have kids that are two, an infant, five years old, 15 years old? They indicate the percentage of care provided. It gives us a sense of how intensive their care is that they provide for their children, how time consuming perhaps it might be. They also indicate the percentage of financial support and then the relationship to the dependent and then if they're the legal guardian. Also, they can check if they're an expectant parent. One thing we didn't do is work in some kind of mechanism to trigger them. But I had some hesitancy around that, especially for students who might experience pregnancy loss, or maybe a failed adoption. So we're still kind of problem solving around that. And then these are the categories that they could choose for their relationship to their dependent or they can indicate other and I believe that's it. So that's what we have. We're able to go in and look at the data and see what students are reporting and we're seeing a lot of students with multiple children. A lot of students with three children, 4, 5, 6, 7 children. It's not uncommon at all. It's much more common, I think, to see students with more than one child. And so that's what it looks like. And as I said, it's voluntary, which is part of our challenge in getting that full, complete picture.

Jasmin Othman 1:16:35

Thank you Dr. Larissa, especially for that visual representation. The next question was actually directed towards you. Because you mentioned the GI 25 initiative. So their question is, is that a policy specific to your campus or was it implemented throughout the CSU institution? I would like to read more about policies or strategic plans that incorporate support for student parents.

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:17:05

the strategic plan that I was referring to was our campus strategic plan, where we have different pillars and one of the pillars is around student basic needs, but also within GI 2025 we have a pillar for basic needs and bureaucratic barriers and other other areas of need. And so, when I was leading some of the work around basic needs, our cabinet connected and justified the investment by looking to see how it fit our campus strategic plan, but there's a lot of room within GI 2025 to support this kind of work. And last year, our campus put out a call for student success proposals and my proposal to provide training modules for faculty and staff around student parents in order to improve that student parent competency was approved. I was awarded that. Campuses can prioritize this on their own even if it's something that's not seen as directly related to GI 2025. Or even it's not prioritized on a system wide level.

Jasmin Othman 1:18:33

Thank you very much. So is there a current CSU committee that you all are a part of? If yes, how can this individual attend? If not, what do we need to do to get one started?

Tina Cheuk 1:18:51

We would love to have more folks at the table especially from the CSUs. This is this initial investment from 20MM with Long Beach, Cal Poly and Fresno State, but I know that they are looking in terms of more long term and bringing more campuses to the table. So I think some of the work that Pamela and I have done is just really getting a sense of what's happening, website scanning, just surface level, because we know each institution are doing much more than what's visible on their website. It's relational. It's those meetings that happen. It was decisions that are made for our student parents. Why we asked so many questions in the chat is to get a sense of what's happening and invite you to be part of this alliance coalition so that we can mobilize because I think it's through the power of more. Me working at Cal Poly is one campus, but now that I've connected with Long Beach and Fresno where we're tied to each other and we get to learn what amazing work each campus is doing. And so I think we're trying to build that in a systematic way, but also organically so that folks have a big umbrella so that we include more campuses and that way, what we're doing here at the Cal State can be a future Northstar to other states that have also public educational systems, so that we can be like this is what we're doing, this is how we're serving both the students and the families.

Jasmin Othman 1:20:26

There's an individual here who would like to start a survey on their campus to try to find their pregnant and parenting students and their question is really what steps/recommendations you have, specific questions to ask in this survey. Can you just speak to that and then getting that process started?

Pamela Lewis 1:20:48

Yeah, and I can definitely share a Qualtrics survey that I created. I just wanted to know so I sent a survey to all the managers. I'm like if you work with pregnant and parenting students, have them fill out this survey so we can at least have a better centralized location and I have no problem with sharing that survey. It was just a start, because I've mentioned those

touch points, but how great to get them all in one and be able to communicate to them. So yes, if the individual would like to email me I would have no problem sharing that with them.

Jasmin Othman 1:21:21

Thank you very much. So again, data collection, is it possible to collect data through the CSU apply? Is there currently a standard question to identify pregnant and parenting students through the application process?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:21:44

In CSU apply, there is a household information question or I think that's what it's called. And so you can identify as being responsible for dependents and that's something that we can tap into for some initial kind of understanding of who our student parents are that are enrolling on our campuses for the first time. So that's there. It's kind of similar, I think, to the data that I'm collecting on my campus. So it's basic demographic data, number of dependents. I think part of that household information is also income. So there is some data there. And it's data that I haven't asked my institutional research office for. But that could be a really great start for starting to gather some some data that's been formally collected.

Jasmin Othman 1:22:53

So I have a parent here who wants some advice on how to work with their children's center on their campus. Specifically in relation to the cost being high.

