



## **Expanding Reach Task Force April 11, 2019 Meeting Summary**

Task Force members participating: Katherine Harasz (chair), Carl Cimino, Lionel de Maine, Linda Labit, and Maria Lucero

NOVA staff: Kris Stadelman, Cindy Stahl, Eileen Stanly and Lisa Wepfer

### **I. Welcome and Review Agenda**

The Task Force chair opened the meeting with a welcome and overview of the agenda that would include a review of the last meeting, results from the Stakeholders Group survey and follow-up discussion, proposed pilot prototypes and next steps.

### **II. Review of Last Meeting**

Over the past few meetings, the task force has reviewed the labor market/economic landscape, existing resources in the NOVA workforce development system and opportunities to expand NOVA's reach where there is the greatest need (areas with high poverty rate, high numbers of residents in poverty and high unemployment) and where NOVA does not currently have a presence. As a result of this research, the task force's focus has turned to expanding reach in northern San Mateo County that is a high need area and where NOVA is no longer operating a job center. During the last meeting, ideas were explored for utilizing technology to bring NOVA's curriculum to partners and customers, train-the-trainer concept so partners could teach the curriculum to their customers, innovative approaches to tackling transportation issues that are barriers to accessing services, and physical co-location of NOVA staff at partner sites that may be cost prohibitive. Also, at the last meeting, the task force reviewed a resource map of organizations in the workforce development system, specifically, adult education, community colleges and large companies. For the adult education providers and community colleges, these sites are considered closed sites and may not be good options for NOVA to co-locate and serve its customers. Staff has delayed approaching companies until an identified ask is further fleshed out and a strategy for how best to reach out to these companies is developed. At this meeting, members also recommended that partners be surveyed regarding their needs and what approaches would work for expanding NOVA's reach in the community.

### **III. Review Results of Stakeholders Survey and Group's Discussion**

The Stakeholders Group is comprised of a variety of public and private agencies with a common mission of workforce development that includes: adult education, community colleges, State and county government agencies, and agencies serving individuals with barriers to employment, among many others. All of the WIOA mandated partners are included in the Stakeholders Group. The group has been

meeting for 30 years and about two years ago was expanded to include San Mateo County partners, with the addition of the County of San Mateo to the NOVA consortium.

The Stakeholders Group survey was conducted in October 2018 and received a 36 percent response rate, which is considered an excellent response rate. The results of the survey were distributed to the task force. The survey results and follow-up discussions with the group can be divided into three broad categories:

- 1) Partners interest in accessing NOVA curriculum content online via technology: There were a lot of concerns expressed regarding the use of technology given the partner sites' limitations with accessing certain technology such as WIFI and live streaming and their customers' limitations with utilizing technology. Also, if a workshop is dependent on technology and the technology doesn't work, then the entire session would be considered a failure.
- 2) Partners interest in learning more about NOVA curriculum such as through the train-the-trainer model: In general, partners were interested in learning more about NOVA's curriculum content but how this content is disseminated was explored further with adult education partners. Partners moved away from adopting the NOVA curriculum in its entirety because their case management model is very different from NOVA's integrated service-delivery model. Partners were more interested in adapting portions of NOVA's curriculum and expertise either through a video or through a train-the-trainer model of partners' staff, such as the transition specialists, so it is integrated into their current curriculum for consistency. This curriculum could also be expanded to customers who do not have a right to work that NOVA is unable to serve directly.
- 3) Transportation Issues and Co-location: Transportation was identified as a major barrier for accessing job seeker services overall, but respondents felt that customers would likely travel to an education site to receive these services. While partners were interested in discussing the potential for NOVA to offer limited service at their site, they recognized that NOVA may not have the staff resources to go from site to site directly delivering the curriculum and that partners may not have the space to accommodate NOVA staff if the resources were available.

#### **IV. Discussion on Pilot Prototypes**

- Jefferson Adult Education
- Santa Clara Adult Education

As a result of the Stakeholder survey's findings, NOVA staff is exploring launching two new pilot projects:

- Jefferson Adult Education: Based on previous research and data collected, Jefferson Adult Education, located in Daly City in northern San Mateo County, would be a good partner with which to pilot a project given the community's high need for services and the potential positive relationship that could be developed with this organization. NOVA staff reached out to Jefferson Adult Education about opportunities to partner and the organization was interested in exploring the train-the-trainer model with NOVA's curriculum for the transition specialist staff there. Initially, the pilot will just focus on one provider site, but there is potential for expanding this model to other adult education providers in San Mateo County who are part of the ACCEL consortium.

- Santa Clara Adult Education: NOVA has had a longstanding history of partnering with Santa Clara Adult Education on a variety of initiatives that includes more recently with the NOVA youth program. As such, this provider would be a good candidate with which to collaborate on a new pilot project. NOVA staff reached out to the Santa Clara Adult Education, who brought in additional partners that included Mission College and Evergreen Adult Education for the discussion. Partners expressed an interest in the train-the-trainer model as well. As a first step, NOVA is conducting a skills assessment (handout) of partner transition specialists' skills to determine what skills they have and what skills they would like to develop further. NOVA will then conduct an in-depth training of the Santa Clara Adult Education staff and measure impact to see if this model should be expanded to the other adult education providers in northern Santa Clara County. Then NOVA will customize training based on staff needs and pilot these trainings to other adult education providers recognizing that each program is different and their customers (and staff) have different skill-sets.

Metrics: The task force brainstormed on possible metrics for these pilot projects to answer the question, How do we know we're adding value? Examples include:

- How many customers (from the adult education providers) have come to NOVA as a result of the pilot?
- What are the barriers that stood in the way of customers coming to NOVA before the pilot?
- Where did the customer find employment? Was there any overlap with service areas?
- After training, survey how partners incorporated NOVA curriculum into their program.
- Survey customers regarding their level of satisfaction.
- Survey adult education staff regarding whether the expanding reach strategy reached more customers or how the strategy assisted partners with expanding their reach.

It will be important to recognize that there is no "cookie cutter" approach, so it will be important to customize and to develop good messaging. The skills assessment of staff will achieve this. The resulting outcomes of these pilots may serve to expand the bandwidth of both NOVA and the workforce development system. The original concept of the one-stop system was that all partners were co-located. That proved to be unrealistic and ineffective, so the focus now is providing career navigation assistance at every door.

## **V. Wrap-up and Next Steps**

The next step is NOVA will move forward with prototyping the pilots. At the next meeting, the task force will:

- Further flesh out the list of metrics and menu of services
- Revisit the transportation issues that are serving as barriers to accessing services
- Review progress with prototypes.