



Emerging Trends Task Force September 17, 2018 Meeting Summary

Task Force members participating: Andy Switky (chair), Steve Levy, and Micah Merrick

NOVA staff: Kris Stadelman, Luther Jackson and Eileen Stanly

Guest: Floor Koudijs, Joint Venture Silicon Valley

I. Welcome and Review Agenda

The task force chair called the meeting to order and provided an overview of the agenda to set the stage for the meeting's discussion.

II. Review and Follow-up to July Meeting Discussion

- At the July task force meeting, Board member Sinead Borgersen discussed a core curriculum model that is being implemented in the K-8 grades through the Union School District. At Sinead's recommendation and as a follow up to this discussion, NOVA manager Luther Jackson reached out to Superintendent Denise Coleman to obtain more information about this program.
- The Union School District program has a holistic and integrated approach to education, focusing on problem-solving and embracing risk-taking and innovation in a contextual learning environment where students are learning how to apply what they have been taught. While students are taught coding at an early age, coding is not viewed as the end result but rather a means to developing problem-solving skills to solve real-world problems in the future. Students understand that they are valued and are contributing members of society. An example of a project they participated in was researching the impact of plastic straws on the environment and presenting on their findings. The challenge will be maintaining this approach and curriculum after they transition to high school.
- Just as colleges in the 19th Century valued a foundational liberal arts curriculum including Greek, Latin, geometry, history, logic and ethics, Luther presented on a 21st Century core curriculum discussed at the last task force meeting at the annual California Workforce Association Meeting of Minds conference. The new foundation for a 21st Century education should include: STEM (chemistry, calculus, physics, coding, data science), Liberal arts (music theory and performance, journalism, painting, writing and other creative arts), and career navigation (networking, entrepreneurship, lifelong learning and problem-solving).

III. Further Define Work

Highlights of the discussion included:

- One approach is looking at the problem from the perspective of supply (what employers are looking for in their talent) and demand (who they will hire). There will likely always be a mismatch between

the two where gaps will emerge that should be targeted. Identifying foundation/core curriculum will be good to focus on specifically to address the long-term need.

- Another way to look at this is according to knowledge (the requirements don't change that much), skills (the requirements start to change more rapidly) and tools (the requirements change very rapidly). Some will be timeless and some won't.
- A revised "Hub and Spoke" model discussed at the last task force meeting was presented, with the hub representing the core/foundational curriculum, with circles surrounding the hub representing specialties and spokes emerging from each specialty representing more in-depth specialization.
- There will be 1 million retirements expected by 2030 that will result in a shortfall of 700,000+ people needed to fill the available jobs in the region. In addition, most jobs are not tech and represent a wide variety of sectors. More workers will be in low-wage jobs in the future. These are emerging trends that the Board should consider tackling. The new approaches to education discussed are good but they are addressing the long-term need, not the more urgent problem that the community faces. The Board has a dual mandate: help fill the skilled labor market gap and help workers in low-wage jobs move up into better paying jobs. In addition, these efforts need to go beyond just the tech industry. These problems may also need to be addressed at a policy level through the Board Legislative Committee and with the State Board.
- While the challenges facing the K-12 education system are important, this won't be the focus of the task force's work. The task force's work will also need to go beyond just the tech sector. While occupational skill development will be needed, other skills such as problem solving and teamwork will be important to consider.
- A schematic was captured on a flipchart as follows:

Demand Side

- *Employers care about now
- *Impacted by replacement jobs
- *Public vs. private sectors

*Domain specific skills

Supply Side

NOVA

- *Helps customers navigate the hub and spoke model

*Universal/foundational skills
Collaboration, innovation, tools, people skills
(doesn't change)

- *Takes more time on this side
- *Hub and spoke model

- We need to verify that this model is accurate for employers and that they care about it. Employers can help identify domain specific skills but they are having problems finding workers with the universal/foundational skills.
- In response to a question, NOVA is both a convener and collaborator. While NOVA has focused on the supply side, efforts have been made to be a convener/collaborator with employers on the demand side. One example is a recent project where NOVA has been reaching out to the health care industry to identify their needs and employers recommended that we focus our work on home health care and mental health care rather than on hospitals. Another example where NOVA obtained input from employers is the ICT Tech study where NOVA obtained input from employers that translated into a very specific curriculum, "The 5 Truths of Career Success", which was taught to our customers and is still relevant today for customers trying to navigate the economy and job market. The five truths are: self-awareness, networking, relationship management, organizational reading,

and mentorship. We have identified foundational/core skills that may be of value to workers, but have not verified these skills with employers except for the ICT Tech study that was completed several years ago. Perhaps this process needs to be revisited. The retirement issue will be a critical issue for employers and may be a way to engage them.

- This is a golden opportunity with the low unemployment rate and employers are looking for workers to engage employers in our work. Both the private and public sectors are facing challenges for workers. The public sector, in particular, cannot compete with the private sector in terms of offering competitive salaries. This is also a challenging time for the changing labor market, where workers are being sourced in pieces working on a project within the company and then being expected to compete for another project within the company when that project ends.
- While the task force horizon could be a two-year period or more, a recommendation was made to identify individual processes that could be achieved in the interim.
- Project ideas for the task force included:
 - 1) What tools exist to place a customer on the map? Assessment of skills, knowledge, etc. The approach could be technology in nature or could be a test? Are there new technologies that could address this?
 - 2) Do a similar project as above but related to career pathways. Is there a way to identify pathways based on how close a customer is from a skills perspective and how well the job pays? NOVA is already doing this but with one customer at a time with information shared among the career advisors.
 - 3) Companies are not very good at evaluating what they are looking for in their workforce. They identify a skill shortage and then look to fill that specific gap instead of doing a skills inventory of their current workforce and adjust assignments to fill this gap. What is the value of spending money to hire from outside the company vs. using existing skills within the company and reshuffling? Quantifying this value may be appealing to employers.
 - 4) Verify foundational/core skills with employers. It is difficult to approach employers for information. NOVA has developed over time a coalition of the willing of employers with whom to converse. Perhaps conducting a quick survey of other workforce boards, education providers, nonprofits and former customers on how best to engage employers may be of value as a first step.
 - 5) Identify an emerging trend and then invite people in to discuss this topic: conversation series.

IV. Wrap-up and Next Steps

At the next meeting, the task force will continue with the discussion and further define the work that may include both short- and long-term projects.