

## **Advisory Team meeting highlights—August 1, 2017**

### **Attendees**

*Amy Anderson, Association of Washington Business; Allan Atienzo, Independent Colleges of Washington; John Aultman, Governor's Office; William Belden, Clark College; Alisha Benson, Greater Spokane Incorporated; Vi Boyer, Independent Colleges of Washington; Jim Crabbe, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Rich Cummins, Western Governors University; Nancy Dick, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Brian Dixon, Washington State University; Alison Eldridge, WSAC; Paul Francis, Council of Presidents; Julie Garver, Council of Presidents; Nova Gattman, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Carrie Hert, OSPI; Michael Highfill, Washington State University; Joe Holiday, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Brian Jeffries, Partnerships for Learning; Noreen Light, WSAC; Bill Lyne, United Faculty of Washington State; Ellen Matheny, WSAC; James McCafferty, Western Washington University; Gil Mendoza, OSPI; Eleni Papadakis, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Marina Parr, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Susana Reyes, Mead School District; Antonio Sanchez, Central Washington University; Lexi Shankster, WSAC; Rachelle Sharpe, WSAC; Randy Spaulding, WSAC; Gray Sterling, WSAC; Becky Thompson, WSAC; Maddy Thompson, WSAC; Marc Webster, WSAC*

### **Review of states**

#### *Indiana*

- Sent 125 thousand direct mailers
  - Strategically sent to adults who stopped out for years ago
  - Identified using Clearinghouse data
  - Successfully re-enrolled 9 thousand students
- Part-time grant redirected to an adult-only grant (similar to SNG)
- Workforce-ready grant equivalent to the Opportunity Grant
  - WA already has similar pieces in place.
- Changes to academic progress policies
  - Back on track with federal funding

#### *Vermont*

- Just in the beginning states
  - Cohort-based model
  - Childcare initiative

#### *New Jersey*

- Marketing to different demographics of students
  - Intentionally engaging communities of color

#### *Kansas*

- Seeking funding for portal development and grant funding.
- Building a sense of community
  - Find a way to build with adult students themselves
  - Tapping into community networks
  - Recognizing the need to engage rural communities

- Two-generation work, HEAD START mailers

#### Questions/Comments

- Anything that could be implemented in WA?
- Mix of funding mechanisms—how do sectors/collaboratively receive funding?
  - State
  - Lumina
  - Community

#### Review Objectives and outcomes from 7/31 Tech-team

##### Attendance

- 32 people attended
- Reps from 6 different vendors
  - Share their expertise in how this could be developed
  - Help up craft a procurement

##### Focus groups

- 6 focus groups conducted
  - Purpose
    - Understand needs and barriers
    - Motivation, value of education

##### Findings

- Earnings, key area of interest
- Websites tend to be according to the organization function, as opposed to the customer function
- Students wanted *something*
  - It was a question of navigation, information was not easy to find
  - Customer experience concept, two different generations looking
  - Everyone knew about the welcome pack from WGU--experiential construct
    - In addition to the content, think about the experience of the student

#### Key Questions

- Have we unearthed from other states where students are accessing the web resources?
- Is the tech/user interface available off-the shelf?
  - College Completion Consortium, yes (NewEd)
- What is the cost?
  - Not a clear estimate, 150k + maintenance
    - Site maintenance ideally handled by the vendor
  - Estimates, results may vary...80/20 rule
- Where do people go to access information?
  - How do you maintain and remain current?
    - Accurate data is imperative

#### Content Considerations

- Job-specific
  - What job is there right now today
    - Consider alignment of language among sectors/organizations
- Suggested content to user (Amazon model)
  - Ex. "People who searched this, also viewed that..."

