As part of its “Birds of a Feather” Twitter engagement strategy meant to connect more deeply with the Michigan student success network in the digital space, the Michigan Center for Student Success (MCSS) coordinated three Tweet chats in summer 2020. This brief summarizes the second chat on July 28, 2020, which focused on “Doing MI-BEST for #mistudentsuccess” and covered topics related to one of MCSS’s newest initiatives, Michigan Building Economic Stability Today (MI-BEST). Themes from each question are summarized below (a full transcription of the tweet chat appears in Appendix A) and all digital resources shared during the Tweet chat are posted at the end of the brief. Follow @MCCACSS to stay engaged in the #mistudentsuccess conversation and look for other tweet chat summaries on our website.

Discussion Summary

Q1 How are institutions supporting resource equity in meeting the non-academic needs of students to ensure #mistudentsuccess and #mibestcc?

- Colleges are adopting student-ready cultures of caring that put students as humans first, with an awareness of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs
- Faculty, staff and administrators are reaching out to students via phone and text apps
- Institutions are repositioning resource notices to prominent locations on their websites
- Food pantries with wrap-around services embedded can provide a one-stop-shop
- Crisis support teams, confidential help requests, destigmatizing services and holistic awareness of available support through cross-training across campus are all critical
- To meet student needs regardless of access to transportation, colleges are offering a variety of options, from home delivery to on-site locations to access basic needs

Q2 How are community colleges using emergency aid grants to support a variety of student needs during the pandemic? #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc

- Campuses are providing Wi-Fi hotspots and reliable devices to close the digital divide
o Institutions are offering finish line grants, direct deposit of emergency aid
o Faculty are moving to open educational resources (OER) to save students money
o Institutions should provide student supports by design, not by coincidence
o Campuses should supply students with a directory of various resources when submitting for emergency aid grants.

Q3 In preparation for the fall term, how are community colleges assisting students in maintaining a sense of mental and emotional wellness for #mistudentsuccess? #mibestcc

o Continued socio-emotional outreach is key to helping students through difficult times; ask students how they are doing and what they need
o Mental and emotional wellness of faculty, staff and administrators is also critical
o Awareness that difficulties may be exacerbated by the pandemic (high alert for domestic violence, child abuse, suicidal thoughts, addiction)
o Partner with mental health providers and consider telehealth or video therapy options
o Use a “why not?” lens to take innovative, bold moves to holistically support students

Q4 How are community colleges sharing information about public benefit-eligibility and access to local resources with students for #mistudentsuccess and #mibestcc?

o Colleges are partnering with MI Bridges, MI LEO, United Way, Single Stop, Aunt Bertha
o Single points of contact on campus can help students navigate the bureaucracy
o Over-communicate with students about benefits and local resources available – include information in easy-to-find places like course syllabi, new student orientation, etc.
o Provide warm hand-offs when connecting students from one resource to another

Digital Resources Shared

o Great tangible examples
  ➢ @jffdave showcased North Carolina’s Finish Line grant [https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/statewide-program-help-community-college-students-graduate-seeing-spike](https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/statewide-program-help-community-college-students-graduate-seeing-spike)
  ➢ @JuliaLawton2016 shared @OTCedu’s student request form [https://students.otc.edu/support](https://students.otc.edu/support)

o Toolkits and resource guides
  ➢ @jffdave linked to @AchieveTheDream’s toolkit at [https://t.co/NEKFcXFEZT?amp=1](https://t.co/NEKFcXFEZT?amp=1)
@MCCACSS highlighted the resources for Michigan Colleges at https://www.mcca.org/MI-BEST-RESOURCES and specifically the recorded MI Bridges webinar at https://www.mcca.org/MIBridges-Webinar

Inspiring Digital Partners

We are grateful to all “Doing MI-BEST for #mistudentsuccess” Tweeters for their participation. Special thanks to the following digital partners that contributed much to this dialogue: @AchieveTheDream (@JuliaLawton2016), @CCRI_UW (@DrLia7 and @KatieKovacich), @Dr_DSHammonds, @ECMCFoundation, @JacksonCollege, @jfftweets (@jffdave), @onomatopriya (from the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement), @sova_solves (@Alison_Kadlec), @TrellisResearch.
Appendix A
Tweet Chat Transcription: Doing MI-BEST for #mistudentsuccess (July 28, 2020)

We’re excited to get this Tweet Chat started! But, first, an ice(cream) breaker to see who’s here with us. Drop a line to let us know where you’re tweeting from and what your preferred flavor is! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess #icecreambreaker

