

## **ENB Grantee Convening 6/11/20 Small Group Questions and Summary**

### **QUESTIONS**

- What were most important things you learned this spring about teaching?
- What were most important things you learned this spring about counseling or directing a program?
- How are you preparing for the fall? (recruitment/outreach/intake, placement, hiring new teachers, teaching, advising)
- (What are tech/device needs?)

### **JOBS GROUPS Addl questions:**

- What are the jobs situations and outlooks for students in your program?
- What about the small business owners in your classes? What do you need to learn?
- What partnerships and support do you need, e.g. from ENB, skills training programs, employers, etc?

### **STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT GROUPS Addl questions:**

- What support did your teachers need this spring and how did they find it?
- What support will teachers need, to be more effective teaching English next year in virtual classrooms?
- Will new teachers need a different kind of support, than your program has given new teachers in the past?
- Other staff?

### **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS**

- The shift to online classes was challenging for teachers and students. Teachers worked longer hours for the same class hours, and students in turn had challenges with attendance, retention, technology, jobs, physical and mental health, and financial hurdles.
- There was wide agreement about how important maintaining connection with students has been.
- Looking toward next year, some programs plan that retaining their current students into next year will be key to recruitment. Programs are making plans to reach new students and / or students on the waiting list.
- Attendance has been mixed. Attendance rate increased in some programs, decreased in others.
- Programs agree more work is needed towards breaking down the barriers for students to learn.

- Some programs want to work on their online presence and on evaluating tech needs of students (updated website, provision of technology tools, internet etc.)
- Chromebooks provided, by the Tech Goes Home initiative or others, have supported online classes and helped students achieve goals.
- Online ESOL classes maintained community and support networks for people who attended. This was accomplished by being flexible and recognizing the challenges everyone faces. People have reported that classes are a "mental escape" and their "me time" in their everyday routines. Volunteers have played a crucial role in maintaining engagement and providing constant support.
- Support and considerations for the future: Teach digital skills to students who might need them. Provide paid professional development time during summer, and adjust prep time for lessons as these take longer to plan.
- ENB funded classes need to build in several weeks of paid teacher start up time at the beginning of the school year, even if it means there are fewer weeks of classes, specifically to give teachers paid time to up their game. Teachers, especially those as underpaid as most adult ed teachers, shouldn't have to spend hours of unpaid time in learning these new skills, ENB should consider requesting that in the new grants.
- Many people emphasized the importance of knowledge exchange and sharing experiences among teachers and among programs as a whole. Programs can increase regular check-ins on teachers and enhance more communication with the staff members.