



IPPS: Innovative Paths to Public Service in the Greater Sacramento Region

Evaluation of 2018 Outcomes and Recommendations for 2019

Context

IPPS leadership launched a collaborative to improve the talent pipeline to public sector careers. In September of 2017, an informal steering committee began attending monthly convenings to determine broad goals and objectives of this collaborative and to write a grant proposal to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to fund this project. On March 1, 2018, the grant was approved and the collaborative began receiving funding through the Strong Workforce Statewide Fiscal Omnibus in order to seed the development of a working civil service collaborative amongst civil service employers, workforce and economic development agencies, and the educational and training community that prepares and retrain this workforce.

The purpose of the collaborative is to study, evaluate, test, and modify ways to improve the pipeline into the public-sector, identify existing workforce needs, identify and secure funding sources, and examine the barriers to preparing incoming workers to fill employment needs. The collaborative decided to focus on four major project areas for 2018: Experiential Learning, Marketing & Branding, Benchmarking, and Stakeholder Engagement. Each of these topics were assigned a team to pilot a six month project that would advance an innovative idea and move the collaborative towards the group's stated goals. These experiments each had a budget of \$5,000 to test for effectiveness and scalability, and had reportable results by the end of November 2018.

In order to establish next steps for the collaborative's work in 2019, IPPS leadership has invited Valley Vision as a third party evaluator to analyze the group's work done in 2018 and provide recommendations for future progress into the next year. IPPS leadership provided Valley Vision with all available documentation regarding the collaborative's activities and progress made in 2018, including project area summaries and updates, quarterly reports, and member feedback given in October of 2018.

Documentation of Progress

1. Experiential Learning Workgroup

The group designed and managed a Youth in Government Day - creating a model, piloting the event, and writing a tool kit for a structured half-day visit to a government agency for Carver High School. On November 14, 2018, 60-70 Carver High School students attended a tour of several county departments, including waste-management, fleet, facilities, and transportation. The purpose was to help students explore potential career pathways in various county departments. A survey was distributed to both the 32 county staff and 54 students that participated at this event to identify areas of success and improvement for future events.[1]

2. Marketing & Branding

The group set a goal to compile and evaluate existing local and state government marketing strategies to determine best practices in promoting the value of government service. They collaborated with a consultant regarding the design and brand of the IPPS collaborative and created a survey for government agencies that would provide insight into their recruitment strategies. In addition, this group gave a presentation on November 1, 2018 at the International Management Association regarding the IPPS collaborative and various municipal models of Governments Engaging Youth in order to both educate the public and gain feedback on their own marketing strategies.

Internally, in October of 2018, this group also created and circulated a survey among the collaborative to gauge opinion about their own participation as well as suggestions for new membership to IPPS. [2] These responses will be incorporated into the collaborative's stakeholder engagement strategy for 2019.

3. Benchmarking

The group organized a series of meetings with [NxtGov](#), an organization of millennial leaders representing state and local governments with experience in the public/private sector, in order to produce several short videos featuring millennials speaking about their public sector careers. On November 14, 2018, the group scheduled and taped interviews with 12 millennials and one NxtGov spokesperson at the Sofia Center/B Street Theater, creating a library of video assets with peer-to-peer messages that will inspire a younger generation to consider a career in public service.[3]

The criteria set for these interviews were to hear from a diverse group of millennials - in terms of race or ethnicity, gender, and professional background - who have been working in the public sector from one to five years. IPPS provided the interviewees with a series of questions and asked them to choose 3-4 of them that they'd be excited to answer and convey their passion for public sector work. The benchmarking group also requested for the interviewees to reflect positive emotions in their responses.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

The group decided to develop a Kumu map of IPPS stakeholders and a toolbox including a needs assessment for employers and a plan for engaging 3-5 organizations.

Member Feedback about the IPPS Collaborative

IPPS leadership has sought feedback from the collaborative in two surveys, distributed October through December of 2018.

In October of 2018, the Marketing & Branding team distributed a survey among the collaborative in order to better understand the appeal and dynamics of the collaborative. Valley Vision distributed a survey to the IPPS collaborative in December of 2018 in order to gauge the progress that IPPS has made in the last year towards their purpose and goals stated in the original application for funding.[4]

The Marketing & Branding team survey was comprised of four questions:

What got you interested in IPPS?

The main factors that respondents noted for getting involved in IPPS were a passion for the public sector, as well as personal invitations from existing IPPS members. Members note that pathways to public sectors are underutilized and it is time to reinvigorate awareness and skill-building in the public sector for young people.

What keeps you coming back?