Ice(cream) breaker

- (@jbschanker) Tweeting from Saint Joseph, MI. Dark chocolate, preferably with salted caramel, is my jam! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess #icecreambreaker
- (@KatieGiardello) Tweeting from Southeast Michigan and salivating over my fave flavor - mint oreo all the way! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess #icecreambreaker
- (@jbschanker) Coffee ice cream all summer! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess #icecreambreaker
- (@jffdave) Tweeting from Vermont. Home of the "creemee"
  - (@onomatopriya) *googling creemee now*
  - (@KatieGiardello) I, too, am curious about the "creemee."
o (@jffdave) Haha. Essentially it is soft serve but a quainter name as Vermont is apt to do. [http://travelikealocalvt.com/2016/07/09/best-creemees-vermont/](http://travelikealocalvt.com/2016/07/09/best-creemees-vermont/)

- (@AchievetheDream) We’re here and excited to participate! Coffee ice cream to keep us energized for #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess Birds of a Feather Twitter Chat. #ATD_Network #HolisticStudentSuccess #comm_college
- (@onomatopriya) Tweeting from NYC (Washington Heights) and dreaming of / drooling over the almond cookie ice cream from @ChinatownICF!
- (@ECMCFoundation) Joining you from Los Angeles, CA! ECMCF is hear to support our students’ #basicneeds and we’re thrilled to have MCCA in our #BasicNeedsInitiative Learning Community. Our favorite ice cream flavor is highly contested, but Neapolitan will probably sate most of our team.
- (@SheAnnJones) Tweeting from Grand Rapids, MI. Anything with chocolate/peanut butter! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
- (@AlisonKadlec) Tweeting from beautiful northwest Michigan, about a mile up a hill from Torch Lake, amid chickens! Toasted coconut is the winner for me...
- (@TrellisResearch) We are excited to participate from Austin, Texas....where our ice cream (Moollenium Crunch from BlueBell!) evaporates in less than a minute if eaten outside.
- (@KatieKofacich) From CCRI in Seattle! My favorite flavor would have to be non-dairy caramel swirl. #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
- (@DrLia7) Tweeting from Washington state. Vanilla with chunks or swirls of chocolate. #mistudentsuccess
Your ice cream flavors are making us hungry but we should get to the "main event!" Here's the first substantive question of the day. #mibestcc
#mistudentsuccess

Q1 How are institutions supporting resource equity in meeting the non-academic needs of students to ensure #mistudentsuccess and #mibestcc?

- (@jbschanker) A1: Text apps like Remind are also useful for keeping in touch with students @MIColleges as reported by faculty. #mifacultylead #mibestcc
- (@ericaorians) A1: Several @Micolleges have reached students by phone to ensure that they are aware of new services. #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
  - (@onomatopriya) Yes! Another example: Many @SinclairCC employees who could not perform their normal duties from home due to the pandemic were tasked with supporting personal outreach to students: https://bit.ly/306Jbtx!
- (@onomatopriya) A1: Many colleges have placed resource guides for students directly on the homepage of the college website—making something so critical so easy to find.
- (@SheAnnJones) A1: @grcc maintains a Get Help website for students to help meet the basic needs of students. #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess #RealCollege
- (@jffdave) A1: By committing to a culture of caring. Students are humans first and deserve our love. Colleges must redesign every system and process on campus to be student-ready. @AmarilloCollege shows us what is possible when you do. https://actx.edu/president/culture-of-caring #mistudentsuccess and #mibestcc
o (@TrellisResearch) Amarillo College does such a great job! An important way to ensure resource equity is to remove the stigma surrounding the use of service and benefits. The Culture of Caring model is a key step in removing this stigma. #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc

o (@jffdave) Absolutely! One option is to set up campus food pantry and ensure it is accessible to all students. Can be a great place to deliver wrap-around supports. @AchieveTheDream has a great toolkit. https://achievingthedream.org/system/files_f

• (@Dr_DSHammonds) A1: Going straight just to the source. Surveying students about what they need (tangible and intangible resources). #mibestcc #mystudentsuccess
  o (@KatieGiardello) Ask. Students. What. They. Need! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess

• (@TrellisResearch) A1 - Many institutions are building crisis support teams to case manage students experiencing difficulty securing basic needs. This model of case management has been successful in supporting students facing mental health crises on campuses for decades. #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
  o (@AlisonKadlec) A1 - this crisis support team model also builds the muscles & appetite for the kind of cross-silo collaboration required to engage in deeper redesign for more equitable outcomes
  o (@MCCACSS) Cross-silo muscle-building for equitable outcomes! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess

• (@TrellisResearch) A1 - Another key component to the resource equity component of this question is advisors. When academic advisors have conversations about finances, supporting family, and basic needs - it can be a catalyst for more students to utilize key resources. #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc
  o (@KatieGiardello) Academic advisors are so critical to #mistudentsuccess! #mibestcc

• (@JacksonCollege) A1: JC students can fill out a confidential emergency request form for needs such as lack of internet, other technology issues, or lack of a device altogether. #mibestcc #JCStrong

• (@JuliaLawton2016) @OTCedu set up a simple form for students to request help that lives on the first page of their website. They also cross-trained staff from across the college to conduct outreach to caseloads of students. https://otc.edu #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess

• (@AchieveTheDream) Our #ATD_Network #comm_colleges are providing great support: @NWTC offers parenting students $ & resources for childcare support. @ASUThreeRivers kept their Eagle Outreach Food, Clothing, & Hygiene pantry open & available by appt thru #COVID-19 crisis #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc

• (@ECMCFoundation) A1: Campuses can take action in multiple ways! E.g. Keeping food pantries open for students who were/are still stranded on campus is a necessity. For
those who no longer have access to campus devices or WiFi, equipping students with hotspots or loaner laptops is another option.

- (@MCCACSS) YES! Several @MIColleges have coordinated food deliveries and pick-up options for students. Technology loans and hotspot accessibility are also being implemented across the mitten. #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess

Great information being shared! Let's see what is happening with emergency aid. #mibestcc
#mistudentsuccess

Q2 How are community colleges using emergency aid grants to support a variety of student needs during the pandemic? 
#mistudentsuccess 
#mibestcc

- (@ericaorians) A2: Internet access - broadband, hotspots, reliable devices. Essential tools to support #mistudentsuccess.
  - (@onomatopriya) The digital divide is real. Loving the many faculty who are deeply leaning into OER!
  - (@MCCACSS) Yes! Our folks @MIColleges love OER! @MichCollOnline #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess

- (@jffdave) A2: By encouraging persistence and completion. @NCCommColleges finish line grant is a promising example of braiding funding to meet emergency needs of near completers. Launched just in time for #COVID19 spike in need.
https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/statewide-program-help-community-college-students-graduate-seeing-spike

- (@onomatopriya) A2: Some colleges have completely skipped an application / request process (which can become unintentional but real barriers) and directly deposited the aid into student accounts.
- (@JacksonCollege) A2: As of this date the college has disbursed $103,000 in emergency funds to students. The institutional portion of the CARES Act Funding is $1,946,067 and is being used to provide scholarships directly to students to reduce the cost of online courses. #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc
  - (@TrellisResearch) Wow! That is really great to hear.
- (@AchieveTheDream) @MCCACSS-#ATD_Network #Comm_Colleges are making it easier for #students to apply for/quicker to receive emergency aid. Many using CARES funds to provide direct payments to students to help w/ needs during these uncertain times #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc #holisticstudentsupports
- (@ECMCFoundation) A2: We’ve seen @dcccd work in partnership with @edquity to disburse aid to students quickly and efficiently. Outside of emergency aid, community colleges such as @cerritoscollege are opening emergency housing for students who would otherwise be homeless. Innovation continues!
Q3 In preparation for the fall term, how are community colleges assisting students in maintaining a sense of mental and emotional wellness for #mistudentsuccess? #mibestcc

- (@ERICAORIANS) Domestic violence, child abuse, suicide, and drug addiction are all real issues that impact students. The @MCCACSS shared links to helpful resources at https://mcca.org/MI-BEST-RESOURCES.

- (@JFFDAVE) A3: With remote the reality for many, colleges should commit to continuing the personal weekly outreach that so many did in the spring. Critical way to demonstrate to students that you care and that they are not alone. #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc

- (@ONOMATOPRIYA) A3: Many colleges are experimenting with teletherapy / telehealth. For example, @MontgomeryCC has partnered with Talkspace, an app which connects users to licensed therapists via talk / audio / video.
• (@onomatopriya) A3: Let’s expand this question to include the mental and emotional wellness of all faculty, staff, and administrators. Everyone is experiencing some form of trauma. We must support students and those who support students and those who support those who support students.
  o (@MCCACSS) And those who support those who support #mistudentsuccess! #mibestcc #2020trauma
  o (@jbschanker) So true! We all need some grace right now! #mibestcc
• (@SheAnnJones) A3: we’re continuing as much outreach as possible. We’re also supporting our faculty and sharing information about our students who responded to the @hope4college survey this summer. #RealCollege #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
• (@Dr_DSHammonds) A3: Taking a step back and examining policies and procedures with a “why not” lense. Now is the time for innovation and bold moves. Take the opportunity to step out there and meet students’ needs! Telemental Health Counseling for students - why not? @mibestcc @mistudentsuccess
  o (@Dr_DSHammonds) Text-based student mental health support line - why not?
• (@JacksonCollege) A3: Jackson College partners with Family Service and Children’s Aid (FSCA) to offer JC students and employees a wide range of behavioral health services. Licensed mental health and substance abuse clinicians, along with the Oasis Navigator, will be available to provide
  o (@JacksonCollege) A3 cont: individualized support at the Oasis Center or assist the individual in obtaining services at FSCA main office located in downtown Jackson. The Oasis Navigator will connect students and employees with the appropriate community support to meet the individual’s needs.
  o (@JacksonCollege) A3 cont: The navigator will also provide advocacy for the individual. Options available to you will include:
    1. Phone support/therapy session; and or
    2. Utilize GoToMeeting for a face to face consultation over the web
• (@TrellisResearch) A3: We are seeing many CCs asking students - through surveys - how the pandemic has affected their mental health. In the COVID-19 surveys we have conducted we found around 65% of students have elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and/or stress right now. #mibestcc
• (@DrLia7) That number shows how important it is for CC to ask students about their mental health. The more they know the more they can support them! #mistudentsuccess
• (@AchievetheDream) A3 @MCCACSS: #ATD_Network @IvyTechCC & @LifeAtPurdue Uni prtnred to create optnl addiction studies;@MCCC offers free, online therapy;
@ASU-Newport has fun, socially distant activities like in park movies; @ASU-Newport shares inspiring art/poetry/ music.#mistudentsuccess #mibestcc

TIME FLIES when you're tweet chatting! Here is our final question of the hour. #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess

Q4 How are community colleges sharing information about public benefit-eligibility and access to local resources with students for #mistudentsuccess and #mibestcc?

- (@ericaorians) We at @mccacss are excited to partner with @michiganhhs to connect community colleges with #mibridges.
- (@ericaorians) Our colleague @pmillerbiz recorded a quick video to help colleges connect with #mibridges from @MichiganHHS. [https://www.mcca.org/MIBridges-Webinar](https://www.mcca.org/MIBridges-Webinar)
- (@ericaorians) Don't forget that many @micolleges students are eligible for unemployment benefits from @MichiganLEO.
- (@onomatopriya) A4: We tend to front-load our services and by the time students enter their 3rd / 4th / 5th terms, they may have forgotten which services are available and how to access them. Many students have found a Single-Point-of-Contact / "their person on campus" to be very helpful!
  - (@MCCACSS) Excellent point, Priya! We can't assume that students will remember hearing something once in their student success course. Faculty can also play a role by highlighting services during class time. #mifacultylead #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
- (@jffdave) A4: Partnerships like United Way and @SingleStop go a long way. But what more must we do? Redesign FinAid offices as holistic aid & financial counseling. Advocate for policy change to broaden eligibility and benefits. #StateLeading #WhyNot #BoldMoves #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc
  - (@TrellisResearch) Great point David. This work can only go so far under current policy. #StateLeading #WhyNot #BoldMoves #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc
- (@Dr_DSHammonds) A4: Open access and equitably. Provide the information to all students. AND - structure in resource share (in syllabi/ course pages, new student orientations, or virtual student trainings). Requiring disadvantaged students to hunt down this info further disadvantages them
  - (@MCCACSS) "THINK STRUCTURALLY." Right on, @Dr_DSHammonds. Thanks for tweet chatting with us today!! #mibestcc #mistudentsuccess
- (@TrellisResearch) A4: Many institutions start with something like @AuntBertha or @SingleStop. These are great services to start creating lists of reduced cost services and connecting students to public benefits. As mentioned before...including cross-silo training on using these services are key.
- (@TrellisResearch) A4: In Trellis' Fall 2019 Student Financial Wellness Survey, we found public benefits use higher amongst CC students. When considering the levels of basic needs security, these levels of public benefits usage do seem low. More work can be done for sure. #mibestcc

![Q54-58: Percent of respondents who indicated use of public assistance, by assistance type](image)

- (@JacksonCollege) A4: Jackson College sends out student communication two times a week, often sharing resources available to our students. Jackson College sends out student communication two times a week, often sharing resources available to our students. Shelter, Food Pantries, and more. #JCStrong
• (@AchieveTheDream) @MCCACSS A4 Many of our #ATD_Network #Comm_Colleges are proactively supporting their #students throughout the application process for benefits to minimize stress and additional hurdles to accessing needed benefits. #equity #studentsuccess #firstgen #mistudentsuccess #mibestcc