Tina Cheuk 1:23:11

I know at Cal Poly we do have short term gaps in terms of grants. So I think emergency funding is available. So that's part of Cal Poly Cares and I think really, partly working with your financial aid office so that they are aware of the full picture of the situation and really thinking about what is that combination of the financial aid package that then allows. I think this is related to data. It's like if they know that there is a critical mass of student parents who child care costs is not affordable, especially in California. Then it signals to them and they can gather, there's actually a significant number of student parents who may be exiting the system or delaying re-enrollment because of childcare costs and/or there aren't enough seats. So that's where it's really important for students to make themselves visible in places where it is welcoming and belonging. So that's where I think the tension arises where students don't feel like they can share that because the disclosure of that becomes a negative bias and they might think administrators look at them in a way that is a negative stigma.

Pamela Lewis 1:24:24

And I also recommend meeting with your student leaders, through associate students incorporated. Maybe they're finding that doing that across the CSUs or in the settings that you're in, to see if it is too high, and then maybe they can work with that department or that childcare in regards to looking at or lowering, but I will always recommend to work with your student leaders as well.

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:24:49

I think that's a great point. I believe program for children and childcare center only gets about \$100,000 outside of like basic operating costs. I mean, it's a very low budget that they're working with. And as much as I don't want to suggest student fees, there could be possibly a very small student fee that can be, even \$1 or \$2. I've seen that, that could then, it accumulates. It could support students who are experiencing these hardships. But I also want to point out that there is already a formal mechanism for requesting that your estimated cost of attendance reflect your childcare needs, so it can be increased. So if you feel like, my estimated cost of attendance is \$15,000 this year, but it doesn't take into account childcare, you can go in and there's a form that you can fill out to request that the the ceiling be highered, so that you could qualify for more grants and more loans, which is how I pay for childcare.

Jasmin Othman 1:26:10

We only have a couple more minutes for Q&A. I'm so sorry we're not going to be able to get through all of these but I do urge any of you to send any of these questions in an email. I'm sure all of our panelists would be more than happy to speak with you and I'm going to take one more question. There's a student here who is talking about taking care of their toddler at home. And one of the pros of the pandemic was the fact that they were able to care for their child at home while taking their classes. Now that their campus is transitioning back to in person, they're not really sure how they're going to be able to take care of their child, afford childcare in order to stay enrolled. So their question is, what is your recommendation in having their institution still offer online classes?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:27:09

To go back to Pam's point, work with your ASI. They can pass a resolution, they can advocate for you at the academic senate. The ASI president is a member of the Academic Senate. And, we get calls and requests for advocacy through the academic senate on a regular basis. So that could be a great space for reaching representatives from across campus. So I think that this is where student power and advocacy and activism can really make a difference. And also let your professors know. Don't be afraid to contact chairs. I say that as a future chair.

Jasmin Othman 1:28:08

We're going to take one more question. So can you please speak to the best practices regarding ethics and safety in collecting student parent data?

Larissa Mercado-Lopez 1:28:26

With our data collection, we tried to be as least invasive as possible and stick to the information that's collected on your tax form. And how dependents are defined. Go through IRB for any kind of surveys that you are conducting. You want to make sure that you have resources available for students. You want to make sure that your questions are not doing any kind of harm. So working closely I think with your IRB chair or maybe if you have an IRB representative in your department, that could be a really great first step.

Jasmin Othman 1:29:19

Thank you all so much. For the sake of time, we are going to now turn it back over to Miguel.

Miguel Leon 1:29:29

Thank you so much, Jasmin, and thank you to all of our panelists for the incredible conversation. I know we're a little over. I think it just speaks to the level of engagement that we experienced today. Thank you so much. The state of pregnant and parenting students in California was presented by the Michelson 20MM Foundation in service of advancing equity for all students and families. We want to thank our partners, Ascend at the Aspen Institute, Blue Shield of California Foundation, California Competes, the Education Trust West and Tipping Point Community. Shout out to all of you for helping make today happen. For those of you in our audience, mark your calendars on April 21 for the second installment of our Virtual Learning Series. Quick note for that one, we're hoping to uplift exemplars going on throughout the state of efforts supporting pregnant and parenting students. Mark your calendars for that one. We'll share more information on that event as the date approaches. Thanks for being here and join us on this journey. Continue to ask those questions about what work is being done at your campus and throughout the state. How are you serving grades and parenting students? Who are they? How are you reaching them? How are their voices being heard and incorporated into your equity work? All these are extremely, extremely important. And fortunately, there is a groundswell. This is one small part of it. Our partners have been in the space for a long time, and we're all coalescing around the student population which is fantastic to see. We'll post the recording of today's discussion on our YouTube channel, the Michelson 20MM Foundation by tomorrow. If you or your organization want to become part of our work focused on supporting pregnant and parenting students, please reach out to me personally at miguel@20mm.org. You can also stay engaged by signing up for our newsletter at 20mm.org to receive news and updates about our pregnancy and parenting student project, as well as other events and programs. Thank you all so much again for joining us today. Truly grateful for your presence. Have a great rest of the day.