Members continue attending IPPS meetings because they want to invest in the community's students and enjoy participating in a project that makes a difference with tangible results. One respondent said, *"Part of working in the public sector is making a difference in my community. I think it is important to invest in our students so that they can make informed decisions about their future."*

Who or what agencies do you think should be involved?

Members would like to see participation and involvement from more public sector human resources recruiters, local government representatives, and K-12 district faculty. Other departments and agencies that they note include law enforcement, cities, counties, special districts, or other state departments.

Do you have additional insight or reflections on how to enhance our shared work or improve IPPS?

Members had varied ideas about how to improve IPPS. Members would like to see:

- More energy towards increasing awareness of the IPPS collaborative and its work.

- Ensured project sustainability and action
- A statewide badging system for youth
- A communication strategy related to government pension and healthcare concerns
- Standard WBL and practices to share with other government agencies
- Capture of outcome data

The Valley Vision survey focused on IPPS's attainment of the overarching goals that were noted in the project charter. In addition, the members were also asked what changes they'd like to see in the collaborative's future and what challenges will need to be overcome in 2019.

To what extent have the overall project objectives been achieved?

When asked to reflect on achievement of overall objectives, the objective that respondents rated IPPS most highly on: *The IPPS Collaborative discovered and tested new or modified ways to improve pathways to the public sector.* A couple respondent comments include:

- *"The projects thus far have been beneficial and novel, but more structural changes will likely need to be pursued to make truly new ways."*
- *"I believe we have created a great base but believe a more coordinated effort to a larger goal would serve our group and initiatives better."*

The overall objective that respondents identified as needing the most improvement was: *The IPPS collaborative has identified and secured funds to build ongoing capacity to meet the workforce needs of state, county, city, special districts, and other related civil service sectors.* Respondents noted that funding options are being explored and that more time is needed to secure adequate funding to ensure sustainable achievement and impact.

Respondents agreed that IPPS met other objectives that were identified in the original project charter. These objectives included:

- The IPPS collaborative has brought together the right group of people to prepare and strengthen pathways to public sector careers: Respondents think the collaborative is off to a good start and the group should expand to include more public sector participation.
- The IPPS collaborative has increased knowledge and awareness among community stakeholders of the importance of creating pathways to public sector careers: Again, respondents note that there has been a good start but there is much work to do to reach the level of awareness that is needed.
- The IPPS collaborative is clear on the challenges and obstacles that hinder the development of pathways to public sector careers. Respondents noted that IPPS needs a more strategic and comprehensive understanding of barriers, including *"regulations and labor agreements that affect hiring in government how this will impact pathways to PS employment"* and *"perception of government jobs, access to training from K12 to higher education to continuing education"* Responses indicate that a strategic planning process would be beneficial to the group.

- The IPPS collaborative has emphasized expanding opportunities for diverse workers to work in the public sector. Respondents note that the group is off to a good start but impacts are at a very small scale at this stage.
- The IPPS collaborative understands the landscape of where key job needs are in the public sector and who and what educational assets can support worker preparation. Respondents note that more data is needed to understand this landscape and recommend conducting a Public Sector study from the Los Rios Center for Excellence.
- The IPPS collaborative has clarity on the goals or success measures of the collaborative. Respondents note that there has not been enough time to fully clarify long term goals. As one respondent notes, *“It’s a working group so the goal is shared but each has their own lens on it. The group started, wanted to get results under the belt, and now needs to go back and have a discussion with participants on measurable goal and vision for the collaborative.”*

Where has the collaborative been most successful?

Ten of the 12 respondents felt that the collaborative has been most successful in establishing a base network of individuals and organizations committed to this work. Some respondent comments include:

- *“Bringing participants together to tackle a challenging topic and creating space where specific groups can test an idea and share results and modify for future work.”*
- *“Building a good base of committed folks who want to work together on increasing pathways into the public sector. At least two of the pilots were completed and led to strengthening relationships and also showing movement forward with the work.”*
- *“Getting the right people in the room, building relationships and making connections with the right organizations (e.g., Carver and the County, IPPS and NextGov), laying the groundwork for future work and successes. Not to mention the most visible outputs - the highly successful YIG days and the NextGov videos.”*

In what ways has the collaborative been most challenged?

Responses to this question converged around two major themes:

- Engaging youth and participants from state departments: Respondents noted that the collaborative needs to expand to include participation of youth, state government representatives, policy makers, and those involved in human resources.
- Building capacity and knowledge through increased funding, more data, and increased understanding of barriers to inform and create strategic goals: Respondents noted the need to identify specific skill sets, more funding to support the work, and an overall strategy with broad-based buy in. The need to improve the clarity of IPPS goals and measures of success and to secure funding to build ongoing capacity of workforce needs.