- Credit hours
  - How many classes are you taking at a time
- Site navigation
  - Users need to know what they're looking for initially
  - Users tend to say a site is confusing because they can't find what they're looking for...
    - Is there a search feature, google search embedded in the site...
      - "I'm not clicking, I'm searching"
- Cost, credits, and available programs
  - Important to leverage existing resources
    - Ex. Evening/weekend studies, there is a way to direct students to those resources
- This resource is not just limited to "adults"
  - Developing a system that helps students access information, with adults in mind
- Is there a way to talk to a human being?
  - Usually it is difficult to find a number or chat
- If a number is made available, there should be someone on the other end who knows what they're talking about...
- Self-sufficiency calculator, how much does it really cost to go to school

#### *Other considerations*

- Privacy, enrollment tracking to measure success
  - User should be able to enter as much information as possible before being required to enter name
  - Student voices should be visible
  - Variation by region...how do we make sure what we're doing at the institution level, recognizing the differences in regional needs?
- Ensure certificates and apprenticeships information is made available, not just degrees.
- Sharability via social media, and save features
  - Adult learners want to start right now, but not ready to start right now
    - Ex. Financial aid is a need, but they may have already missed the deadline...
- Provide information about critical support services
  - Child care
  - Food stamps
  - Housing Authority
  - Better effort among states to coordinate all of their benefit programs
    - Institutions are already starting to work on this...
    - Is this something we reference, or something go into indepth
      - Coordination is a place to start
    - Static page
      - DC site has a link to TANF
      - Template possibly provided to all institutions, "Here are things we recommend..."
- Is a web-based tool the only approach we're taking and/or considering?
  - We could potentially lose people if so...
- If we can serve 80% of people with most of what they need, would we consider that success?

- Helping them to know what questions to ask when they do talk to someone
- Using the word "adult friendly"

*What questions should the Tech-Team consider?*

- Prioritizing the purpose of the tool
  - Determine what you want, not how much we want to spend
    - What's out there? Vs. What can we buy with the resources we have?
- Connect with competency-based learning
  - Military can automatically go into the system and get equivalency
  - Give information about academic and work backgrounds
  - What's the information needed for PLA, transcripts etc
  - Hybrid, collecting some information from the student and passing to the institutions, vs using site widgets and tools
  - PLA is a bucket--combination of tools and passthroughs
- Is there any provision in the grant for "free" money for wrap around services?
- Veterans need to be plugged into the right advisor to avoid losing benefits
  - Same with students receiving other benefits
  - i.e. TANF, housing etc...(see notes above re: critical support services)
- Proactive links to self-identify—series of questions to prompt user identification
  - once user clicks a particular link now you know user person
    - ex. "Did you know a vet earns 20% more?"
    - ex. "single mom's have benefits available..."
- Employer connectivity, on-ramping...
  - How do we update, is there a portal to log-in and update

**Micro-grant**

- Serves as a solution to address small dollar pre-enrollment barriers
  - Do we implement at the time we launch the tool?
  - How do we effectively connect funds to identified pre-enrollment barriers?
  - How do we connect to institutions (both those who have initiatives already in place, and those that do not)?

*Pre-enrollment considerations*

- Identify the type of need
- Could these funds be used to help institutions with their marketing plan?
  - Institutions already know who and where they are...
  - Link the micro grant to the marketing
    - Waiving the entry fees as part of the match
  - Needs to have some portability
    - In case students had a bad experience at one institution and decided to go to another
- Direct contact examples
  - President at CWU called at the students who didn't re-enroll
  - IN model--sent letter as a follow-up from institution with a "deal"
  - Personal direct marketing
  - Referral method

*Funds available*

- \$500k is the hope for a pilot model in hopes of future funding for sustainability?
- Key question: How do you make \$500k into \$1 million?
  - Explore incentivizing institutional matching
  - Possibly do the same with child care
- Invest in success--three-way (institution/feds/student)
  - “Hook” the student and incent monthly mentoring/check-in w/funds
  - Georgia-tech has a small dollar grant
  - UC Berkley--interest free small dollar loan