Some of the other feedback included the desire to formalize the structure of the collaborative and improve the accessibility of the monthly meetings, whether this is through providing a call-in option or rotating locations around the region to include a wider network of partners.

What goals or success metrics would you like the IPPS Collaborative to work towards?

Respondents identified goal and data needs within the group, as well as outcomes and success metrics they recommend. Within the group process, respondents would like to see:

- Public Sector Workforce Study to understand the job needs
- Data connecting this work to the SWP (Strong Workforce Program?)
- Coordination with other entities, including bringing more youth and young professions to the committee and identifying youth advocacy and community based organizations to partner with to build interest in and connections with public sector organizations (e.g., Boys and Girls Clubs).
- The pursuit of a “Big Hairy Audacious Goal” with success metrics identified and tracked.

Respondents identified the following outcomes that IPPS should pursue:

- Identify the needs of local employers in the jobs of the future (competencies, abilities and knowledge) and align them with educational institutions.
- Work with local agencies to identify opportunities to build pathways and internship opportunities between K12 and local government, especially in high need skill areas.
- Build out pathways from high school to community college - connecting real municipal entities who have real needs to recruit new workers to several high schools who seek Work Based Learning opportunities.
- Help map out what it would take for a high school student to get from high school to the job or from high school to college to the job. Engage in conversation with large and small municipal organizations about their succession planning and how they are intentionally building their workforce for the future.
- Expanded pipeline activities that lead to an Increase in applications and hiring.
- Share best practices for succession planning, long and short-term strategies to connect people to public-sector careers.
- Broaden the Youth in Government model to touch more schools and public sector organizations (e.g., by 2020, 800 high school students in the region will have participated in a Youth in Government day).
- Build a sustainable model by identifying a resource in each entity (e.g., schools, city and county governments) whose job description includes coordination of Youth in Government days and Work Based Learning.

Success metrics that respondents identified, include:

- Identify the number of internships, job shadows, classroom visit we want to create
- Identify the number of new public sector pathways created. Number of students enrolled. Number of new recruit hired.

Overall, the collaborative responded with positivity regarding the 2018 initial effort, but also makes it clear that there is still much work to be done.

Recommendations and Conclusions

Throughout all opportunities to give feedback, there were some consistent themes. Overall, the membership says that the collaborative is off to a very good start, providing an opportunity to build capacity, gather a committed group of people from diverse entities, provide a place to discover and test ideas, and set goals together.

IPPS has been very successful in activating a small group of committed individuals, widening the circle by inviting new people in, and creating a venue to make an impact on an important issue. The ability to test new ideas and start advancing work has been very valuable to participants.

Areas that have challenged and will continue to challenge are: the need for funding, the need for additional data and understanding of a large scale and complex issue, and the limited reach of the group.

Members would like to see IPPS expand its reach through recruiting more state agency staff, more diverse geographic and public sector representation, and more youth and young professionals. Members note that clarity on a strategic goal, with a fuller understanding of the landscape, would be beneficial.

In response to this feedback, Valley Vision recommends the following actions:

- Increase awareness of the IPPS work by advancing branding and communications work as well as outreaching across other sector work conducted by SETA, Valley Vision, and others.
- Where capacity exists, focus on membership recruitment in quarter one of 2019. This should include the “snowball effect” - or targeted invitations sent from existing members as well as locating new sources of contacts, including new sources at CA State Human Resources, community colleges, K-12, and city/county entities.
- Work with the Los Rios Center for Excellence to conduct a Public Sector Occupations study in 2019.
- Conduct a strategic planning session with the full membership once the Public Sector Occupation study is complete to identify specific impactful actions that IPPS can pursue in response to occupational needs and pathway opportunities.
- Identify target areas that need funding and capacity. Communicate to membership what types of activities are being supported by funding. Explore with partners how to fund target activities that need support.

The IPPS Collaborative has a year of successful collaboration, knowledge, capacity, and network building under its belt. This is a good moment for IPPS to reflect on work done, adapt to challenges, and scale up their efforts in order to create lasting system-wide change, resulting in increased talent pipeline and employment for the public sector.

[1] Appendix A - Youth in Government Day: Memo, Survey, and Results

[2] Appendix B - Marketing & Branding Survey and Results

[3] Appendix C - Benchmarking Interview Questions

[4] Appendix C - Valley Vision's IPPS 2019 Feedback Survey